

**The Role of Social Media in Factory Workers' rural-urban
Migration Trajectories in China**

Bingchun Hu

Submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology and Social Policy

The University of Leeds

School of Sociology and Social Policy

June 2025

I confirm that the work submitted is my own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

This copy has been supplied on the understanding that it is copyright material and that no quotation from the thesis may be published without proper acknowledgement

The right of Bingchun Hu to be identified as Author of this work has been asserted by Bingchun Hu in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am deeply grateful to my participants; their generous sharing makes the thesis possible. I sincerely appreciate my gatekeepers; thanks for the facilitation they provided to the research. It is my fortune to have met all of you through this research.

I owe special thanks to Dr. Sun and Professor Timothy Thurston. I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. Sun. She is a professional and patient supervisor who guided me in improving my research ability and deepening my understanding of the academic world. She, as a Chinese female researcher, is a role model for me. I also deeply appreciate Professor Timothy Thurston. He is warm and supportive, always willing to help and generous in sharing his knowledge with me. Both of you made my academic journey less lonely and gave me the courage to persist.

I am especially indebted to my family. When I told my family members I wanted to apply for a PhD in Sociology, they didn't even understand what sociology was, but they gave me all the financial and emotional support I needed. Thank you for their support, which allowed me to become the first-generation undergraduate, the first-generation master's student, and now have the chance to become the first-generation PhD in my family.

I am thankful to my colleagues and friends in Leeds. I cherish the happy moments we shared and the tough times we went through together.

ABSTRACT

In 2024, China's rural-urban migrant population reached 299 million (NBS, 2025), making it a major phenomenon in the country's urbanisation and industrialisation process. At the same time, the number of smartphone users active in the social media market reached 1.1 billion, accounting for 85.3% of urban residents and 63.8% of rural residents (CNNIC, 2024). Against this backdrop, the use of social media by Chinese rural-urban migrant workers has also increased. This research aims to investigate the role of social media in the migration trajectories of Chinese rural-urban migrant workers. The research uses social media as a new social element to explore the mechanisms through which migrants are simultaneously embedded in both their rural origins and urban destinations, and to uncover the complexities and dynamics of this embeddedness. For this research project 41 participants were interviewed, all of whom are rural-urban migrants working as factory workers in the city of Wenzhou. Drawing on interview data, this research finds that Chinese rural-urban migrants are active social media users, using social media to facilitate their embeddedness in both their rural origins and urban destinations during migration. The main findings of the study are as follows: 1) Chinese rural-urban migrant workers use social media to empower their careers, both in gaining a greater voice in their current workplaces and enabling them to pursue higher-skilled job positions in the city. 2) They use social media to keep connected to left-behind family and rural communities, and to participate remotely in the affairs of the rural household, lineage, natal family and community. 3) They use social media for leisure: social media content can strengthen their emotional connection to their traditional rural culture, and can also help them absorb modern ideology, shifting to an urban mindset. Embeddedness is a concept previously used for transnational migrants; this research extends this to internal migrants and develops social media as a new lens. The research conceptually develops the idea of internal migrants' dual embeddedness. The conceptual contribution and empirical data

can support internal migrant studies in other Global South countries, as large-scale rural-urban population mobility is also common in other developing countries.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	6
Chapter 1. Introduction	8
1.1 Research Background	8
1.2 Research Questions and Methods.....	12
1.3 Structure of the Thesis	13
Chapter 2. Literature Review	18
2. 1 Historical Background of Chinese Rural-Urban Migrant Workers	18
2. 2 The Current Situation of Rural-Urban Migrant Workers in Contemporary China.....	22
2. 2. 1 Employment and Occupations of Chinese Migrant Workers	23
2. 2. 2 Left-Behind Groups	25
2. 2. 3 Leisure and Entertainment.....	26
2. 2. 4 Social Interaction and Integration Processes	27
2. 3 Factory Workers in the Era of Rural-Urban Migration in China.....	29
2. 3. 1 Historical Review of Chinese Factory Workers	29
2. 3. 2 Research on Chinese Factory Workers	30
2. 4 Social Media Use in China.....	32
2. 4. 1 Functions and Cultures of Chinese Social Media Platforms	33
2. 4. 2 Key Research Themes on Chinese Social Media.....	35
2. 5 Social Media and Migration.....	40
2. 5. 1 Social Media and Transnational Migration	41
2. 5. 2 Social Media and Rural-Urban Migration in China.....	45
Chapter 3. Conceptual Framework: Migrants’ Embeddedness in Origin and Destination	51
3. 1 Transnational Migrants’ Embeddedness	52
3. 2 Internal Migrant’s Embeddedness	54
3. 3 Chinese Rural to Urban Migrant Workers: One-Sided Embeddedness and Types of Embeddedness Research.....	56
Chapter 4. Methodology.....	58
4. 1 Research Site and Participants	58
4. 1. 1 Research Site	58
4. 1. 2 Sample and Research Site Criteria.....	61
4. 1. 3 Research Site Access and Participant Recruitment.....	62
4. 2 Data Collection and Data Analysis.....	64
4. 2. 1 Data Collection: Semi-Structured Interviews.....	64
4. 2. 2 Data Analysis.....	66
4. 3 Ethical Considerations and Challenges.....	68
Chapter 5. The Influence of Social Media on Rural-Urban Migrants’ Employment.....	70
5. 1 An Overview of the Selected Factory	71
5. 2 Empowerment at the Workplace: Working Group on WeChat.....	74
5. 2. 1 Active Participation	74
5. 2. 2 Passive Participation	77
5. 2. 3 Observation (Invisibility) and Team Representative	78

5. 2. 4 Beneficiaries of Nominal Empowerment	81
5. 3 Empowerment in Professional Development: Online Training Opportunities and Academic Qualifications.....	82
5. 4 Inaction on Employment Rights and Perceptions.....	89
5. 5 Summary.....	94
Chapter 6 : The Influence of Social Media on Migrants' Families and Communities in Rural China	97
6. 1 Social media and Family members.....	98
6. 1. 1 Connecting with Left-Behind Elderly in the Rural Hometown	99
6. 1. 2 Connecting with Left-Behind Children in the Rural Hometown.....	102
6. 1. 3 Left-behind Women in the Rural Hometown	110
6. 2 Lineage Cooperation in the Rural Hometown.....	116
6. 3 Natal Family Networks in the Rural Hometown	119
6. 4 Social Media and Community.....	121
6. 4. 1 Village Activities	121
6. 4. 2 Sub Communities' Activities in in the Rural Hometown.....	125
6. 5 Summary.....	126
Chapter 7. The Influence of Social Media on Factory Workers' Leisure Time and Pursuits.128	
7. 1 Rural Embeddedness in Social Media Leisure	129
7. 1. 1 Hometown in Social Media Browsing and Recording.....	130
7. 1. 2 A Case Analysis of Rurality within the Research Field: Village Super League.....	135
7. 2 Urban Embeddedness in Social Media Leisure Activities	141
7. 2. 1 General Urban Embeddedness.....	141
7. 2. 2 Wenzhou Urban Embeddedness	152
7. 3 Summary	155
Chapter 8. Conclusion and Discussion.....158	
8. 1 Research Summary: Key Findings	158
8. 2 Conceptual Discussions: Embeddedness in Both Rural and Urban Social Spaces.....	163
8. 2. 1 Different Forms of Embeddedness	163
8. 2. 2 Differentiated Embeddedness among Migrant Workers	168
8. 3 Research Contribution and Policy Implications	172
8. 3. 1 Research Contribution.....	174
8. 3. 2 Contributions of This Research to Future Policy Making.....	175
8. 4 Research Limitations and Future Research Direction.....	176
Reference.....178	
Appendix 1:Participant Demographic Table	242
Appendix 2: Ethics Letter.....	244
Appendix 3 :Participant Consent Form	245
Appendix 4: Participant Information Sheet.....	247
Appendix 5: Gatekeeper Consent Form.....	250

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Research Background

Globally, one out of every seven people is a migrant. Among this group, migrants within nations account for a significant portion, estimated at 763 million, which far outnumbers transnational migrants, who total 281 million (United Nations, 2024). The number of internal migrants may even be underestimated, as internal migrants move within large administrative regions, which might not be included in the statistics (Selod and Shilpi, 2021). The formation of migration patterns is largely due to the processes of urbanisation and industrialisation in developing countries. These social changes have led to large-scale rural-to-urban population mobility during certain periods of history, a phenomenon which includes the present time. Factors influencing this population move from the countryside to the cities include the income gap between urban and rural areas, disparities in public amenities, and other related issues (Lagakos, 2020).

China is a country which is representative of large-scale rural-to-urban migrant flow. The number of rural-urban migrant workers has gradually grown, reaching 299 million in 2024 (NBS, 2025). The current trend of large flows of migrants moving from rural to urban areas in China can be traced back to 1978, following the implementation of China's reform and opening up policy. This period marked the beginning of marketisation and foreign investment in China, leading to a boom in labour-intensive industries in urban areas. The demand for labour in these industries, combined with agricultural workers' need for monetary income, drove significant population mobility (Pun et al., 2012; Andreas and Zhan, 2016). Rural-urban migrants fuelled China's 'economic miracle' (Niu and Zhao, 2018; Thompson, 2011; Gong et al, 2008). They served as a critical labour source, significantly contributing to urban development, particularly in labour-intensive sectors, such as the manufacturing and construction industries. Their income tax, taxes

on goods (such as VAT), and transfer charges incurred during inter-regional transfers still contribute to a net income gain for host cities. (NBS, 2022; Frijters et al, 2015; Han and Ge, 2015). Rural-urban migrant workers also serve as vital providers of economic support for left-behind families and rural communities. Rural-urban migrants' financial support improves the standard of living of the families left behind, particularly in the areas of housing and greater material possessions (Démurger and Wang, 2016). Money received from family members working in the city is also used to invest in human capital, such as covering family members' tuition fees (Chiang et al., 2013).

However, rural-urban migrants and their families face challenges and barriers brought about by migration. In the workplace, migrants are a disadvantaged group, often lacking opportunities for training and job promotion. They also face exploitation and difficulties in securing labour rights protections (Shen, 2006; Cai, 2010; Meng and Li, 2013; Huang, 2014). In family life, many rural-urban migrants are separated from their family members, facing challenges in their children's parenting, spousal relationships, household management, and elder care. All these factors reduce the quality of life in general, and happiness in family life (Xu and Wang, 2015; Zhang et al., 2018; Wu and Guo, 2020; Jacka, 2012;). In the leisure sphere, older-generation rural-urban migrants spend less due to financial constraints and the need to send money home. Meanwhile, the younger generation enjoys more opportunities for leisure activities which is one factor which can predispose them to be more susceptible to engaging in risky sexual behaviours (Yang et al., 2016; Tang et al., 2020; Mao et al., 2023). Besides this, Chinese rural-urban migrants also face discrimination from local urban inhabitants, and institutional obstacles because of the household registration system, making their integration into urban areas difficult (Zhang and Wang, 2010; Zhang et al., 2016; Hung, 2022). Existing studies also show that the home ownership rate of Chinese rural-urban migrant workers in urban destinations is extremely low, and their living conditions are worse than those of native local residents.

This is reflected in their smaller living spaces and poorer housing facilities (Tang, Feng and Li, 2016).

In the same year as the Reform and Opening up policy, 1978, the Chinese government announced its intention to seize the 'revolution in information technology' happening around the world, utilising administrative power and national resources to accelerate the country's digital progress (Wang, 2016). In 2013, the State Council of the People's Republic of China published the 'Notice on the Issuance of the 'Broadband China' Strategy and Implementation Plan,' which combined government administrative power with market forces to facilitate the penetration of the internet and related technologies. In 2018, China became the world's largest internet user base (State Information Center, 2020). Good internet coverage creates a solid foundation for the widespread popularity of social media (CNNIC, 2024). Currently, 1.1 billion people in China are mobile phone users (CNNIC, 2024), providing social media with a large user base.

Chinese rural-urban migrant workers are an active group in terms of social media usage. Over the past decade, scholars have begun to pay attention to the social media usage of rural-urban migrants. Existing research has found that Chinese rural-urban migrants use social media as a channel to maintain a sense of rootedness with their rural origins, including using social media to sustain social networks in their hometowns and to collect and share photos of their hometowns, and even to create new online avenues for conducting religious and ritual activities (Wang, 2016). Studies have also shown that social media can help these migrants to establish urban social networks and facilitate their integration into urban settings (Zheng, 2023). Social media also aids them in transitioning their identity from that of peasant farmers to migrant workers (Cao and Li; 2018). Additionally, Chinese social media has also been utilised for the emergence and spread of working-class subcultures.

However, existing qualitative empirical research on the use of social media by Chinese rural-urban migrant workers mostly comes from the contributions of a small number of scholars (Wang, 2016; Zheng, 2023). Compared to the widespread nature of this phenomenon, there is a significant lack of in-depth understanding of its significance. Furthermore, the mechanisms of simultaneously maintaining connections with both rural and urban societies remain underinvestigated. Against this backdrop, this study aims to fill the research gap by further examining the role of social media in rural-urban migrant workers' migration trajectories. This research employs 'Embeddedness' as its conceptual framework. 'Embeddedness' originated in economics, developed within economic sociology, and was later extended to migration studies (Polanyi, 1944; Granovetter, 1985). When the concept was adapted to migration studies, embeddedness referred to migrants rooted in or engaged with the broader social environment. This research further utilises the concept of 'dual embeddedness,' which builds on embeddedness and refers to the simultaneous embeddedness in both the sending and receiving societies across spatial boundaries. The conceptual framework allows me to investigate the connectivity of migrant workers in dual social settings, focusing on the role of social media platforms. It demonstrates how rural-urban migrant workers utilise social media to navigate and maintain relationships in both rural and urban locations. The data collected in this research provides an empirical contribution.

More importantly, this thesis applies the theoretical concepts of embeddedness and dual-embeddedness to rural-urban migration and introduces social media as a new element in the conceptual framework of embeddedness.

Large-scale rural–urban migration is not a phenomenon unique to China. Many Global South countries — typically characterized by lower economic development, post-colonial histories, and marginalization within the global system — are experiencing rapid

urbanization accompanied by large-scale rural–urban migration (Dados and Connell, 2012; Henderson and Turner, 2020). In Global South countries such as Vietnam, Bangladesh, and India, the expansion of urban industries has created strong demand for labour, and the resulting income opportunities have driven agricultural workers to leave their land and seek employment in emerging industrial sectors (Khanam, 2024; Chandrasekhar, 2014; Vo, 2021). China as one of the largest Global South countries, research conducted in China offers theoretically original contributions that can inform and support the study of internal migration in other Global South contexts.

1.2 Research Questions and Methods

The main research question is: **What is the role of social media in the rural-urban migration trajectories of factory workers in China?** The sub-questions are designed to correspond to the different aspects of the main research question, with each sub-question being more specific and directly targeting a particular aspect.

The first sub-question: *What is the influence of social media on rural-urban migrant workers' employment?*

The second sub-question: *How does social media influence rural-urban migrant workers' family and community relationships?*

The third sub-question : *What is the impact of social media on rural-urban migrant workers' leisure activities?*

In order to respond to the above questions, this study adopts the semi-structured interview as its research method. I chose a factory in Wenzhou, a city representative of China's private economy and a hub for light industry, which attracts low-skilled rural-urban migrants to become labourers in the light industrial sector. It is one of the main production

sites for 'Made in China' products. Wenzhou is a well-known migrant-receiving city in China, with over 35% of its population being non-local (Lin and Gaubatz, 2015, 2017). Through Wenzhou's industrial connections, I contacted a factory that has been operating for over ten years and is in good operational condition. I obtained permission to collect data from this factory, and then conducted interviews with rural-urban migrant workers in the factory. To ensure data saturation, I conducted two rounds of interviews: the first round was in person, and the second round was online. A total of 41 participants were interviewed, including 24 female workers and 17 male workers. The entire interview process spanned seven months, from March to October 2024. Before data collection began, the research was approved by the University of Leeds Research Ethics Committee, with the reference number BESS FREC 2024-0799. The data analysis was conducted using Nvivo software, employing thematic analysis as the approach for analysing the interview data. The first-hand interview material was originally in Chinese. Later, during the writing phase, the material was translated into English to accommodate readers with different language backgrounds.

1.3 Structure of the Thesis

The thesis consists of 8 chapters:

Chapter 2 is a literature review. This chapter first provides an historical background of Chinese rural-urban migrant workers. The chapter then provides a brief review of the current situation of rural-urban migrant workers in contemporary China, which is a broad research area. I primarily focus on four key themes: employment and occupations, left-behind issues, leisure and entertainment, and social interaction and integration. These are the themes that are most closely related to the research questions. Moreover, this chapter provides a brief introduction to the review of the influence of social media on migrants globally.

Chapter 3 begins with a detailed explanation of the conceptual framework of the research project —'embeddedness'. Then, this chapter presents relevant research, including a section discussing transnational migrants' embeddedness. It emphasises how transnational migrants cross borders while maintaining and creating relationships in their country of origin, and simultaneously engaging in the host society. This chapter also includes a section reviewing previous studies on internal migrants based on the embeddedness conceptual framework. These studies show that internal migrants are able to maintain relationships in their places of origin and their destination at the same time.

Chapter 4 outlines the methodology of the research project. This chapter presents the research site: the city of Wenzhou. Wenzhou is a factory-cluster city in the eastern coastal region. It is also a well-known migrant-receiving city. The participant recruitment process involved the assistance of the Wenzhou Industrial Association to contact the management team of a factory; I then contacted potential participants among rural-urban factory workers. Data collection was conducted through in person one-on-one interviews, as well as remote interviews to ask further questions. Data analysis was performed using Nvivo for thematic analysis. This chapter also discusses the ethical considerations of the research project, clarifying how this research carefully protects participants' rights.

Chapter 5 examines the role of social media in the career development of Chinese rural-urban migrant workers. This chapter first provides a detailed description of factory working patterns and conditions. Then, Chapter 5 shows that Chinese rural-urban migrant workers, through social media, are empowered both within the workplace and outside it to seek better career transition, highlighting social media's influence on urban embeddedness. In factories, social media serves as a channel that provides more worker

participation, enhancing self-esteem and communication. However, rural-urban factory workers, under the rigid hierarchical structure of Taylorism, lack decision-making ability, which highly limits the potential of social media to empower them in the workplace. In addition, sharing their professional knowledge through social media platforms does not directly translate into monetary rewards, which can reduce rural-urban factory workers' motivation to actively participate and voice their opinions.

Outside the factory, social media provides Chinese rural-urban factory workers with more opportunities to pursue further education and training, supporting their aspirations to change career paths and achieve upward social mobility. However, this often leads to misleading expectations of career prospects. Moreover, not all factory workers are strongly motivated to pursue training through social media platforms. This chapter also presents findings that participants still rely more on traditional channels to pursue their rights, such as job-hopping and word of mouth, to gather information about rights protection.

Chapter 6 examines the role of social media in maintaining connections within rural family networks and communities. By means of social media, Chinese rural-urban migrant workers can maintain intimate connections with their left-behind families, including practising filial piety toward the elderly, parenting children, and maintaining communication with their spouse. Also, it enables them to sustain connections with extended family. Rural China has a tradition of lineage systems, which are based on kinship ties through male ancestry. Social media helps rural-urban migrant factory workers overcome physical constraints, enabling them to seek and provide support within their lineage networks. In addition, changing gender values have led to a shift away from the traditional belief that married women's duty is only to her in-laws rather than her birth parents. Social media helps married female migrants in the factory maintain

connections and collaboration with their natal families, and also enables male migrants to provide support to their married siblings. Moreover, Chinese rural-urban migrant workers also participate online in their communities, practising social citizenship.

Chapter 7 studies social media leisure activities. This chapter examines how the use of social media for leisure can deepen both urban integration and rural attachment, enhancing both urban embeddedness and rural embeddedness. By means of social media platforms followed in leisure time, information about rural towns, such as festivals, hometown cuisine, and regional activities, is disseminated to rural-urban migrant workers, evoking memories and maintaining their bonds with their hometowns. This reinforces the emotional connection to their rural roots and traditions, making their hometowns more than just generic rural locations in China, but places with personal significance and identity. Social media deepens their urban embeddedness, both in general embeddedness to the urban environment and specific embeddedness to the host city. Social media exposes Chinese rural-urban migrant workers to new aesthetics and ideologies that they cannot access through traditional rural social norms. Social media also allows them to acquire informal local information, on topics such as food and travel in the host city.

Chapter 8 is the Conclusion and Discussion chapter. This chapter first provides a straightforward summary of the research findings. Then, the chapter provides conceptualised discussion of ‘embeddedness’, pointing out that embeddedness takes different forms in the rural and urban settings, including economic embeddedness, cultural embeddedness, and social embeddedness. This chapter further discusses the differences migrant individuals can experience varying depths of embeddedness based on their personal circumstances. After this, the chapter highlights the academic contribution of this research. This thesis applies the theoretical concept of ‘embeddedness’ to the

context of rural-urban migration, and introduces social media as a new analytical element in the conceptual framework of embeddedness. This research enriches empirical data on China's migrant studies, also providing new insights into embeddedness and contributing to internal migration research in other Global South countries. This chapter also presents the potential of this research for policymaking, particularly in supporting left-behind groups and migrants. Finally, this chapter reflects on the research's limitations and directions for future research.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

Chinese rural-urban migrants actively participate in popularising social media in China, using social media resources to connect themselves with their rural hometowns and cities. In the process, they become an important group in the trend of informatisation (Zheng,2023). This literature review chapter will first provide an overview of the current situation of rural-urban migrant workers in contemporary China. Then, a brief introduction to Chinese social media will be given. Finally, this chapter will present research on the use of social media by migrants, particularly by Chinese rural-urban migrant workers.

2. 1 Historical Background of Chinese Rural-Urban Migrant Workers

This research studies rural-urban migrant workers in China, who voluntarily migrate from impoverished rural areas to prosperous cities. In the early stages, peasant gave up agricultural jobs and migrated to cities in search of non-agricultural work. They had no fixed designation and were called 'peasant worker (minggong)','floating migrant workers' (liudong minggong), 'outsider labourers' (wailai gong), or faced discriminatory labels like 'drifters' (liuming) and 'blind flow' (mangliu). In 1983, Zhang Yulin, the director of the Rural-Urban Sociology Research Office at the Institute of Sociology, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, first introduced the concept of 'rural-urban migrant workers.' In the late 1980s, the term 'rural-urban migrant workers' became widely used in labour studies in China. By 2006, the term was officially incorporated into government documents (Li, 2025). In this research, the term 'rural-urban migrant worker' is also used. Rural-urban migrant workers have been the subject of study in Chinese and English language scholarship. The origin of the rural-urban migrant worker group can be traced back to 1976, when the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the Chinese government

decided to stop viewing class struggle as a core component of work and shifted their focus to economic construction. The past ‘mistakes’ were judged as ‘extreme left line’ and were negated officially in the Central Committee of the CPC. Sociologists such as Pun Ngai described China’s position in the world at this turning point as ‘falling from the forefront of fighting imperialism to the edge of world capitalism’ (Pun, Lu and Zhang, 2012, p. 23). Since the ‘Reform and Opening Up’ policy, China has begun to adopt neoliberalism. The decision to introduce ‘Reform and Opening Up’ was made at the Third Plenary Session of the 11th Central Committee in 1978, leading to China’s entry into a vigorous process of marketisation. Later, in 2001, China joined the WTO, strengthening marketisation and foreign commercial links (Pun, Lu and Zhang, 2012; Chen et al. , 2020).

Since the 1978 reforms, the new economic system and opening up to the outside world have gradually been implemented. On ‘Reform and Opening Up’, Deng Xiaoping, a senior leader of the Chinese Communist Party, proposed that ‘common prosperity’ should be carried out in stages, and the market mechanism should be used as a tool for construction, allowing some people and some regions to get rich first. In the policy implementation process, some eastern coastal cities opened up to foreign investment first and experienced rapid economic development (Hewitt, 2007; Fan, 2006). From the 1980s onwards, labour-intensive sectors in these eastern coastal cities have progressed quickly, increasing the demand for labour. To maintain the momentum of economic growth, the government’s attitude towards peasants working in eastern coastal cities improved. Concurrently, with the advancement in market-oriented reforms, daily necessities, education, and housing were marketised, making rural agricultural workers heavily dependent on monetary income. They strongly demanded an increase in monetary income. However, they were unable to obtain the necessary monetary income from the small-scale

peasant economy in rural areas (Pun, Lu and Zhang, 2012; Jie, 2011). Therefore, a large proportion of the rural population rapidly migrated to eastern coastal cities to obtain the monetary income they needed (Andreas and Zhan, 2016; Whyte, 2010). Many scholars regard the surge in demand for monetary income and market-oriented reforms as the main driving forces behind the formation of the wave of rural-urban migrant workers.

With the formation of rural-urban migration, the hukou system is becoming a focal point. The *hukou*¹ system has also played an important role in rural-urban migration in China. The modern *hukou* system came into being with the implementation of *the People's Republic of China Hukou Registration Regulation* in 1958. *Hukou's* origins are in the ancient *baojia* and *xiangsui* systems (Young, 2013), which functioned similarly to the Soviet Union's *propiska* system (Dutton, 1992). Commonly, *the* basic unit of the *hukou* is the household, and under this system family members register themselves jointly in a household registration booklet. However, some citizens are collective *hukou* holders, and they register themselves not on a household basis but on *danwei* (work unit) basis, such as military, schools, and state-owned enterprises (Li and Chan, 2022). A Chinese citizen's *hukou* status consists of two parts. The first part is agricultural/urban *hukou*. Before the *hukou* reform, state benefits were distributed unequally between rural and urban *hukou* holders. Urban *hukou* holders received better welfare provisions than agricultural *hukou* holders. The second part is residential location, which also impacts *hukou* holders' welfare and public services. For example, compared with urban *hukou* holders in the less developed province of Yunnan, urban *hukou* holders in Beijing receive better education and healthcare (Sun, 2018; Miller, 2012, p. 33; Chan and Zhang, 1999). In addition, the

¹ Original term is 户口. *Hukou* as transliteration and the house registration system as the sense-for-sense translation are both widely used in English literature

hukou booklet records the holders' basic information, including name, gender, height, place of birth, date of birth, residential address, marital status, race, religious belief, education, military service, and migration details. Various occasions require household registration for identification, such as marriage, passport application and employment (Wang, 2005, p. 67).

Four stages describe the official attitude towards migrant workers' voluntary migration from rural areas to cities for economic purposes. These four stages are the prohibition phase (1949–1983), the permissiveness phase (1984–1991), the liberal phase (1992–2001) and the facilitation phase (2002 onwards) (Sun, 2018). In the prohibition phase, for rapid industrialisation, resources were concentrated highly in cities with industries (Ma and von Glahn, 2022). Consequently, urban *hukou* holders, especially those employed in the industrial sector, had a higher level of welfare than agricultural *hukou* holders (Chan, 1996; Shen, 1997). To alleviate the financial pressure on welfare expenditure and maintain resources in cities, the government strictly controlled the transfer of agricultural *hukou* to urban *hukou* and the migration of agricultural *hukou* holders to cities (Chan and Zhang, 1999). In the permissiveness phase, China's Reform and Opening Up began. Special economic zones emerged during this period. Special economic zones referred to specific coastal cities which were granted more market-oriented policies and opened up to the outside world earlier than the rest of China (Desk, 2020; Yueh, 2018). Under the '10 Policies on Activating Rural Economy' and other policies, rural workers could leave their registered residences and move to special economic zones to seek jobs (Sun, 2018). A growing number of agricultural *hukou* holders left their registered place of residence to work in special economic zones. However, during the permissiveness phase, peasants near special economic zones dominated the rural-urban movement, and short-distance migration within the province was the norm (Sun, 2018). In the liberal

phase, the deepening of ‘Reform and Opening Up’ led to an increase in the number of coastal cities opening up to the outside world (Wong and Zheng, 2001). However, there were no clear policies to encourage or prohibit peasants from moving to cities. Interprovincial migration became increasingly prevalent (Sun, 2018). In the facilitation phase, China became one of the few countries in the world to support urban-rural migration (UN, 2010). During this phase, China gradually established *hukou* reform policies to promote rural-urban migrant workers’ access to public services and eliminate the welfare gap caused by unequal *hukou* (Huang et al, 2017). The transfer of agricultural *hukou* to urban *hukou* and the change in *hukou* residential location were more relaxed, with many areas directly cancelling the division of agricultural /urban household registration (Zhang and Hoekstra, 2020; Chan and Zhang, 1999; Sun, 2018). *Hukou* is no longer an impregnable barrier to mobility, and narrowing the gap in access to welfare caused by *hukou* is the main policy trend. Currently, citizens with local *hukou* can still receive better welfare provision than rural-urban migrant workers with non-local *hukou* (Fields and Song, 2020; Zhang and Hoekstra, 2020). The *hukou* system still is criticised as an institutional basis for social and spatial stratification in China (Chan, 2012; Miller, 2012; Kroeber, 2016, pp. 73–74; Chan and Zhang 1999). In sum, China uses *hukou* as a mechanism to manage the flow of rural-urban migrants. Attitudes and policies towards rural-urban migrant workers adjust according to the developmental stages of the state.

2. 2 The Current Situation of Rural-Urban Migrant Workers in Contemporary China

The study of rural-urban migrant workers has received a great deal of scholarly attention as researchers attempt to comprehend this sizeable population and their way of life in contemporary China. Numerous themes on Chinese rural-urban migrant workers have been investigated, such as citizenisation (e. g. , Zhang and Wang, 2010; Zhang, 2012;

Li, Li and Chen, 2010), self-identity (Gui et al., 2012; Wang and Fan, 2013), social networks (e. g., Meng and Xue, 2020; Yue et al., 2013; Wang, Lao and Zhou, 2014; Wang, Zhang and Ni, 2015), labour shortages (Knight, Deng and Li, 2011; Chan, 2010a;), new generation rural-urban migrant workers (Hu, 2012; Cheng, 2014; He and Wang, 2016; Zhao, Liu and Zhang, 2018), insurance and social security (Qin, Zhuang and Liu, 2015; Cheng, Nielsen and Smyth, 2014; Qin et al., 2021), intention to stay/return (Mohabir, Jiang and Ma, 2017; Chan, 2010b), internal differences among rural-urban migrant workers (Magnani and Zhu, 2012), consumption (Chu, Liu and Shi, 2015; Cao et al., 2017), housing (Li and Zhang, 2011; Niu and Zhao, 2018; Garriga et al., 2021; Song and Zhang, 2020), land arrangement (Xie and Jiang, 2016) and lifestyle (Song and Smith, 2019; Zhang, Nazroo and Vanhoutte, 2021; Yang and Gu, 2020). There are no clear boundaries between the themes.

Four themes are particularly pertinent to this research project: employment and occupations, left-behind issues, leisure and entertainment, social interaction and the integration process. Therefore, detailed explanations of these four themes will be presented in the next section.

2. 2. 1 Employment and Occupations of Chinese Migrant Workers

China's National Bureau of Statistics released data on rural-urban migrant worker employment distribution. In China's official statistics, the primary sector refers to the agricultural sector, the secondary sector to the industrial sector, and the tertiary sector to the service sector. In 2024, 0.7% of rural-urban migrant workers worked in the primary sector, 44.7% in the secondary sector and 54.6% in the tertiary sector. Rural-urban migrant workers in the secondary industry are mainly concentrated in the manufacturing and construction sectors, accounting for 27.9% and 14.3% of all rural-urban migrant

workers respectively. The scale of rural-urban migrant workers in the tertiary sector is also significant. While 13.6% of rural-urban migrant workers are engaged in the wholesale and retail sectors, 7.2% are engaged in repair and other service-related sectors, 7.1% in shipping, warehousing and transportation sectors and 12.3% in the hospitality and catering sectors (NBS, 2025). The statistics indicate that the manufacturing industry absorbs the most rural-urban migrant workers, and becoming a factory worker is one of the conventional employment choices for rural-urban migrant workers. It has been reported that the average monthly income of rural-urban migrant workers in the manufacturing industry is 4978 yuan², which is higher than that of workers in the wholesale and retail sectors (average monthly income 4362 yuan), hospitality and catering sectors (average monthly income 4141 yuan), and repair and other service-related sectors (average monthly income 4023 yuan). However, it is lower than the monthly income in the construction sectors (average monthly income 5743 yuan) and shipping, warehousing and transportation sectors (5635 yuan) (NBS, 2025). In accordance with the White Paper on China's Remuneration Survey, the turnover of factory workers consistently ranks highest among the surveyed industries, with a rate of 28.9% (Micheal Page, 2023). Rural-urban migrants leave industries because of the predicament of being locked in a low-skilled job, dependency on personal relationships, difficulty in acquiring rights protection and lack of promotion chances and training (Huang, 2014; Cai, 2010; Liu et al., 2006; Shen, 2006).

There is a gender division in the employment of rural-urban migrant workers. Male rural-urban migrants are more likely to be employed in physical labour, such as construction, mining, and woodworking, whereas female rural-urban migrants are more likely to work

² 1 yuan = 0.11-pound sterling

in factories, hotels, restaurants, or domestic service (Seeberg and Guo, 2018). In some industries with severe gender-based occupational segregation, female rural-urban migrants face higher levels of discrimination and the risk of sexual exploitation and coercion (Gaetano and Jacka, 2004; Jacka, 2006; Dai et al. , 2015;).

Furthermore, ethnicity influences the employment choices of rural-urban migrant workers. The ethnic minority-specific industries in cities can absorb a part of the ethnic minority migrant labour force. For instance, Tibetan Buddhism merchandise stores, handicraft stores, Tibetan cafés and Tibetan hostels surround Wuhou Temple in Chengdu city. These Tibetan-influenced businesses create jobs for Tibetan rural-urban migrant workers (Brox, 2019; Kai, 2014; Dou, 2013). In addition, Hui ethnic groups have formed *Jiaofang* (教坊) communities in some northwest Chinese cities. *Jiaofang* communities provide halal services, such as cooking, to Hui Muslims. The *Jiaofang* community's halal-service businesses employ Hui rural-urban migrant labourers (Liang, 2003).

2. 2. 2 Left-Behind Groups

Another important component of the research on migrant experiences is the impact on Left-Behind groups. Rural-urban migrant workers' families receive more financial support for medical care, housing, and education; however, the phenomenon of 'Left-Behind' families has emerged, in which working-age labourers migrate to cities, while the rest family members remain behind (Sun, 2018; Quisumbing and McNiven, 2010). China has 11. 9 million rural left-behind children in compulsory education, 47 million left-behind women and 16 million left-behind elderly people (CCTV, 2022; BBC, 2010; Chinanews, 2021). The improvement in the family economy achieved by financial contributions from relatives in the city cannot cover the problems of those staying behind. The left-behind children, because of their distance from their parents, endure mental

health challenges, social interaction barriers and physical health issues (Xu and Wang, 2015; Zhang et al., 2018; Wu and Guo, 2020). Left-behind women face high labour and farming burdens, mental health issues and sexual repression, all of which contribute to their low level of happiness (Sun, 2018, pp. 11–38; Jacka 2012). But with husbands migrating out, decision-making power within the family has increasingly shifted to the left-behind women, thereby enhancing the status of women in rural origins to some extent (Wang et al., 2020). The left-behind elderly also must contribute to domestic and agricultural labour and housework, and can suffer mental health problems (Sun, 2018, pp. 11–38). Being left behind worsens symptoms of depression, decreases social support, and increases the risk of elderly suicides (Zhou et al., 2018). The phenomenon of ‘left behind’ negatively affects the quality of life and wellbeing of rural-urban migrant families, and constitutes a significant social issue.

2. 2. 3 Leisure and Entertainment

Chinese rural-urban migrant workers engage in leisure activities that provide various benefits, but their leisure activities are often constrained. Physical activities outside the home can help rural-urban migrants expand their living space, develop social networks, build self-identification, and counter stigmatisation (Xiong et al., 2020). However, due to social isolation in urban settings, demanding work schedules and harsh treatment by employers, migrants often choose home-based leisure activities, which further limits their social integration (Zhao and Liu, 2024; Li and Stodolska, 2018).

Previous research also emphasises the differences in leisure pursuits among Chinese rural-urban migrant workers. Mao et al (2023), after studying the leisure patterns of Chinese rural-urban migrant workers, suggest that there is a significant difference in leisure patterns between young and older rural-urban migrant workers. The older generation of rural-urban migrant workers tends to stick to traditional leisure patterns,

characterised by low leisure consumption, shorter duration of leisure activities, and staying close to residential spaces. These patterns are influenced by factors such as gender, working hours, family life, and residential location. In contrast, the younger generation is more likely to engage in leisure activities with higher consumption of longer durations, a greater willingness to travel farther. Tang et al (2020), based on consumer behaviour, classified Chinese young rural-urban migrant workers into four types: Conservative, Balanced, Frustrated, and Adventurous. The Adventurous type is the most individualistic, spending more on leisure (such as restaurants, KTV, pubs, bars, travel, sports, toys, gadgets, etc.), while other groups tend to spend more on children's education and sending money home. In addition, Chinese rural-urban migrant workers' leisure may give rise to deviant behaviour. Yang and colleagues found that the social network of male rural-urban migrant workers increases the likelihood of engaging in risky sexual behaviours, including seeking commercial sex and having condomless sex with sex workers (Yang et al. , 2016).

2. 2. 4 Social Interaction and Integration Processes

Hukou has been recognised by scholars as an institutional obstacle to the urban integration of rural-urban migrant workers (Zhang and Wang, 2010; Hung, 2022). In addition to *hukou*, academics have examined the integration of rural-urban migrant workers in the receiving areas from an economic perspective. Previous research has indicated that rural-urban migrant workers experience wage discrimination against their migrant status (Zhang et al. , 2016; Lu and Song, 2006). With the increase in time spent by rural-urban migrant workers in cities, their incomes have improved. In some industries, rural-urban migrant workers' income can even exceed that of local employees. This improvement in economic conditions has promoted the integration process of rural-urban migrant workers. However, the increase in income is mostly attributable to rural-urban migrant workers' longer working hours. Wage discrimination persists (Wang and Fan, 2012).

Furthermore, academics have investigated the integration of rural-urban migrant workers into receiving areas from a socio-cultural standpoint. Numerous studies have found that locals view rural migrant workers as vulgar money predators and exclude them because of their non-urban lifestyle. The acquisition of urban lifestyles and modernity is an important step for migrants in their integration into cities. Learning the local dialect and marrying local people in the receiving area also promotes the integration process of rural-urban migrant workers (Zavoretti, 2020; Yue et al. , 2012; Wang and Fan, 2012; Nguyen and Locke, 2014). However, it is worth mentioning that although discrimination against rural-urban migrant workers is common, it does not mean that it is the same throughout China. A study conducted in cities of ethnic minority regions showed that Han rural-urban migrant workers from inland Han regions did not experience discrimination and evaluated themselves as being of 'high quality' (Yeh, 2013, pp97-126).

Studies have examined the intergenerational effects of rural-urban migrant workers on urban integration. Chinese rural-urban migrant workers are generally believed to be divided into two generations. First-generation rural-urban migrant workers were born in the 1960s and 1970s and worked in coastal cities in the 1980s and 1990s. Second-generation migrant workers were born after the Reform and Opening Up (the 1980s), and they started to work in 2000 and afterwards (Davis, 2000; Pun, 2003). Compared to the first generation when they were young, the second generation has experienced improved working conditions and is more inclined to integrate into urban life. However, they also have a heightened sensitivity to painful experiences such as discrimination and exploitation (Lu and Pun, 2014; Pun and Koo, 2015).

2. 3 Factory Workers in the Era of Rural-Urban Migration in China

Most frontline factory workers are rural-urban migrant workers (China Labor Watch, 2022). Hence, there is a natural connection between the study of factory workers and the study of rural-urban migrant workers. This section focuses on research on Chinese factory workers, with specific attention paid to the historical background and empirical studies.

2. 3. 1 Historical Review of Chinese Factory Workers

Currently, most factory workers come from the rural-urban migrant worker group, which must be explained in light of China's 1978 Reform and Opening Up policy. First, as one of the measures of Reform and Opening Up, China carried out trade reforms in the 1980s. Since then, China's cheap labour, land and incentive policies have won a large number of overseas manufacturing orders. The vast majority of manufacturing factories that benefit from overseas investment are located in coastal cities. Considering the low cost of employing rural-urban migrant workers from inland, factories in these coastal cities have recruited many rural-urban migrant workers (Zhang, 2006).

China's first President, Mao Zedong, died in 1976. His death was followed by the implementation of the Reform and Opening Up policy in 1978, and the social status and composition of Chinese factory workers have undergone significant changes since this historical turning point (Cai, 2006; Lee, 2000; Hurst, 2004). During the Mao period, factory workers were regarded as masters of the country and as the leading class of socialism. The factories of the Mao era were state-owned. Factory workers were 'state-fixed workers' (Zhao, 2012), and the state guaranteed workers lifelong employment and livelihoods in the factory. Only the Labour Bureau had the power to allocate labour resources and control labour relations, and the dismissal of factory workers was strictly restricted (Deng and Ma, 1987). The state-owned factories of the Mao era also provided employee benefits. In addition to paying wages, factories needed to provide housing,

medical care, living subsidies, education, pension security and intervention in factory workers' marriages, political lives and childbearing (Zhao, 2012). The welfare treatment of factory workers in the Mao era covered their lives from 'the cradle to the grave' (Warner, 2000). Factory workers had tenured positions and received social benefits that were not available to other citizens. Although factory workers were not free to seek jobs and negotiate wages, they were regarded as the most privileged labour group during the Mao era. Factory workers in Mao's time were predominantly locals (Li, 2023). However, the status of factory workers went through a tremendous change in the Reform and Opening Up era. The Reform and Opening Up policy also involved labour force reform, which was first carried out in the 1980s. Factory workers became contract labourers and lost many of the social benefits they had enjoyed during the Mao era. Factories were thus linked to low wages, long working hours and poor environments, resulting in them being marginalised from society. After the labour force reforms, many factories had campuses. Factory workers resided in factory dormitories on campuses, with curfews and entry restrictions. They were not allowed to leave freely or at will. Since factory jobs were less appealing than they were after Reform and Opening Up, rural-urban migrant workers replaced locals in factories. Local people, instead, turned to the new jobs created by the economic growth of Reform and Opening Up and were unwilling to work in factories. This gave rural-urban migrant workers an opportunity to secure a large number of factory jobs (Zhao, 2012, pp. 173–207).

2. 3. 2 Research on Chinese Factory Workers

The exploitation of rural-urban factory workers has received widespread attention from the academic community (Lee, 2023; Lieder and Rashid, 2016). Research findings have revealed that the existence of long working hours, lack of overtime pay, repetitive work, crowded living environments, distance from relatives and friends and the ongoing commitment to modernity in Chinese factories have sometimes induced factory workers

to commit suicide (Farred and Litzinger, 2013; Chan, 2013; Mo et al. , 2020; Sznajder et al. , 2022). Some scholars have pointed out that most factories in China work under ‘despotic factory regimes’ (Burawoy, 1985; Lee, 2007; Shen, 2007). These factories have not reached the stage of ‘coercion makes way for some degree of worker consent’ and often achieve the goal of controlling workers through undisguised exploitation (Burawoy, 1985, p. 5; Lee, 2007; Shen, 2007, pp. 164–165; Guo and Huang, 2007). An empirical case study of jumping deaths in Foxconn factories supported the view that the Foxconn factory's dictatorship is manifested in four aspects. Firstly, Chinese factories are characterised by high labour intensity, long working hours and low wages. Secondly, factory workers’ dormitories have been placed within the factory area, and the dormitories have become an extension of the factory. Thirdly, the relationships among workers are ‘atomic’, with little environment for close cooperation or emotional bonding, as individuals tend to focus solely on their own tasks. Fourthly, factories implement paramilitary management of workers (Pun et al., 2011). Additionally, according to a study on young rural-urban migrant workers, some schools use internships as a pretext to send students to factories and threaten that students; refusing to work in factories would mean they cannot graduate. Students are thus exploited as cheap labour in some workplaces (Pun and Anita, 2015; Chan, Pun and Selden, 2015; Smith and Chan, 2015).

Moreover, research on female factory workers has yielded remarkable results. Pun Ngai conducted ethnographic research on female rural-urban workers. She proposed that global capitalism and patriarchy make up a form of oppression applied to the female factory worker group (Pun, 1999 ; Pun, 2005; Pun and Ren, 2007). Also, researchers have concluded that although female rural-urban migrant workers are active consumers, they try to eliminate their differences in appearance from urban and wealthy people and pursue

a more equal social identity. However, social discrimination against rural-urban migrant workers also exists in the consumption (Yu and Pun, 2008).

In sum, the phenomenon of rural-urban migrant workers has a rich historical and social background. Chinese rural-urban migrant labourers are marginalised and face various obstacles and opportunities in contemporary Chinese society. The plight and vulnerability of migrant workers working in factories have been fully investigated. But, there has been much less research on the complex ways workers engage with, support, and subtly resist the sometimes conflicting demands placed upon them in the twenty-first century. Social media use makes an interest case for this. The next section will introduce the development and related research on social media use in China, providing a detailed description of Chinese social media use as an important background for the research project.

2. 4 Social Media Use in China

Since 2012, China has been the world's largest smartphone market (Li and Seaton, 2015). The total number of smartphone users in China has reached 1.1 billion, and 85.3% of urban residents and 63.8% of rural residents in China use smartphones (CNNIC, 2024). Social media use in China is gradually developing with the expansion of the smartphone market, and smartphones' popularity has created a platform for the development of the social media industry (Craig, Lin and Cunningham, 2021, p.64). Western social media platforms, such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram, are not widely used in China for reasons such as access blocks, content censorship and information control (Taneja and Wu, 2014). Local social media in China dominate the vast market (Hong, 2017, p. 1495; Zhang and Pentina, 2012). Research on the use of social media by factory workers from rural to urban areas can only be better understood by looking into research on Chinese social media. Thus, this section will focus on the existing literature on Chinese social media.

2. 4. 1 Functions and Cultures of Chinese Social Media Platforms

The functions and user bases of social media platforms are diverse to the extent that the cultures of various social media platforms are different or even conflicting. In this subsection, I will list the functions and social media cultures of China's main social media platforms.

2. 4. 1. 1 WeChat

Statistics show that WeChat has 1.38 billion.³ WeChat has a contact function similar to WhatsApp, which allows for one-on-one and chat group communication (Thomala, 2023). In addition to sending messages, WeChat provides profile pages for self-expression, called WeChat Moments. WeChat Moments allow content that can be interacted with to be posted. The content posted in the WeChat Moments is viewable only by people on the user's access list, therefore WeChat Moments are not considered public discussion spaces (McDonald, 2016).

Except for interactive functions, WeChat enables file transfers, payments, credit card payback, loans, financial management, public services, and the sharing of red envelopes (Mu and Lee, 2017; Xu, 2017; Wang and Gu, 2017; Kow, Gui and Cheng, 2017; Chan, 2015; Shen et al. , 2020). WeChat also supports users in accessing 'mini programs' on the WeChat platform. WeChat users can complete a series of daily activities, such as making appointments for clinics, hiring taxis, ordering meals, hiring and playing games, etc. , all without downloading a new app (Hao *et al.*, 2018). In addition, some

³ WeChat allows individual users to register multiple accounts, and institutions can create official public accounts. In addition, non-Chinese users are also able to register WeChat accounts. Therefore, it is reasonable that the number of reported WeChat accounts exceeds the number of Chinese smartphone users. However, the actual number of unique users is likely lower than the official figures published by WeChat.

organisations, such as universities and hospitals, establish WeChat's 'public accounts', and institutions can publish information on public accounts (Gu, Yang and Cao, 2018; Wang and Wu, 2020; Wu et al. , 2018). As Montag, Becker and Gan (2018, p. 2) indicated, 'WeChat must be seen in broader terms than just being social media'. When designing WeChat, Tencent company gave WeChat a neat style, made WeChat keep a professional and serious tone, avoid giving a juvenile and unsophisticated impression, made it popular in the workplace, and made it be a life-and-work two-in-one combined social app (Liu and Wu, 2018; Chen, Mao and Qiu, 2019).

2. 4. 1. 2 Kuaishou/Douyin

Both Kuaishou and Douyin⁴ regard short videos as their main digital products with features such as live broadcasting and textual interaction. The creative content of Kuaishou and Douyin is open to the public. They have different social media cultures, despite having comparable functions. Kuaishou users are mostly from towns and villages. Kuaishou has absorbed marginalised people , adopting 'grassroots' as the future development prospect of Kuaishou culture (Lin and Kloet, 2019; Li, 2020a). Kuaishou is an important content creation space for China's marginalised groups, providing a platform for cultural production based on their life experiences and artistic understanding. However, while it is developing rapidly, it is often labelled as 'tuwei' — translated as 'soil taste' in English — which carries a negative meaning, such as being unsophisticated (Zhou and Liu, 2024) . The main target users of Douyin are urban youth (Chen, 2020). The Douyin platform is used to display a fashionable lifestyle and show users as their

⁴ Douyin and TikTok are both products of ByteDance, and their basic functions are very similar. For better survival in different platform ecosystems, Douyin targets the Chinese market and TikTok targets the international market.

perfect selves (Lu and Lu, 2019). Research shows that Douyin users are more willing to post *xiaozi* content. *Xiaozi*'s direct translation is an abbreviation for the petite bourgeoisie in Chinese. The extended connotation of *xiaozi* in social media creative products is consonant with the tastes and characteristics of the urban middle class (Du et al. , 2020; Peng, 2019).

Increasing attention paid to social media content can expand the potential customer base for online sales and help generate advertising revenue (Craig, Jian and Cunningham, 2021). Creating a close atmosphere and establishing a parasocial relationship with users are common means for Kuaishou and Douyin content creators to attract and retain users (Zhou and Liu, 2022; Sandel and Wang, 2021; Yang and Ha, 2021). Additionally, content creators on both platforms realise the importance of attention in producing content, and there are also slight differences between Kuaishou and Douyin. A large number of Kuaishou content creators lack the skills to attract audiences. They must constantly record every detail of their lives to gain attention at the expense of privacy. Dramatic life experiences, such as unmarried pregnancy, disputes, extreme poverty, and divorce, have become an important way for Kuaishou content creators to retain audiences' attention. Douyin content creators are more inclined to increase their attention by commercialising body symbols and creating hot topics, for example body shape anxiety and age anxiety (Tan et al. , 2020; Li, 2020a; Li, 2020b; Liu, 2020; Zhou and Liu, 2022; Hou and Zhang, 2022).

2. 4. 2 Key Research Themes on Chinese Social Media

In recent years, social media in China has received more scholarly attention. The reference points for research on Chinese social media include the social media market (e. g. , Liu, 2018; Yang and Wang, 2015; Ng, 2014; Yang and Ha, 2021; Wang, Huang and Pérez-Ríos, 2020), the social media fan culture (Zhang and Negus, 2020; Zhang and Fung,

2017; Liao, 2021; Jeffreys and Xu, 2017), rumours and misinformation (Liu, Xu and Chen, 2021; Hou et al. , 2020; Chen et al. , 2021; Liu, Burton-Jones and Xu, 2014), privacy (Yuan, Feng and Danowski, 2013; Yang and Liu, 2014; Shao, Li and Wang, 2022), Wanghong economy (Craig, Lin and Cunningham, 2021; Cao, 2022; Baym, 2021; Han, 2021), and censorship (e. g. Bamman, O'Connor and Smith, 2012; Fan and Guan, 2023).

Ideology dissemination in Chinese social media, online patriotism, localism, and the digital divide are research themes closely related to this project, which will be elucidated in this sub-section.

2.4.2.1 Ideology Dissemination in Chinese Social Media

Social media serves as a platform for the dissemination of ideologies, providing disadvantaged and subcultural groups with a space to voice their perspectives, gain visibility, and achieve empowerment. Primarily, social media has become an important platform for feminists, not only facilitating the dissemination of feminist discourses but also fostering the emergence of localized feminist discourses in China. Feminist discourses from the Western world have had a significant influence on Chinese social media, such as the anti-PUA (Pick-Up Artistry) movement. Pick-up artistry, initially conceived in the US, has gained traction in China as well. PUA (Pick-Up Artistry) is a strategy aimed at fostering intimate relationships, but its main method involves emotional manipulation and controlling the relationship by the “PUAer. “ The person targeted by PUA tactics often experiences a range of negative effects, including low self-esteem, introversion, insecure attachment, and a predisposition to conformity. On social media, many women who have been victims of PUA by their spouses or ex-spouses have shared their experiences, seeking comfort and support. They also aim to raise awareness and advise potential victims to recognize the signs of PUA and escape toxic relationships (Bao, X, 2023; Li et al. , 2023). A more localized online feminist discourse, like the

'sum men' discourse, on social media aggressively criticizes male infidelity and toxic behaviors such as domestic violence, sexual harassment, and gaslighting, with the term being widely used to call out and condemn these actions (Li et al. , 2023; Du, 2024).

Social media helps the Chinese LGBT community promote information, support self-identification, facilitate group connections, provide access to resources that improve quality of life, increase public acceptance of LGBT individuals, and enhance their bargaining power with the state (Yang, 2019; Jiang and Yang, 2022; Wei, 2014) . In addition to empowering the LGBT community on social media, the fantasy culture among girls, including Boy's Love (BL) fiction and animation, also helps challenge traditional heterosexual dominance and creates a more inclusive space for queerness. Although , censorship still limits the expression of sexualities within these LGBT culture productions (Zhou, 2014; Hu et al. , 2022).

Racial discourse has also emerged on Chinese social media, shaped by the Chinese context and historical experiences related to opposing racial discrimination. Cai's investigation into Chinese social media's anti-racism discourse reveals that shared social class identity and imagined Third World solidarity evoke anti-racism sentiments among Chinese netizens. However, multiculturalism and internationalism have less influence on these sentiments (Cai, 2023).

It is worth mentioning that ideological acceptance does not always run smoothly and has its own limitations. Online feminist discourse is developing alongside a trend of stigmatized . and pervasive misogyny, which has significantly contributed to heightened gender tensions (Mao, 2020; Han and Liu, 2024 ; Huang, 2023). The LGBT community in China relies heavily on social media for seeking support and forming connections. However, this support largely remains online and does not significantly translate into

benefits in their offline lives. Offline, LGBT individuals in China are still more likely to encounter problems such as depression (Han et al. , 2019). Racism is still very common, and it is often linked to patriarchy. When Chinese men marry women of other races, it is seen as bringing those women into the Chinese lineage. However, when Chinese women marry men of other races, the women and their children are criticized for losing their 'Chineseness, ' while their spouses are viewed as a threat to it (Zhou, 2024; Wei et al. , 2024)

2. 4. 2. 2 Patriotism and Localism on Chinese Social Media Platforms

The existence of patriotism on Chinese social media platforms has attracted widespread attention. Chinese social media patriotism is characterised by grassroots style, bottom-up spontaneity, and the use of humorous photos and videos (Guo, 2018; Han, 2019; Wang, 2016). Meanwhile, numerous studies have criticised grassroots patriotism on Chinese social media for its extreme populist tendencies, unpredictable nature, misogyny, and impetuosity (Schneider, 2018; Han, 2019; Liu, 2016; Zhao, 2007).

In addition to patriotism, scholars have explored Chinese social media from the perspective of localism. Localism also exists in social media. Social media content creators use dialects, scenic locations, cuisines, memories, and local TV shows and films to depict their hometowns as distinctly local rather than as a part of China. Localism on social media strengthens netizens' sense of belonging and local identity (Wang, 2015; Wang, 2017; Wang and Wu, 2021). In the process of protecting local cultural heritage, social media plays an important role. Citizens showcase local traditional festivals and customs through social media, drawing interest from both within and outside the local community. Through social media, citizens can share their vision of local traditions in local history, making it a valuable source of information for local history and folk custom

research outside of traditional media (Svensson, 2012). Significantly, there is a positive interaction between localism and patriotism on social media. For example, during the pandemic period, local social media accounts reported that local medical staff went to Wuhan for medical assistance. The medical assistance behaviours of local medical staff are intertwined with the ideology of patriotism, enhancing local pride (Wang and Wu, 2021).

2. 4. 2. 3 Digital Divide

Research on the digital divide focuses on multiple levels. The digital divide is the inequality in utilising digital technologies (Ragnedda and Muschert, 2013). The first-level digital divide focuses on internet access, whereas the second- and third-level divides focus on digital abilities and usage patterns among different populations (Ragnedda and Ruiu, 2017; Hargittai, 2002; DiMaggio et al. , 2004). There are multiple levels of the digital divide in the use of social media in China. Scholars studying the generational digital divide have found that elderly individuals use social media less often than young people. This finding negatively impacts the elderly's social integration, information reception and mental health (Zhou, He and Lin, 2022; Liu et al., 2021; Huang, 2020; Cheng et al., 2018). The research results concerning the rural-urban digital divide show that there is still a gap in the affordability of internet infrastructure and electronic equipment between urban and rural areas. Rural residents' social media skills are less developed than those of urban residents, and they use social media less for career advancement and self-teaching (Yan and Schroeder, 2020; Fong, 2009). Research on social media algorithms shows that social demographic characteristics, particularly education and income, have a substantial impact on people's understanding of social media algorithms. High-income and educated groups are more aware of and critical of social media algorithms (Wei and Yan, 2023). Some

scholars have criticised the exclusion of disabled individuals on social media, believing that when using Chinese social media, disabled individuals face a digital divide. The ‘Law on Protection of the Disabled’ in China mandates disabled people's internet access. As of 2008, social media platforms in China need to have inclusive designs for people with disabilities under laws and regulations. However, the current inclusive designs of Chinese social media are far from achieving full access for disabled people (Kent et al. , 2017; Ding and Giannoumis, 2017; Chen, Bong and Li, 2017).

In conclusion, the research on Chinese social media has multiple points of concern and angles. Chinese social media is of considerable importance in modern Chinese society, but the development of Chinese social media also comes with digital inequality. In the next section, the researcher delves deeper into the impact of social media on migration.

2. 5 Social Media and Migration

As this project examines the role of social media in the trajectories of rural-urban migration, this section will focus on the use of social media by migrants. Considering that a large number of migrants worldwide migrate voluntarily due to regional development differences (Ottonelli and Torresi, 2013), this has something in common with Chinese factory workers moving from rural to urban areas, as they also share similar motivations. Therefore, reviewing research on the usage of social media by migrants across borders has referential value for this project. This section examines research on the use of social media by migrants both internationally and nationally in China. Particular attention is paid to Chinese rural-urban migrant workers using social media.

2. 5. 1 Social Media and Transnational Migration

This section will review migrants' use of social media across borders. Considering that rural-urban migrant workers in China are voluntary migrants, the sub-section mainly analyses the use of social media by voluntary migrants. The researcher does not consider the literature on refugees and other forced migrants. Some international migrants are motivated by political reasons and social structural factors. Although their migration is not coercive, it is inappropriate to regard them as voluntary migrants in a narrow sense (Bakewell, 2021).

2. 5. 1. 1 Communication

Social media has influenced the maintenance and construction of social networks for migrants. Firstly, social media connects migrants to their origins. Numerous studies have shown that social media helps migrants maintain contact with their relatives and friends in their hometowns (Madianou, 2012; Nedelcu, 2012; Parreñas, 2005; Wilding, 2006). While social media allows migrants to maintain ties with their origins, it also hinders them in some instances from integrating into their destinations. A study of Filipino and Polish migrants in Ireland examined the dynamic relationship between staying connected with their original communities and integrating into their new destinations. The study pointed out that social media helps migrants participate remotely in their original communities, but participation in the original community can negatively impact their integration process in their new domicile (Komito, 2011). In addition, some queer studies have indicated that homosexual migrants maintain contact with homosexual netizens in their original location through dating apps based in their home area. Dating apps in their place of origin give homosexual migrants a sense of belonging but reduce their participation in local queer activities and limit their integration into the destination's

homosexual communities (Li, 2020; Alinejad and Ponzanesi, 2020). Secondly, social media helps in the mending of broken or weakened relationships. Existing research indicates that, to obtain support in the new locality, some potential migrants use social media to reconnect with relatives and acquaintances (Dekker and Engbersen, 2014; Ellison et al. , 2007; Hiller and Franz, 2004). Thirdly, social media promotes economic communication. A study found that Chinese mainland women who migrated to Taiwan engaged in cross-strait economic trade through social media, creating a cross-regional social network based on business needs (Zani, 2018).

2. 5. 1. 2 Information Seeking

Social media also provides information support to migrants, both as a supplement to social networks and as a way to reduce their dependence on social relationships. Migrants and potential migrants use social media as a source of information. They get their home country's information through social media and use social media to learn about daily life, services, immigration rights, education, housing, employment, medical care, and other related information in their new locality (Lee, Jaruperechachan and Tseng, 2022; Komito and Bates, 2011; Akakpo and Bokpin, 2021; Hidayati, 2019; Hein de Haas, 2010). Research by Dekker and Engbersen (2014) showed that social media use can democratise knowledge as an open source of information, allowing potential illegal migrants to collect information. Social media information is crucial to the survival of illegal migrants without official support channels in their new situation (Dekker and Engbersen, 2014). According to research on Maltese migrants by Cassar, Gauci and Bacchi (2016), All of European migrants, non-European voluntary migrants, and refugees use social media to collect information, but the focus of information collection varies depending on actual needs. In addition, potential migrants may use social media to seek immigration and destination

information from strangers who are natives of the locality if they need support. Information from strangers reduces the costs and risks of migration and drives subsequent migration (Dekker and Engbersen, 2014; Thulin and Vilhelmson, 2014; Dekker, Engbersen and Faber, 2015).

2. 5. 1. 3 Empowerment

Research shows that social media empowers migrants to express their political aspirations, influence policies, organise protests and report abuse and discrimination (Kissau, 2012; Oiarzabal and Reips, 2012; Smales, 2011; Minu and Sun, 2011; Janta and Ladkin, 2013). Wijaya, Watson and Bruce's (2018) research findings on Indonesian migrant workers suggests that social media empowers Indonesian migrants individually and collectively. At the individual level, migrant workers can learn the skills needed in the host country and about labour rights through social media to better deal with social challenges. At the collective level, social media makes migrant groups more cohesive and capable of taking collective action to influence policies. Nduhura, Kim and Mumporeze (2019) conducted research on foreign brides in South Korea, echoing Watson and Bruce's argument that social media serves as an important channel for the empowerment of female migrants in structurally weak positions. Foreign brides can better navigate Korean society by learning about their rights and self-protection skills on social media. At the same time, foreign brides can use social media to voice their political views and receive timely assistance from foreign bride groups if abused.

2. 5. 1. 4 Emotion and Psychology

The effects of social media on cross-border migrants' emotions and psychology are becoming more widely studied. Firstly, migrant workers can receive emotional support

from home families and friends via social media, which alleviates the anxiety caused by migration and this promotes their well-being (Nduhura, Kim and Mumporeze, 2019; Benítez, 2012; Watson and Bruce, 2018; Bacigalupe and Cámara, 2012). However, social media may not alleviate all migrant anxiety. In research on the use of ICT by male migrants, contacting their families via ICT reminds them of the responsibility of providing for a family, thereby increasing their stress levels (Chib, Wilkin and Hua, 2013). As a tool for family communication, social media may also increase the stress on all migrants for similar reasons. Secondly, migrants can develop a sense of ‘co-presence’ and ‘togetherness at distance’ with their families in their original places through social media, which gives them the experience of transactional emotional intimacy (Baldassar et al. , 2016; Baldassar, 2016; Itō et al. , 2005; Nedelcu and Wyss, 2016; Alinejad, 2019; Madianou, 2016). Thirdly, social media is an important outlet for migrants to vent their emotions. Georgalou’s (2020) study of Greek migrants illustrated that migrants can express their feelings about their home country, migration process, relatives and friends and host country lives to the public in an emotional way through social media.

2. 5. 1. 5 Identity Recognition

Existing research has found that migrants negotiate and express their identities through social media. They realise their online profile in both host and home countries can be monitored, therefore they will use content management and access rights management to present different identities to different audiences (Yau, Marder and O'Donohoe, 2020; Higgins, 1987; Leary and Kowalski, 1995). In addition, identity recognition and methods of expression vary across social media platforms. Using South Korean migrants in Germany as an example, it can be observed that they draw on Korean identity narratives when expressing their views against racism on general web platforms, while on Facebook

and Twitter, they tend to adopt broader East Asian identity narratives and express their anti-racist views in a more emotional tone. (Park and Gerrits, 2021).

2. 5. 2 Social Media and Rural-Urban Migration in China

In the previous sub-section, the researcher outlined the international use of social media by migrants. Considering that this project studies the use of social media by rural-urban migrants in China, from this sub-section onwards, the researcher focuses on China. This sub-section provides information on the use of social media by rural-urban migrant workers in China.

2.5.2.1 The Maintenance and Establishment of Social Relationships through Social Media

Social media helps rural-urban migrant workers maintain relationships. Numerous empirical studies have shown that rural–urban migrants, along with their friends and people from the same hometown, use social media to maintain social relationships (Wang, 2016; McDonald, 2016; Zheng, 2023). Additionally, social media has enabled some collective folk customs and religious activities to take place online , which also provides more opportunities for interaction between migrant workers and their rural social networks. Although social media enables rural-urban migrant workers to overcome the technical barriers to connecting, social media cannot compensate for the impact of distance on social relationships. Rural-urban migrant workers have gradually distanced themselves from people of their original home due to lack of ongoing shared experiences and changes in mentality. They can abandon some weak relationships, even when technical means provide support for maintaining relationships (Wang, 2016; , 2016).

Some scholars have found that rural-urban migrant workers can display what they want on social media, thus diminishing their identities as outsiders and allowing them to communicate on a more equal footing with local people, which increases the likelihood of good relationships between rural-urban migrant workers and local people (Zheng, 2023). Social media provides rural-urban migrant workers with channels to obtain social capital, (Zhang, 2017; Wang, 2001) by facilitating the establishment of social relationships with local residents (Zheng, 2023). However, the social relationships established through social media are not stable. In the process of transferring social relationships from online to offline, the hidden identity dichotomy between locals and rural-urban migrants reappears and social relationships may not thrive (Shu, 2018).

2. 5. 2. 2 Social Media, Identity Construction and Self-presentation of Rural-Urban Migrant Workers

Rural-urban migrant workers' social media identity construct has also received attention. Cao and Li (2018) found that female rural migrant workers use social media to share their work experience with each other. In this process, female rural-urban migrant workers are being crystallised as a collective identity. Female migrant workers, as a collective identity, are the basis for their resistance to stigmatisation, oppression, and the development of a labour culture. Zheng (2023, p. 80) stated that under the guidance of urban social media information, the new generation of rural-urban migrant workers has modified their cultural codes to match the urban lifestyle. This is a process of re-socialisation and identity formation for rural-urban migrant workers. While changing their cultural code, rural-urban migrant workers are shaping a new self. Some scholars believe that rural-urban migrant workers can deliberately present different online identities from those offline. Online identities often reflect what users want to be, not what they are. In Wang's

case study, female rural-urban migrants went to a photography studio to have artistic photos in evening dresses taken; they then shared these photos on social media. Wang believes that this is far different from their actual lives; rather than recording their real youth on social media, they have created a different version of their young lives on social media (Wang, 2016, pp. 178–179).

2. 5. 2. 3 Social Media and the Urban Integration of Rural-Urban Migrant Workers

The integration of rural-urban migrant workers is closely related to the development of social relations in the areas to which they have re-located, and identity recognition. Statistical results of Wei and Gao (2017), verified the relationship between socialising with locals and urban integration. Social media helps rural-urban migrant workers communicate with residents, enhancing their sense of urban belonging and satisfaction. Zheng (2023) also mentioned this in his research on rural-urban migrant workers' identity construct through social media. Social media can guide rural-urban migrant workers to a new understanding and shaping of their identities. Establishing an urban identity for rural-urban migrant workers is very important for their integration into cities. In addition, Zhang Pengyi' quantitative research combined rural-urban migrant workers' social media empowerment with social inclusion in his study. He concluded that social media leads to both social inclusion and social exclusion. Social integration is reflected in the fact that social media serves as a platform that allows rural-urban migrant workers to collaborate with each other and to centralise survival resources. Social media can enable grassroots elites of rural-urban migrant workers to help rural-urban migrant workers better integrate into the city. Social exclusion is reflected in the fact that it is difficult for rural-urban migrant workers to become opinion leaders on social media because of various disadvantages, such as a lack of online influence and visibility. Social media use cannot address offline practical problems, including temporary employment, unemployment,

discrimination, and wage arrears - all issues experienced by rural-urban migrant workers (Zhang, 2013).

2. 5. 2. 4 *Social Media and Rural-Urban Migrant Workers in Chinese Factories*

The manufacturing industry has attracted a large number of rural-urban migrant employees, and this project treats rural-urban migrant workers in the manufacturing industry as the main research participants. Therefore, social media use by manufacturing workers will be discussed in detail.

Social media has become an essential platform on which rural-urban migrant factory workers can forge a new identity, showcasing their experiences and progress in the digital space. In the 2000s, the *shamate* subculture emerged among young rural-urban migrant workers. This group was characterised by their flamboyant punk hairstyles, exaggerated fashion, and collective activities that often involved gathering in urban public spaces to seek attention and express their individuality. Young rural-urban migrants embraced the *shamate* style as a form of resistance against the emptiness and exploitation they experienced in their work lives. By adopting this flamboyant appearance, they asserted their individuality and expressed a unique identity amidst challenging factory working conditions. When *shamate* culture was at its peak, it gained prominence through social media, where it was widely shared and at times, stigmatised. Today, with the decline of *shamate* culture, it has become a symbol of nostalgia, representing a formative memory of the early stages of Chinese social media (Tao and Donald, 2015; Li, 2019). The *Sanhedashen* is a group of homeless rural-urban migrants in China who survive on extremely low budgets. They sustain their lifestyle by taking short-term day labour jobs and follow a philosophy of "working one day and playing for three days". Sanhe Dashen represents a migrant anti-factory culture, rejecting capitalist exploitation by refusing to

conform to the expectations of being 'good' labourers. Their existence has become a topic of discussion in Chinese social media (Peng, 2021; Dong, 2022; Lin et al., 2024).

Some researchers focus on that social media empowers online group resistance. Qiu (2014) studied the online resistance movement after the Foxconn factory's scandal of numerous factory workers jumping off workplace buildings. Qiu noticed that Foxconn workers began producing 'worker-generated content' online themselves. Factory workers uploaded incidents of security staff hitting workers, collective violence and workers threatening the workplace by trying to jump from a building on the internet. This content triggered worldwide attention and contributed to getting new social supports. Wang Jianhua (2011) analysed the online mobilisation of equipment manufacturer factory workers. He pointed out that the internet is an intermediary for workers to mobilise, plays a role in communicating with internal and external parties and forges 'factory worker' as a collective identity. Wang believes that the role of social media in the online collective struggle of factory workers can be summarised as establishing contacts, discussing strategies, sharing experiences, and mobilising them instantly. Peng and Choi also found that manufacturing workers in different employment positions have different mobile phone use policies, resulting in different patterns of mobile phone-based resistance. Management strictly prohibits workers on the assembly line from using mobile phones, while ignoring workers in the hardware department using mobile phones and forcing workers without fixed workplaces to use mobile phones. Workers on the assembly line secretly use mobile phones to question the legitimacy of the factory's different phone management measures for workers in different positions. Workers in the hardware department strive to use mobile phones in compliance, while workers without fixed locations pretend not to receive messages and evade management supervision (Peng and Choi, 2013).

In summary, extensive research has shown that the use of social media is widespread during the migration process. The existence of social media has changed the meaning of distance and space for migrants. However, existing qualitative empirical research on the use of social media by Chinese rural-urban migrant workers mostly comes from the contributions of a few scholars. Most research in this field lacks solid qualitative data support.

In conclusion, research on the use of social media by rural-urban migrant workers should be conducted within a social and institutional background, as well as taking into account the complex life situations these workers face, in order to fully understand the role Chinese social media plays in their migration trajectories. While social media platforms in China have specific realities, in social media activities, such as building social networks, obtaining information, and fostering empowerment, they exhibit commonalities between Chinese rural-urban migrant workers and voluntary migrants in other parts of the world.

This literature review found that existing research on social media use by Chinese rural-urban migrants often focuses on their connections to either the location they have left, or that to which they have migrated. However, the mechanisms through which social media enable Chinese rural-urban migrant workers to simultaneously maintain connections with both rural and urban societies remain underexplored. Also, the literature review found that empirical qualitative research results about the social media usage of Chinese rural-urban migrant workers are limited to only a few scholars. In this research field, more in-depth qualitative analysis is required.

Chapter 3. Conceptual Framework: Migrants' Embeddedness in Origin and Destination

In this research, 'embeddedness' is employed to examine the research topic. Scholars embarked on a theoretical journey by applying the concept of embeddedness, initially 'embeddedness' was established by Polanyi (1944) in *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time* as an institutional economics concept. The original concept of embeddedness recognised that economic activities are rooted in non-economic arrangements; economic actions are socially hosted, politically mediated, and institutionally regulated (Peck, 2013b; Peck, 2013a). Then, 'embeddedness' developed by Mark Granovetter (1985) in *Economic Action and Social Structure: The Problem of Embeddedness* as a socio-economic concept, to migration research. In economic sociology, the concept of embeddedness emphasises that economic activities are deeply rooted in social relationships, with social and economic interactions intertwined within the market system. Economic behaviours are embedded in networks of ongoing social relations (Dale, 2011). In the development of the concept, a key principle is maintained: economic activities are embedded within broader social contexts. In migration research, embeddedness retains its core principle of being embedded in broader society and gains further significance by encompassing diverse aspects of migrants' situations. This provides a more comprehensive framework for analysing migrant embeddedness, extending beyond merely economic dimensions. As migrants can maintain connections with individuals both at their places of origin and destinations (Tsuda, 2012), they overcome space constraints, embedding both their origin and destination in multiple layers (Levitt and Jaworsky, 2007). In the research field of transnational migration and internal migration, scholars have begun to pay attention to migrants' dual embeddedness

and to explore the mechanisms behind it (Faist, 2000; Levitt and Jaworsky, 2007; Levitt, 2001; Portes, 1999; Portes et al. , 1999;).

3. 1 Transnational Migrants' Embeddedness

The embedding of receiving places and sending places simultaneously by transnational migrants is a common phenomenon. For instance, case studies of middle-aged and low-skilled migrant domestic workers (Filipinos, Poles, Albanians, Ukrainians, and Peruvians) in Italy (Boccagni, 2017), Polish migrants in London (Ryan, 2018), and Caribbean migrants in the USA (Basch et al. , 1992; Glick Schiller and Fouron, 1999; Glick Schiller and Fouron, 2001) suggest that transnational migrants living in the host country maintain and create relationships with their home country across borders, while engaging in the host country's society simultaneously.

But the mechanisms of the dual embeddedness behind this phenomenon are not consistent. Tsuda reviewed the dual embeddedness literature. He indicates that, in some circumstances, the engagement with the host country and the embeddedness in the country of origin run in parallel and do not directly affect each other; in other cases, migrants' engagement in both societies may be either in a zero-sum relationship or mutually reinforcing (Tsuda, 2012).

Some studies have shown that engagement in the original country and the host country is a zero-sum relationship. Economically, remitting money to home countries reduces migrant investment in host countries. On the other hand, if migrants spend more of their income to improve their lives in host societies, remittances will decline (Marcelli and Lowell, 2005; Rodolfo and Lowell, 2002; Suro, 2005). The more time, energy, and resources migrants spend on their home country's politics, the less they can contribute to the host country's politics (Ø stergaard Nielsen, 2003; Glick Schiller and Fouron, 1999).

Socially, if migrants are discriminated against, marginalised, and have no opportunity for upward social mobility in host countries, they will maintain tight relationships with their home countries to compensate for reputation and social status not obtained in host countries (Levitt, 2001; Itzigsohn and Saucedo, 2002; Portes, 1999; Portes et al. , 1999;). If migrants gradually succeed economically and integrate into the host countries, then their connections and attachments to their home countries will decrease (Itzigsohn and Saucedo, 2002). Culturally, greater consumption of home country culture may potentially lead to reduced engagement with host society culture, as resources for cultural consumption are limited (Tsuda, 2012).

There are also studies that have found the opposite results. These studies point out that engagement with the original countries and the host countries can have a mutually reinforcing relationship. In terms of the economy, migrants are more capable of carrying out economic activities in their home countries after obtaining sufficient economic capital in host countries (Portes et al. 2007; Portes 2003). In terms of politics, migrants with resources, high social status, and citizenship in host countries are more capable of participating in the politics of home countries (Itzigsohn and Saucedo, 2002; Guarnizo et al., 2008). Also, participation in bilateral political issues between the host country and the home country is mutually reinforcing of dual embeddedness in a political context (Guarnizo and D'az, 1999). Socially, maintaining connections with home nations can boost migrants' national pride and self-worth, help them cope with marginalisation in host countries, and improve their integration (Smith, 2006; Portes, 1999). From a cultural perspective, in some cases, cultural consumption may not require significant additional resources. For example, a TV subscription, once purchased, can provide access to content from both home and host cultures. In such instances, consuming one culture may not diminish engagement with the other; rather, it may enhance it by facilitating easier access to both (Tsuda, 2012).

Studies have shown that transnational migrants' ability to engage in origin and destination countries is limited by external social structures and their own circumstances, which influence their goals and migration plans (Ryan, 2018; Boccagni, 2017). Moreover, the participation of migrants in their countries of origin is also considered a reciprocal behaviour. In the process of simultaneously embedding in origins and settlements, transnational migrants send remittances to their home countries, and relatives who stay in home countries form reciprocal relationships with transnational migrants by managing migrants' housing investments and taking care of their children in home countries (Glick-Schiller and Faist, 2009; Mazzucato, 2011).

In Chinese transnational migration studies, embeddedness is noted. Research by Ceccagno and Gao (2023) in Italy shows that Chinese migrants seek transnationally embedded opportunities for skills training, as access to training is more readily available in China than in Italy for Chinese migrants. They return to China for skills training, enhancing their ability to improve their competitiveness in the Italian job market and settle down there. Ren and Liu (2015) indicate that Chinese immigrant entrepreneurs are dually embedded in both China and Singapore, with economic and social resources in each location mutually reinforcing each other. Although they obtain Singaporean citizenship and acquire local knowledge, cultural understanding, and social skills, they also benefit from business information, market insights, and support from social networks in China. By leveraging resources from both China and Singapore, Chinese immigrant entrepreneurs enhance their business survival and success.

3.2 Internal Migrant's Embeddedness

Compared with transnational migrants, there are fewer existing studies on internal/rural-urban migrants and their connections with people at their original domiciles and at their

destinations. Research in Vietnam, India, and Thailand has found that many rural-urban migrants reside in cities for a long time and insinuate themselves into urban lives. The majority of them, however, still tend to accumulate social capital in their rural hometowns, send remittances to their rural hometowns, and travel between rural and urban areas (Anh et al, 2012 ; ICSSR, 2011 ; Osaki, 2003). Studies of rural-urban migrants conducted in Vietnam found that female rural-urban migrant workers are influenced by gender roles and family responsibilities, making greater efforts to develop close contact with their place of origin, while maintaining a relatively low level of urban embeddedness (Agergaard and Thao, 2011; Tien and Ha, 2001).

Research on embeddedness in the context of Chinese rural-urban migration is limited, with only a few studies addressing this topic. Cheung (2020) has studied the Miao ethnic community from Guizhou province , focusing on their migration to the Pearl River Delta (coastal China). She found that Miao migrant associations organise ethnic festivals and cultural heritage events, which help maintain and strengthen the ethnic identity of Miao migrant workers. These activities rekindle and reinforce their ethnic consciousness while also creating Miao network linkages that channel labour, culture, and capital flows between the Pearl River Delta and their hometowns. This process secures the Miao migrants' embeddedness in both their new locations and their hometowns. Zhu and his colleagues studied the return-home entrepreneurial intentions of Chinese rural-urban migrants. They found that these intentions are characterized by mixed and multi-layered embeddedness within the economic, social, and institutional contexts of both their rural homeland and urban destination. In rural hometowns, kinship and high-quality social relationships in addition to kinship help returning migrants establish and sustain businesses. Migrants also have easier access to financial capital, market information, and institutional support due to migration experiences. Meanwhile, their experience in urban

destinations motivates them, as they are inspired by the entrepreneurial success and culture around them, which helps them to develop an entrepreneurial mindset (Zhu et al. , 2023). A few researchers have discussed the situation of the secondary generation of rural-urban migrant workers in China, highlighting that these workers experience ‘de-embeddedness’ from both their rural hometowns and urban destinations. Their human capital, self-identity, and career aspirations are more aligned with urban environments, but their economic status, limited job opportunities, and inability to fully access public services and other disadvantages result in their marginalization in urban areas. This creates a situation where they are not fully embedded in their rural hometowns but are also unable to fully embed themselves in urban society (Huang, 2014; Jin and Yang, 2023; Qiu and He, 2024).

3.3 Chinese Rural to Urban Migrant Workers: One-Sided Embeddedness and Types of Embeddedness Research

A group of researchers may not specifically focus on dual embeddedness, but their work is closely related to the embeddedness status of Chinese rural-urban migrant workers. Their research can serve as a valuable supplementary source for the conceptual framework chapter and is therefore included here.

There are scholars in the field of Chinese rural-urban migrant worker research focusing on either the rural or urban side. Zeng and Li (2018) have designed an urban embeddedness scale to measure the *shiminhua* (urbanization) of Chinese rural-urban migrant workers. The scale includes 29 project indicators and identifies two second-order factors: the pull of city embeddedness and the push of city embeddedness. It also identifies five first-order factors, namely sense of welfare, sense of linkage, sense of support, sense of deprivation, and sense of gap. Zhang and Yang (2022) found that rural

embeddedness is maintained through returning to and visiting one's hometown, owning a house in the rural hometown, participating in collective dividends, and having rural settlement plans. These activities deepen rural embeddedness, leading migrants to feel stronger moral responsibilities and social norms, which, in turn, enhance their tendency to offer charitable donations in their rural hometowns.

Some scholars investigate specific types of embeddedness in the field of Chinese rural-urban migrant workers. Zhang and colleagues studied the social networks of Chinese rural-urban migrant workers, dividing their social network embeddedness into four types: kinship social network, organizational social network, instrumental social network, and self-built social network. Luan and Wan (2018) studied the job embeddedness of Chinese rural-urban migrant workers and found a correlation between job embeddedness and turnover rates: lower job embeddedness is associated with higher turnover rates. They also identified internal differences within rural-urban migrants, with this trend being most evident among male, younger workers from well-developed rural hometowns.

Chinese rural-urban migrant workers are embedded in multiple aspects of both their rural hometowns and urban destinations, as mentioned to some extent in previous research. However, the mechanisms underlying this embeddedness remain underexplored and insufficiently explained. Despite the widespread presence of embeddedness in the experiences of Chinese rural-urban migrant workers, relevant studies are relatively limited and lack depth.

Chapter 4. Methodology

This project explores various aspects of the role of social media in factory workers' rural-urban migration trajectories in China. Qualitative research can reveal participants' migration experiences and their use and perceptions of social media during the migrant process (Ritchie and Ormston, 2014, pp. 32–36). This can help researchers understand how participants view social media's role in migration. Qualitative research can also assist researchers in comprehending participants' personal backgrounds and the research site's social-cultural environment, which allows for a deeper exploration of participants' inner emotional experiences (Stiles, 1999). Under the umbrella of a qualitative approach, this study uses semi-structured interviews as the research method. I will explain the research site and research method in the following sub-sections.

4. 1 Research Site and Participants

To ensure research data is fully sufficient and representative, careful consideration is given to the selection of research sites and participants. Next, I will provide a detailed explanation of why the chosen research site is the most suitable for this study and outline the participant recruitment process, including necessary adjustments based on practical realities.

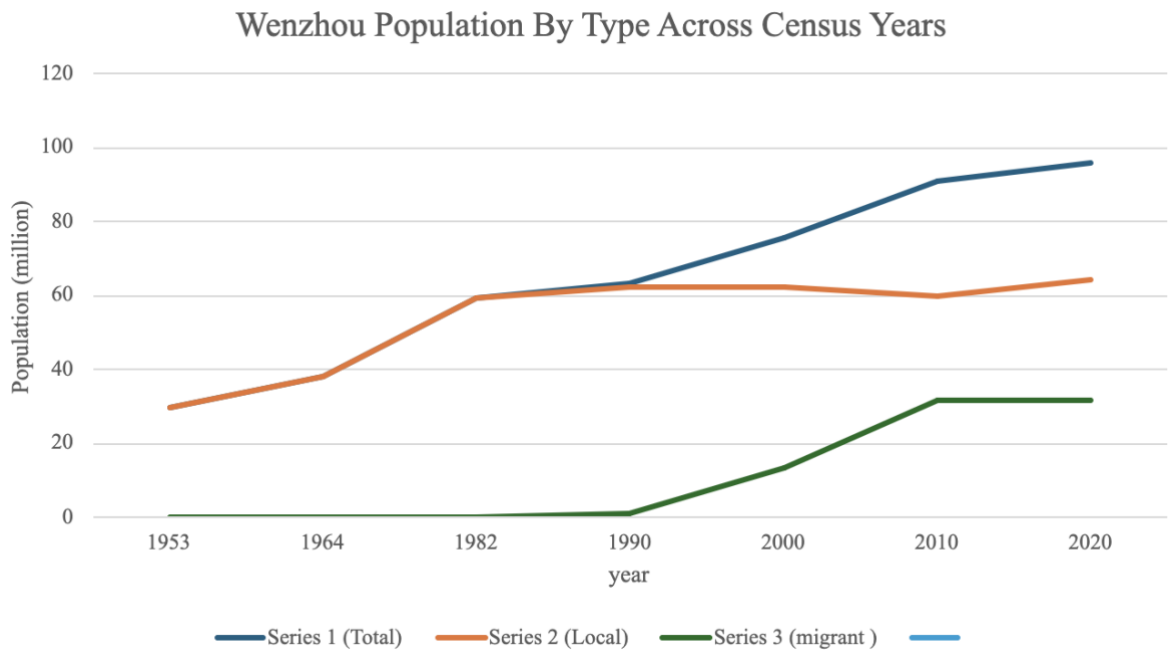
4. 1. 1 Research Site

I carried out the fieldwork in Wenzhou City, Zhejiang Province. Wenzhou was selected as the research site because it is a well-known destination for rural-urban migrant workers (Lin and Gaubatz, 2017). Furthermore, I have lived in Wenzhou for around ten years and have developed an understanding of the local business culture and social norms, which facilitated data collection (Tanu and Dales, 2015; Brannick and Coghlan, 2007).

Wenzhou city is representative of privatisation and entrepreneurship; it is known as the birthplace of China's private economy (Lin and Gaubatz, 2017). Since the Reform and Opening up policy of 1978, Wenzhou has promoted private economy and it was one of the first coastal cities to open up to the outside world. The first individual business licence and the first private enterprise regulations in China both originated in Wenzhou (Zhang, 2019). Light industry is the most significant driver of Wenzhou's economy, the city is a major production hub of 'Made in China' goods. The most recent disclosure of light industrial output value was ¥146.982 billion (Wenzhou Municipal Bureau of Statistics, 2013). The strength of light industry has led to the establishment of a large number of factories in Wenzhou and a high demand for rural-urban migrant workers. Wenzhou has received over 3.376 million rural-urban migrant workers, and the proportion of rural-urban migrant workers in the total population of Wenzhou has reached 35% (Lin and Gaubatz, 2015; Lin and Gaubatz, 2017; Xu, 2011; Wang, 2009). Rural-urban migrant workers mainly come from provinces with high population density, such as Hunan, Hubei, Guizhou, Jiangxi, Anhui, and Sichuan (cnr, 2008).



(Ministry of Natural Resources of the People’s Republic of China, n.d.)



(Wenzhou Municipal Bureau of Statistics, 2024,p.436)

4. 1. 2 Sample and Research Site Criteria

I contacted Wenzhou's industrial associations and requested their assistance in reaching out to factory owners. Wenzhou's industrial associations had information about local factories, which helped me determine which factory was most suitable as the research site. When selecting the factory, it met the following criteria: firstly, the factory was operating smoothly and had been in operation for more than ten years. Secondly, the factory employed rural-urban migrant workers of different ages and genders, and from different hometowns, allowing me to select participants to form a sample that reflected the composition of the rural-urban migrant worker population.

I conducted semi-structured interviews with participants. The sample consisted of rural-urban migrant workers employed at the factory site. Migrants and locals are relative concepts. In this project, I used Wenzhou city as the boundary, defining factory workers from outside Wenzhou as migrants. Due to the shared dialect and culture within Wenzhou, there is a strong sense of Wenzhou identity among people from different districts of the city. People from outside Wenzhou are referred to as 'nyang dei nang' in the Wenzhou dialect ('waidiren' in Mandarin and 'outsider' in English). The definition of rural-urban migrant workers in this study was based on the subjective perception of 'nyang dei nang,' commonly used in Wenzhou. In addition, rural-urban migrant worker participants were required to hold a non-Wenzhou agricultural hukou — that is, their hukou had to meet two conditions: it had to be registered outside Wenzhou and be classified as agricultural.

For the semi-structured interviews, I selectively recruited interviewees to ensure that rural-urban migrant worker participants of different genders, hometowns, age groups, educational levels, and skills were included. The selection of the sample reflected the composition of the rural-urban migrant worker population, making the sample

representative (Meyer and Mayrhoer, 2022). I applied to the factory's human resources department for access to employee information to select suitable rural-urban migrant workers as potential candidates for interviews. Then I issued interview invitations to potential participants, attaching the consent form.

4. 1. 3 Research Site Access and Participant Recruitment

With the assistance of Wenzhou's industrial associations, I obtained permission to access a factory which fully met the research site criteria. At the time of the study, the factory had been operating for over 12 years, employed 77 assembly line workers, imported toys from outside China, and served customers in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. Based on the factory's roster from March 2024, the average age of the assembly line workers was approximately 37 years. However, the factory experiences a high turnover rate, with many older workers leaving after the Spring Festival and new workers being hired. As a result, some basic statistical figures about the factory's workforce and general conditions are in a state of flux.

Three notable observations can be made: firstly, a significant portion of the factory's workers are from Guizhou province. Guizhou is one of the main labour resource provider provinces for Wenzhou, and when workers from Guizhou are hired, they often act as pioneer migrants, via social media and offline, introducing more relatives and fellow villagers from Guizhou to the factory, gradually forming a high percentage of Guizhou workers in the factory. Secondly, on the assembly line, female workers outnumber male workers. As previous research has mentioned, factory work is gendered, with female workers often portrayed as more obedient, patient, and better suited for assembly line tasks. This preference for female workers in the factory aligns with findings from earlier studies (Pun, 2005). Thirdly, most workers in the factory are married, accounting for 95%

of the workforce. According to the factory's HR department, there is a preference for hiring married individuals who support families, as this reduces turnover rates. Such workers are less likely to leave, because they need a stable income to financially support their families and because they are perceived to be more hardworking and resilient. The national average age of rural–urban migrant workers is 43.1, with over 80% being married. This indicates that the majority of migrant workers are married nationwide, which further explains why married workers make up the majority in this factory.

I collected data not in a short time, but through a few steps, completed over an extended period.

The first step involved physically visiting the research site factory in March 2024. I established contact with the management team, from whom I obtained the staff roster, the assembly workers' shift schedule, and salary information.

In the second phase, I spent one and a half months conducting interviews with assembly line workers in the factory. Thirty assembly line workers agreed to participate in the research. However, as required by their work schedules, their time on the assembly line was very limited, and they could not give me individual interview slots. As a result, all the interviews were conducted either during assembly production processes or during participants' lunch and dinner breaks.

The third step involved returning to the University of Leeds, where I have monthly supervision meetings with my supervisors. During these meetings, I received feedback, and over the course of six months, I gradually identified areas of insufficient data and lacking. For data saturation, I reconnected with some participants to ask further questions via social media. Additionally, with the help of previous participants, I conducted online

interviews with 11 new participants. Online interviews help manage travel and time costs, improve data collection efficiency, and make it easier to schedule appointments despite time zone differences and location constraints.

The full process took nearly 7 months, which I interviewed 41 participants. Among the participants, were 24 female, and 17 male workers. Of these, 21 participants were from Guizhou province, while the remaining participants originated from various provinces, including Anhui, Hunan, Yunnan, Jiangxi, Hubei, Shandong, Sichuan, Chongqing, Fujian, and less developed areas of Zhejiang. The average age of the participants was 37.6 years. The participants were predominantly married—38 were married, and only 3 were single or divorced. With their consent, the content of these conversations was incorporated into the research data. To protect participants' privacy, all individuals in this research are referred to by pseudonyms.

For more details of participant demographics, see Appendix 1.

4.2 Data Collection and Data Analysis

4.2.1 Data Collection: Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews allowed me to ask supplementary questions based on the participants' responses (Flick, 2017). The semi-structured interview outline guided the overall direction of the interviews (Kallio et al. , 2016). Care was taken to ensure that participants' superiors were not involved in the interviews to prevent restrictions on them expressing their true feelings. The average interview duration was 40 minutes. Thematic analysis was applied to analyse the collected interview materials. With the participants' permission, I prepared a voice recorder that could record interviews into WAV files at 96khz/24bits (Winick and Bartis, 2016). I used the voice recorder to record the interviews.

At the beginning of the semi-structured interview, I obtained basic information from the participants such as place of origin, age, marital status, and number/type of family members. This information provided me with the necessary background for participants' use of social media, enabling me to better identify points that could be further explored in the interview. Afterwards, I inquired about the participants' use of social media, which social media platforms they used on a daily basis, and their specific experiences and feelings about using social media. Next, I will introduce my interview questions in detail:

4. 2. 1. 1 Work Experience and Training Experience

Discussing and analysing work experience and training experience via social media can provide deeper insights into rural-urban migrants' upward mobility opportunities and the benefits they gain in urban settings. This helps to better understand their urban embeddedness status. To understand the role of social media in the urban embeddedness of rural-urban migrant workers, I focused on the types of information on social media that empower rural-urban migrant workers. In the interviews, questions were related to the following areas : How do social media help participants gain more opportunities in the workplace? How do participants use social media to learn about labour rights protection? How can participants access learning and training materials on social media to help their career development? What financial and time investments have been made in the process of training through social media, and are they satisfied with the outcomes? how do social media serve as an emotional release for factory workers experiencing negative emotions?

4. 2. 1. 2 Left-Behind Dilemma

As a large number of previous studies show, the presence of left-behind individuals often increases the attachment of rural-urban migrant workers to their home towns. By examining the experiences of rural-urban migrant workers via social media communication with the left-behind, I can gain a better understanding of rural-urban

migrant workers' rural embeddedness. In the interviews, questions cover relevant areas: Do participants communicate with their families through social media? If using social media to communicate with family, what kind of social media are used, and what form does the communication take? Do participants communicate with their rural community through social media? If using social media to communicate with the community, what kind of social media are used and what form does the communication take?

4. 2. 1. 3 Leisure

(Social media's obvious function as a leisure activity offers a significant perspective on migration trajectories. Examining social media leisure activities is important in providing a comprehensive understanding of the role social media play in the migrant trajectories of rural-urban migrant workers. What information did participants receive on social media to help them understand the city's lifestyle and social norms? Have participants experienced discrimination and false information on social media, and how have these experiences impacted their integration into their new location and reduced their sense of belonging to their new place of residence? How do social media influence participants' understanding of modern ideologies?

4. 2. 2 Data Analysis

I used thematic analysis. During the analysis process, I used Nvivo to improve efficiency. Thematic analysis can systematically identify, organise, and provide insight into patterns of meaning across a dataset (Braun and Clarke, 2023). The process of data analysis is as follows:

Stage 1: Data Management

The first step in data management is 'Familiarisation'; I immersed myself in the data, familiarised myself with the data, and identified themes of interest. The second step is

constructing an initial thematic framework. I listed initial themes and sub-themes based on the research questions and the ‘embeddedness’ conceptual base, then assembled the themes and sub-themes into an initial thematic framework. The third step is indexing and sorting. This step is also known as ‘topic coding’ (Saldana, 2009). I labelled and sorted data, and subsequently analysed similar labelled data together (Spencer et al, 2014, p. 284). The fourth step is reviewing data extracts. I checked whether important data had been missed and whether there were any themes that needed to be subdivided or merged. The fifth stage is data summary and display. I wrote a précis for each theme and sub-theme (Spencer et al, 2014).

Stage 2: Abstraction and Interpretation

During the second stage, I read through the managed data and iterated on themes, shifting focus from the literal meaning of the themes to the underlying abstract principles. Then, I divided the iterative themes into categories. After that, I mapped the data to see what linkages existed between different parts of the data and what patterns they formed. Finally, I gave reasonable explanations of the data patterns through explicit accounts provided by participants and implicit accounts deduced from participant intentions, situational factors, and expectations (Spencer, 2014, p. 284).

In addition, when translating Chinese into English, it is difficult to achieve complete equivalence, and there is often a decrease in the accuracy of the data during the translation process (Twinn, 1998; Yelland and Gifford, 1995). Therefore, during the analysis of interview materials, I directly analysed the Chinese transcription, rather than translating the Chinese transcription into English first.

4.3 Ethical Considerations and Challenges

This study follows the guidance documents issued by the University of Leeds' research ethics committee and UKRI to minimise harm to participants and related institutions. My research ethics application, reference number BESS+ FREC 2024-0799, has been approved by the Research Ethics Administrator.

Participants were fully informed about the research aims and academic uses before interviews, and they were free to withdraw at any time without coercion from the management team. Participants who had previously withdrawn were welcome to rejoin the research at any point before the thesis was submitted to the university system, based on their willingness. Anonymity was maintained through the use of pseudonyms that could not be easily traced, and personal details were blurred to prevent identification. Privacy was also upheld by not disclosing any original personal information (See the consent form in attachment 3 for further details.)

I obtained permission to collect data from the factory owner. Rural-urban migrant workers in the factory may be reluctant to refuse or withdraw from the research because they fear possible punishment by factory owners for doing so, which would violate the principle of voluntary participation. I minimized the risk of coercion as much as possible. I provided my contact information in the consent form, with a special note next to the contact information stating that this study could be refused to participate in or withdrawn from at any time. Anyone could directly contact me to express their unwillingness to participate in the study. I did not disclose any information about individuals who were unwilling to participate, either from the outset or midway through the research, to anyone — especially not to the management team.

I am responsible for the security of the research data. The data was stored in OneDrive and the University of Leeds M: Drive, both of which were password protected. I used a recording pen for data recording and a laptop for data interpretation. I uploaded the data from the voice recorder and the laptop to OneDrive at the University of Leeds as soon as possible, and then deleted the data from the voice recorder and the laptop.

Chapter 5. The Influence of Social Media on Rural-Urban Migrants' Employment

A significant body of previous research has found that rural-urban migrants, particularly low-skilled workers, often face discrimination in the labour market of the cities to which they have migrated. They tend to be pushed into jobs that are frequently dirty, dangerous, and difficult (Chan, 2001; Pun, 2005; Pun and Chan, 2012; Yue et al. , 2015; Zhang and Wu, 2017; Ye, 2018). Their salaries often fall short of their expected material aspirations (Meng, 2012), with earnings being lower than those of their local counterparts (Knight et al. , 2011; Meng, 2012; Zhang et al. , 2016). Additionally, their employment rights and social insurance are often not adequately protected (Sun and Liu, 2014; Müller, 2016; Chan and Hui, 2017; Liu and ten Brink, 2022). These challenges are one of the main barriers preventing rural-urban migrant workers from embedding permanently in their host cities; this leads to many to prefer returning to their rural hometowns and becoming unstable or non-permanent migrants.

This chapter aims to explore whether social media can empower rural-urban migrants by improving their working conditions and enhancing their job satisfaction, which may, in turn, encourage them to continue migrating to the receiving city and foster a greater sense of urban embeddedness.

Within academic discourse over the last four decades, empowerment researchers have reached a consensus on the inherent coherence of empowerment (Joseph , 2019 ; Wilkinson, 1997 ; Lincoln et al, 2002). This consensus is that empowerment should be perceived as a transformative tool encouraging disadvantaged groups to access strengths and power (Turner and Maschi, 2015; Al Wazni, 2015; BentGoodley, 2018; Hardy and

Leiba-O'Sullivan, 1998; Gutierrez, 1990 ;). This research aims to investigate Chinese rural-urban migrant factory workers and the mechanisms of how they embed in both their urban destinations and rural hometowns simultaneously via social media. Employment is an important aspect of rural-urban migrants' embeddedness in urban environments. This chapter uses the lens of empowerment to examine social media's ability to empower rural-urban migrant factory workers. It finds that social media empowers their careers and employment rights, thus offering support for urban embeddedness. However, in some situations, the extent to which social media empowers career and employment is limited, only slightly deepening urban embeddedness. Barriers and constraints to social media empowerment restrict its potential.

This chapter begins with an introduction to participants' employment status. It then analyses how social media empowers career development for factory workers, both within and beyond the factory, using empirical data to detail how social media empowers the workers and the constraints involved. Moreover, this chapter examines the social media empowerment of rural-urban migrant workers regarding employment rights and perceptions.

5.1 An Overview of the Selected Factory

The factory mainly produces toys for the overseas market. The factory has three floors. The first floor is designated for management teams and white-collar employees, with the reception room and offices also located on this floor. Except for using the restroom, assembly-line workers usually do not come to the first floor. The second line is an assembly workshop, dedicated to assembly-line workers processing production pieces. Around 80 assembly workers, who are rural-urban migrants, work on the second floor.

During every Chinese New Year Festival, about one-quarter of the assembly-line workers go home and do not return, thus requiring HR to hire new workers during the post-festival period. This results in a high turnover rate for the factory. The second floor can be divided into several areas based on different tasks, including injection moulding, soldering, piece assembly, production checking and packing. Workers involved in injection moulding and soldering typically earn monthly salaries ranging from 5,500 to 6,500 yuan based on a per-piece rate. Similarly, workers in piece assembly roles receive an average monthly income of 6,000 to 7,000 yuan. Conversely, those in production checking roles are paid hourly, with average monthly earnings between 4,800 and 5,500 yuan. Packaging positions, which also adopt an hourly payment model, - pay by the hour. generally yield around 6,000 yuan per month. The daily work routine involves factory assembly-line workers receiving boxes of production pieces, and they process each piece in 1-2 seconds based on the task requirement. After finishing the boxes of toy pieces they have been assigned, workers need to report to the inventory keeper to obtain more toy pieces. Each month includes two days of rest, on the 1st and 16th of the month. The usual working time is 9 hours per day. During the busy season, an additional 3 hours of work are required. Typically, employees work 3 days of regular hours followed by 1 day of overtime, alternating this pattern. However, there are instances when the rest days will be cancelled, especially if there is a rush order. The third floor is dedicated to technicians who operate precise large-scale machines to produce toy pieces for processing on the second floor. Compared to the second floor, the third floor requires a higher level of education and training.

Previous research indicates that in China, factories often construct dormitories within their factory campuses where roommates are assigned randomly. This arrangement disrupts existing relationships and lacks provision for individual privacy (Pun and Anita,

2015 ; Pun and Smith, 2007). Pun described this as the 'dormitory labour regime, ' blending workplace production with the daily routines of social reproduction in a shared dormitory environment. This arrangement enables extended hours of work, including overtime and night shifts. The design focuses on maximising work productivity rather than providing genuine rest (Shu-Huah et al. , 2023). In the research site, living conditions are not as harsh as in some other factories. It takes about ten minutes to walk from the factory to the dormitory. The dormitory is provided free of charge for workers, so most workers choose to live there. Managers can arrange for couples and families to live together in separate accommodation within the factory premises, enabling them to maintain their family life (This arrangement allows them to avoid sharing living quarters with other workers). However, if family members are not workers and live in the dormitory, a small additional rent may be required. The factory does not impose restrictions on where workers live. A few workers do not want to live in factory accommodation. The main reason being that their spouses also work in Wenzhou and can provide better living options. If workers choose not to live in the dormitory, they receive a small housing allowance.

In terms of food, around the factory, many small restaurants cater to migrant factory workers, offering dishes which they know from their home area. Supermarkets in the factory area also sell food items typical of the main areas from which the migrants originate, such as *Houttuynia cordata* (known as zheergen in Chinese). However, factory workers usually do not have the opportunity to enjoy these during working days. During their workdays, employees primarily dine at the factory canteen, where they receive a free lunch. On days with overtime work, a free dinner is also provided. The meals primarily consist of vegetables and carbohydrates, with protein being scarce. While there is some flexibility in meal times, rural-urban factory workers often eat quickly in order to return

to work promptly. Since many workers are compensated based on the number of pieces they complete, there is often anxiety about spending too much time in the canteen, as it could reduce their piece count and, consequently, their earnings.

5. 2 Empowerment at the Workplace: Working Group on WeChat

The empirical data collected shows that the most common social media platform used for factory work is WeChat. Therefore, this section of the research focuses on studying whether participants feel empowered through their use of WeChat within their factory work. WeChat is widely used in factories as a working tool. WeChat, with its 1.3 billion users worldwide, allows interaction with individuals and the creation of chat groups for communication (Thomala, 2023). WeChat, permeates the workplace and is widely used for task assignment and communication within enterprises as well as with clients (Zhang, 2021; Yu, 2018). In the research site factory, there are two WeChat working groups. One consists of assembly-line workers and workshop managers, named "XX Factory Employee Working Group," and another consists of management team members, white-collar workers and technician, named "XX Factory Manager Working Group."

5. 2. 1 Active Participation

Experienced workers accumulate specialised knowledge about the work tasks and requirements, allowing them to describe issues very precisely and be aware of the adverse impact they may bring to work. In Western countries, platforms like Zoom and Teams are commonly used to facilitate efficient online communication and collaboration (Rysavy and Michalak, 2020; Ilag and Sabale, 2022). In China, WeChat serves a similar role for these purposes (Chen et al, 2018). When a new order comes in, workers quickly notice that the pieces they receive are different. They check the quality of the production pieces while processing them. If only a few pieces have quality issues, the assembly-line

workers will put the problematic pieces aside on their working table and dispose of them when their work is finished. If a whole batch of pieces has quality issues, workers will communicate with the manager about it in the WeChat working employee group immediately. To make things clear, workers prefer to use photos to help them describe and discuss quality issues via the WeChat group. In response to feedback from the WeChat group, managers can quickly contact the third floor responsible for mass-producing production pieces. This first-hand feedback from the assembly-line workers is highly valued by managers.

“This batch of pieces has a quality issue. For example, the hole for the screw is too tight. I took a picture and sent it to the WeChat group, commenting that the hole is too tight and the screw spike has difficulty in penetrating the hole. I need to report this problem to the manager in the working group. Additionally, in this batch of pieces, there are glitches in many of the holes. Even with the use of force, the screw spike still cannot be made to penetrate the hole” (Wei, 35 years old, male migrant)

Improved relationships with managers enhance the working environment, acting as an urban attraction that makes participants more willing to stay and become embedded in the urban setting. The male participant , his experience about providing feedback on quality issues in the WeChat group, is representative. The manager valued his feedback, and based on his feedback, instructed the third floor responsible for mass-producing the pieces to make adjustments. Workers’ involvement in the adjustment of production pieces assists the factory in improving efficiency. The workers do not receive any external rewards for their assistance in this way. However, sharing feedback from their firsthand knowledge raises their self-esteem and this empowers them to have greater confidence when facing management. In the interview, Wei mentioned that he and the manager are

" friends", with frequent interaction between them. They do not have a "Supervisor-Supervisee" relationship. Wei is comfortable expressing his needs to his manager, such as applying for rest time. This is not really common in a traditional Taylorism management model. Traditional Taylorism management is characterised by "measuring, judging, prying, intruding". Managers monitoring and surveillance make workers feel that their privacy is being invaded, which can hurt the workers' dignity (Sprague, 2007; Kanigel, pp. 466). Research on Polish migrants in the UK reveals that they report, compared to their working environment in Poland, that workplace relationships in the UK are less hierarchical and characterised by mutual respect, which reduces emotional distress. This positive perception benefits Polish migrants, leading more of them to express a desire to stay in the UK (Cieslik, 2011). Similar to Cieslik's findings, this participant (Wei) has been working in the factory for over ten years and wishes to continue. Given the high turnover rate in factory work — with many workers not returning after the annual Spring Festival holiday — Wei's long-term commitment is particularly noteworthy.

In China's small-scale private factory settings, any form of empowerment, even in its most limited form, can make workers feel more equal and respected within this rigid structure, granting them greater bargaining power. In larger, more developed factories, formal channels and factory policies exist for applying for basic needs, such as annual leave or salary requests. However, in the research area of Wenzhou, most factories are small-scale private ones, where workers' benefits are based largely on the management's discretion. In these environments, nominal empowerment, which helps create a more equal relationship with the management team, becomes more significant than in other contexts.

5. 2. 2 Passive Participation

Social media enables factory workers to engage in production, share knowledge, and express opinions, which helps participants gain respect in the workplace. However, some participants question whether empowerment helps them. More opportunities to participate do not necessarily translate to greater economic benefits. For participants in quality checking, their tasks are remunerated on an hourly basis without additional incentives for identifying quality issues. For those involved in quality checking, although their participation may enhance productivity, it does not correspondingly increase their income. Efficiency improvements do not bring any financial rewards. Workers involved in quality checking may indirectly gain additional income due to the positive correlation between productivity and salary. However, there are no direct rewards as a result of their contribution to the efficiency of the factory.

Under intense financial pressure, earning money is the primary motivation that brings migrant workers to Wenzhou. Consequently, they prioritise economic benefits over seeking a better working environment or other non-financial considerations. Their primary goal is to send remittances back to their left-behind family members, rather than striving for good working relationships and a better social environment that would facilitate their integration into Wenzhou. They perceive enduring these challenges as "eating bitterness" for the sake of their family. They prioritise channelling all their energy into earning money, leaving them with little capacity to address other aspects of their work environment.

One participant performs quality checking and provides detailed feedback in a WeChat group as it is the quickest way to get managers to notice her feedback. However, she does not derive any positive feelings from this process. She is facing financial difficulties and

must work two jobs. She recently welcomed a newborn grandson. In China, financial support for grandchildren is a common practice for the elderly, particularly for sons' children (Xu and Chi, 2018). This phenomenon, referred to as “biting the elderly” in China, is widely criticised but occurs frequently in families facing financial difficulties (CCTV, 2024). In the factory, she checks production quality, and after leaving the factory, she continues to label bags at home. Her typical workday at the factory runs from 7:30 AM to 11:30 AM and from 12:00 PM to 5:00 PM. On days when there is no overtime, she returns home to cook for her family and then spends her evening labelling bags until bedtime.

"I need to report in the WeChat group that for this brand of production, each product's colour should be the same, but some pieces are more yellow and some are more white. I really need to report it in Wechat group. And I noticed that some pieces are warped, and some make unusual noises when I check them. I need to report this. Sometimes, I advise the manager to send the pieces back to the technician, while at other times I simply fix them myself if the problem is small. ... I'm very busy, I have to cook when I get home from work, and then I make a small amount of money by labelling bags with my husband. You see, I'm so old, and I have to work for a few yuan. I'm really tired" (Mei, 59 years old, female migrant,)

5. 2. 3 Observation (Invisibility) and Team Representative

Additionally, some participants feel that empowerment through participation is unnecessary and therefore show little interest in this sort of empowerment, as having a larger voice in the factory is not attractive to them. There are four young female factory workers whose workstations are close to one another. They perform the same tasks and

process the same batch of pieces. They never reject overtime for the additional pay. They even leave their workstations early to have lunch in the canteen, not to slack off, but to reduce queuing time. This way, they can save more time to process product pieces during their midday break. Their pay is based on the number of pieces they process. By contrast to their extreme effort to process more pieces, they try to minimise their engagement in other activities as much as possible. They expressed to me that they are part of the "XX Factory Employee Working Group", but they intentionally try to remain invisible within the working group.

“Since my products usually have no problems, I don’t feel the need to contribute much in the working group. Instead, I usually just read other people’s messages in the group. The fact that my products are good and have no problems means that I don’t feel the need to participate in the group discussions. The working group is for work-related discussions, so if a topic isn’t relevant to me, I don’t feel the need to speak up. If there are problems with my products, having one person speak on behalf of all four of us in the working group is enough.” (Lian, 29 years old, female migrant)

Some factory workers may have little willingness to be empowered through participation in product adjustments. In the Mao era (1949-1976), factories were state-owned and referred to as "danwei", which translates to "work unit" in English. In Mao’s era, factory workers’ fundamental unit was the working unit. In addition to paying wages, factories engaged in workers’ private lives by providing housing, medical care, living subsidies, children’s education, pension security, and involvement in workers’ marriages, political activities, and family planning (Zhao, 2012). To further increase female productivity, factories took over some domestic responsibilities. Workers also shared childcare centres,

staffed canteens, bathrooms, and laundries (Dong, 2024). Factory workers were highly dependent on the factory system. Factory workers aspired to be 'Activists' (jijifenzi). Activists enjoyed priority in housing allocation and welfare assignments, bringing family members a better quality of life (Walder, 2014). Since the economic reforms of 1978, the factory system has undergone significant changes (Lee, 1999). The number of private factories has increased rapidly and factory welfare has been discontinued. Following factory reforms, welfare of workers, ancillary facilities, and welfare priorities for activists have become things of the past. Being 'active' lost its drive. Factory workers' job satisfaction now stems more from "fair days" and "fair days' pay" rather than deep participation (Vidal, 2007). Without factory welfare, employees must rely entirely on their wages to support their families. For some participants, gaining more respect and fostering good working relationships is not a significant matter without factory welfare as motivation. Their primary focus is on performing tasks that guarantee payment.

Female workers may prefer to remain invisible in WeChat work groups, which could be related to the patriarchal atmosphere within the group. Goger (2013) points out in his empirical research conducted in a Sri Lankan clothing factory that the empowerment initiatives designed by factories remain embedded in the patriarchal culture of the country where the factories are located. In the research site factory, the working groups are established by male managers, who have significant control over female workers. Male managers, as the creators of the WeChat groups, have the ability to mute workers and remove them from the group. Female workers may not feel empowered, even though having a greater voice is considered a form of empowerment. Female workers can still feel undervalued and controlled by male managers who hold greater power both in a patriarchal and bureaucratic sense, leading to a twofold sense of oppression in the WeChat

work group. This may also explain why female participants prefer to remain invisible in the WeChat work group.

5. 2. 4 Beneficiaries of Nominal Empowerment

The next stage of my research was to follow up on the feedback evaluation process with management teams. The power to make decisions is entirely held by the management team; assembly-line workers are excluded from decision-making.

A few workshop managers, who are responsible for supervising assembly-line workers, are in both the online “XX Factory Employee Working Group” and the “XX Factory Management Working Group”. When assembly-line workers report issues in the “XX Factory Employee Working Group”, workshop managers need to read the report first. If workshop managers deem the report valuable and think it worthy of consideration for small adjustments to production, they usually pass it on to the technicians. If a report relates to a significant issue, workshop managers will arrange a meeting with the people in the “XX Factory management Working Group”, to discuss what to do next. After assembly-line workers report their feedback in the 'XX Factory Employee Working Group', the only thing they can do is wait for the decisions made by the managers and follow their instructions on the subsequent actions.

Empowerment is highly limited by the traditional Taylorism model. Vidal (2004, p. 1) indicates that in the post-Fordism era, lean production necessitates empowering factory workers by encouraging their involvement in “*problem-solving, decision-making, and continuous improvement processes.*” However, the empowerment of factory workers motivated by the production models is constrained by bureaucratic control within factories. In practical terms, the empowerment of factory workers is often nominal, wherein they may receive increased responsibilities and opportunities to share ideas, but

are not granted decision-making authority. Control remains concentrated within management teams.

In this factory, there is nominal empowerment, allowing participants to voice their opinions. The factory's empowerment measures are designed such that they do not conflict with the factory's own interests. However, empowerment measures exclude labour mobilisation, unionism, and worker protests (Velasco, 2019; Zajak, 2017). Only those forms of empowerment that align with the profits of the factory owners and shareholders are permitted. The benefits from updates and improvements are shared by the factory owners and shareholders. Assembly-line workers provide feedback but do not engage in the follow-up process or profit from benefit sharing. For some participants, providing valuable feedback without additional rewards is seen as exploiting their intellectual contribution to the success of the business.

5. 3 Empowerment in Professional Development: Online Training Opportunities and Academic Qualifications

Previous studies show that many migrants have ambitious career goals, seeking upward mobility by leaving unskilled sectors and transitioning to more skilled jobs (Sa´nchez-Domí´nguez and Fahlén, 2018

; Vidal-Coso and Miret-Gamundi, 2014). Similar to transnational studies, a common phenomenon among rural-urban migrants in Chinese factories is their reluctance to remain in assembly line positions due to low wages, and poor working conditions (LÜthje, 2014). They anticipate that switching to skilled jobs will improve their living and working conditions, provide greater job security, and offer higher pay, thereby fostering upward

social mobility, which results in them gaining a deeper urban embeddedness. This research not only examines how factory workers use social media for empowerment within their current factory work, but also explores how participants, as individuals, use social media for empowerment in their future career paths.

Migrants continuing their education often face numerous hindrances. Families left behind in the migrants' place of origin may hope that the migrant family members will concentrate on earning remittances, rather than being distracted by other commitments such as studying (Chib, Bentley and Wardoyo, 2019). Their employers may discourage migrant workers from working and studying at the same time (Trifanescu, 2015, pp 91-101). Their workload and time schedule may make it difficult for them to balance work and study (Tanan, 2012). Social media allows individuals to study flexibly in fragmented time and informal settings, reducing difficulties and barriers. Social media can also overcome social and cultural constraints, and reduce the embarrassment of unfamiliarity with learning materials (Chib, Bentley and Wardoyo, 2019). At the research site, two participants expressed their intentions to leave unskilled assembly line jobs and pursue other positions that required more skills. However, the lack of skills is a significant dilemma that rural-urban migrant workers face, severely restricting their choices. They realised they could learn professional skills through social media platforms like Douyin and intend to use this method to empower themselves and achieve upward career transitions. Douyin is the mainland China version of TikTok, and is widely used at the research site. Both platforms, from the same company and with similar functions, target different markets: Douyin focuses on mainland China, while TikTok targets the overseas market (Kaye, Chen and Zeng, 2021)

One participant in the research mentioned his plans to open a small Chinese barbecue restaurant in Wenzhou. He is particularly interested in Jingzhou barbecue, which is a speciality of Jingzhou, a small county in North East China. The reason he is focusing his attention on Jingzhou barbecue is that many chefs revealed Jingzhou barbecue's high gross profits on Douyin. For example, there are many videos on Douyin showcasing how a cabbage costing 3 yuan can be sold for 30 yuan after being cooked in a Jingzhou restaurant. This participant has high expectations of quitting his assembly line job and earning a lot of money from his restaurant. This ideal vision of life acts as an urban attraction for him.

“In the future, I aspire to open a barbecue restaurant as I am passionate about becoming a chef. I avidly gather barbecue-related information on Douyin, particularly enjoying watching content creators demonstrate their barbecue skills. My learning stems from short videos online; I am self-taught, inspired by Douyin videos.” (Jian, 28 years old, male migrant).

In traditional Chinese barbecue cooking, offline training is typically essential. Rural-urban migrants would normally undertake full-time apprenticeships leading to a professional career in catering. Apprentices usually receive only pocket money or a percentage of the full professional wage, often without a formal apprenticeship contract (Risler and Zhao, 2015). Financial vulnerability during the apprenticeship period, no legal protection, and the time costs are all difficulties that need to be addressed. Learning from Douyin is flexible in terms of time; participants do not need to leave their factory jobs for full-time apprenticeships and can continue to earn while they learn. The opportunities afforded by Douyin make acquiring barbecue cooking knowledge less fraught with difficulties, thus empowering the participants to transition from being assembly-line

workers to starting their own business. The negative side of this kind of training is that the participants' high expectations may not be come to fruition; learning from Douyin may not fully substitute for completing a full-time apprenticeship. Apprenticeships usually allow learners to observe and experience restaurant management skills, as well as expand relevant social networks in the food service industry (Rao and Hossain, 2012), and these are aspects of the training which Douyin cannot provide.

Another participant has continued to study and aims to be a civil engineer in Wenzhou. This aspiration to become a civil engineer and achieve social mobility is the main motivation that keeps him persisting in Wenzhou. He was exposed to advertisements for adult education on Douyin, and spent 4,000 yuan (equivalent to 420 Pounds sterling) on adult education to upgrade his certification from junior high school to college, majoring in civil engineering.

“The online school told me that with the degree, I can apply for an engineering certification. I haven't attended any offline classes; instead, there are video lessons that I can watch on my computer. I can learn at my own pace, as long as I watch enough within the allotted time. I have the contact information for a teaching assistant on WeChat, so I can ask them questions about any problems I encounter. I'm now just waiting for my associate degree to be mailed to me. Once it arrives, I'll proceed with the degree certification process.” (Ming, 25 years old, male migrant,)

Social media provides more flexible learning—allowing asynchronous study anytime—and individualised learning, enabling Ming to choose focus areas (Müller and Mildemberger, 2021). Moreover, as Ming's online colleague degree can be approved by

the Ministry of Education for adult higher education, and can be verified by the China Higher Education Talent Information Network. This is the only website designated by the Chinese educational department to verify the educational degrees of Chinese citizens (CHIS, nd). This official verification will help Ming transition into the civil engineering profession, and achieve better social class upward mobility in Wenzhou.

Additionally, Chinese cities are engaged in an ongoing "talent war," each city offering additional welfare benefits to attract talent and enhance human resources for economic development (Shen and Li, 2022). Wenzhou has also implemented a talent introduction policy. As Ming will have completed a college degree, he falls within the scope of talent that the Wenzhou government aims to attract. Every year, the Wenzhou government provides Ming with various subsidies including housing, employment, social insurance, transportation, entrepreneurship, and loan subsidies (Bendibao, 2023). Confirmed as a talent by the Wenzhou government and granted access to subsidies for integration into the city, this also helps the participant better embed into Wenzhou.

In transnational migrant studies, there are migrants who become part-time students in host countries, not solely to earn money to support their families, but also for their own self-fulfilment and ambition to advance their educational background and language. Promoting educational background and language is regarded as a precious opportunity that paves the path to a brighter future (Bali et al., 2024; Tanan, 2012; Jabbar and Zaza, 2016). As demonstrated by the two previous cases, I also found that Chinese rural-urban migrant workers have the agency to utilize social media for self-learning. Migrants' agency cannot be ignored, as empowerment is in the process of migrants exercising their agency. It should be noted that male participants are more active in professional development, which may be attributed to the traditional Chinese gender ideology that views career success as a measure of men's achievement, given their role as primary

breadwinners (Lee, 2017). This cultural expectation drives male participants to be more proactive in advancing their careers.

It is important to note that the attraction of online training varies among the participants in the research. Firstly, some participants simply seek short-term income. Not all participants have ambitious views of future career expectations and the desire to achieve higher social mobility in Wenzhou. They do not use social media for educational purposes. This phenomenon is particularly evident among those participants who belong to the "sandwich generation," where both the younger and older generations rely on their financial support. They need to send remittances to cover their elders' needs, practising traditional filial piety (Luo and Zhan, 2012) as well as providing for their own children.

Since 2014, with the adoption of the "Ordinance Establishing a Unified Basic Pension Insurance System for Urban and Rural Residents," China has achieved a degree of pension universalism, covering most rural residents in the pension system. However, the basic pension remains very low, with the average pension amounting to only 81 yuan (13 US dollars) per month. Additionally, there are significant regional disparities. In poorer rural regions, the local pension standard is even lower than the average, making it difficult for pensioners to meet minimum living standards (Liu and Li, 2016).

In addition to this, investment in the next generation's education also compels rural-urban migrants to seek quick monetary income. In 1986, the Compulsory Education Law stipulated 9 years of universal compulsory education in China. Elementary and middle school education is free for all children, while senior high school and higher education require payment of tuition and other fees (Yang and Guo, 2020). Investing in children's senior high school and higher education is not easy and constitutes a significant portion

of rural-urban migrants' earnings (Zhang, 2017). However, to ensure their children do not have to perform physical labour as they have had to do, rural-urban migrants are willing to make this educational investment. In Gu and Yue (2020)'s research, they found that regardless of migrant parents' backgrounds, they are willing to support the next generation's education, encouraging them to "read as much as possible. " This opinion has been mentioned by many participants. Other financial issues, such as loans for building rural houses, medical expenses, and pension savings, exacerbate participants' financial hardships (Zhong, et al, 2016;). Financial hardship has made them vulnerable.

"I'm drowning in debt! I feel like I'm too deep in debt. I'm in a rush to make money. I never even thought about empowerment. Online training is for people in a good financial situation. For people like me who have no money, how can we learn what we want?" (Ling, 33years old, female migrant)

The lack of affordable and efficient training opportunities often prevents them from realising their empowerment aspirations (Hu, 2012; Démurger and Xu, 2011). Over 30% of Chinese rural-urban migrant workers are willing to undergo skills training but are unable to do so due to financial difficulties (Chongqing Bureau of Statistics, 2019); about 65% of rural-urban migrant workers cannot or are unwilling to undergo training, as work occupies so much of their time and energy (Zeng, 2018). Similar to previous research investigating rural-urban skills training, participants in this research also feel that their poor financial situation blocks them from empowerment via online training.

Secondly, among participants, some are illiterate or semi-literate. They do not envision an advanced career path and also lack confidence in learning from social media. The

illiteracy rate has gradually dropped from 33.58% to 2.64% over the past 40 years. Participants from the older generation had often had little to no opportunity to learn to read when they were young (Chen, 2023). Illiteracy often leads to digital illiteracy, which refers to the lack of digital competencies and skills needed to navigate fragmented and complex information in the online world (Eshet, 2004). Digital illiteracy causes difficulties in operating internet technologies, orienting oneself online, and fulfilling information and data needs. It also impacts effective communication, collaboration, content creation, and using the internet to achieve goals while maintaining safety online (van Deursen and van Dijk, 2009; van Deursen and van Dijk, 2011; Ferrari, 2012; Ng, 2012; Carretero et al., 2017). Because they are digitally illiterate, many older workers lose the “potential to shape in life in multiple ways” through digital means. This includes opportunities for improving academic performance and increasing their competitiveness in the labour market (Tinmaz et al., 2022).

In the course of data collection, when I asked questions about empowerment through social media, participants often ended the conversation by saying, “I can’t read” or “I have no culture.” These are two common ways people in China express that they have not received much formal education. This response is common among illiterate participants, who often believe that their inability to read prevents them from improving their life chances.

‘I can't read, so I didn't read some of the messages. I can only look at pictures, but there aren't any. I can't read. some Chinese characters are just strokes for me. I don't understand them (Yan, 49 years old, female migrant)

5.4 Inaction on Employment Rights and Perceptions

Due to their limited awareness of their rights and legal protections, rural -urban migrant workers often become targets for exploitation in the urban workplace (Wang , 2024) . Social media has the potential to enhance awareness of employment rights. Earlier research finds that migrant factory workers share their experiences of unfair treatment, exploitation, and anger in chat groups. This sharing can empower workers, by helping migrants unite to protect their rights (Cao and Li, 2018). However, the interview data of this project indicate that the potential of social media to promote action on employment rights is not fully utilised. Some participants habitually upload their work experiences on Douyin, sharing content such as assembling product pieces, showing piles of product pieces, their simple breakfasts on the worktable, or evening scenes when they finish work. They usually do not speak in the videos. Negative emotions are limited to expressing tiredness and financial stress. When they express their tiredness and financial stress, they often use lively songs, memes, and positive slogans to make the videos more cheerful. Participants deliberately avoid criticising workplace relationships or employment rights. Negative emotional release is restrained and does not lead to self-empowerment in the protection of workers' rights.

One reason is that many participants hope to appear decent and positive on public social media. Studies on social media worldwide have shown that people engage in impression management, employing self-presentation strategies to craft a positive image for their audience (Lee, Lee and Kwon, 2011) . Similarly, in China, researchers have observed that students participating in internships may refrain from harshly criticising their experiences, even if they are unpleasant, to maintain an easygoing and non-fussy persona on social media (Guo, 2015). In this study, participants also avoid expressing negative emotions and refrain from appearing sentimental to their audience.

“I think it's fine to share fun outings and the beautiful moments in life on Douyin. But when it comes to work and negative energies⁵, it's better not to post those on Douyin. Share the happy moments, but don't post the unhappy ones. Life is already tough enough, so why make others feel bad too?” (Hua, 37 years old, female worker)

“I want to leave a good impression on others. When I'm happy and something good happens, I like to share it with others. But when I'm unhappy, like when I'm feeling down or something isn't going well, I definitely don't want to post about it. “ (Fen, 39 years old, female migrant)

I found in this research, participants feel that negative working experiences are not appropriate for sharing, and some participants even feel that releasing negative emotions on social media is impolite and may upset their followers. This differs from Cao and Li's (2018) findings, which indicate that rural-urban migrant factory workers are willing to share negative work experiences and seek emotional support from online audiences. This may be because social media apps vary in privacy settings; some are more private while others are more public. On social media platforms like QQ, which were investigated in Cao and Li's study, there are chat groups that typically require an application for entry. Migrants can use these applications to create chat groups specifically for migrants. They assume that within these groups, their negative work experiences will receive more empathy and support, without adversely affecting their personal profiles. In more public social media platforms like Douyin, which participants used extensively in this research, posts are visible to everyone, not just those with similar experiences. Participants find the

⁵ The term *negative energy* used here is an extension of Chinese government language *positive energy*. Actually, *negative energy* here and *negative energy* in Western common usage have very similar meanings; both refer to personal inner negative feelings. However, the origin of the term is different.

audience's reaction to their posts more unpredictable, leading them to share safer content that avoids discomfort for everyone. Their desire to appear positive online reduces their willingness to find fault with their working conditions on social media.

A second reason is that participants still feel that when they are exploited in the factory, their best solution is to leave the job and find another factory, rather than empowering themselves by gaining more employment rights knowledge from social media and confronting management. Although they mentioned that they have increased their knowledge of labour protection laws via Douyin, they still feel their options are limited to tolerating their situation or giving notice. Due to the labour shortage in coastal areas, factory workers do not find it difficult to secure a similar job. Solving problems by equipping themselves with employment rights knowledge is more time-consuming and complicated than simply finding a new job (Franceschini, 2020 ; Cui, Ming and Lu, 2018; Li, et al, 2012).

"Yeah, I've been recommended labour rights stuff by Douyin, but you know, it's like, you choose to work here. If you can't handle it, you can switch jobs, right? If you decide to stay, then just stay; there's no need to carry so much resentment. Once you sign a contract, you do the job. If you don't sign, you don't work. Here, all the contracts are voluntary, there's no forced contracts. Whether you carefully read those regulations or not, you don't have the right to raise any disputes and ask managers to make changes " (Tao, 50 years old, male migrant)

"I've seen information on Douyin. Like overtime. Over here, our overtime hours are quite long too. Starting work at 7:30 and working until 9:30 with no complaints,

it's all voluntary overtime. Honestly, there's nothing stopping you, you can quit anytime you want now. ” (Ming, 25years old, male migrant)

Additionally, I found that if a worker is more agreeable and friendly toward the factory's management, it can blur the class conflict between factory owners and workers. Not only does this not empower him to understand the workers' rights and interests, but it also tends to make him more accepting of his situation.

"I've browsed content about factory successors (factory owners' sons/daughters) , seen what their lives are like. Their lives are pretty much the same as other workers, day in and day out. They also do deliveries for factories every day, acting like drivers. In Wenzhou, I think the thinking culture is factory successors should come from the grassroots and slowly climb up. They should toughen themselves up. Many start from the bottom, not just because they're someone's son. They start with the toughest jobs on the assembly line or as drivers. In reality, their lives are quite similar to Douyin. They also, honestly speaking, do things themselves. Like sometimes when there are returns, they handle them themselves. " (Ming, 25 years old, male migrant)

Thirdly, participants still rely more on traditional channels, such as word of mouth. When facing violations of their legal rights, their first choice is to consult relatives and fellow-villagers. During the data collection period, a participant experienced work injuries. Although she has downloaded social media apps and habitually uses them, she did not post relevant content or seek information about workers' rights protection on these platforms. She still prefers to rely on word-of-mouth, rather than seeking information on social media. When she received the necessary information from her brother, 30 days

had already passed, which is the deadline for worker injury applications set by the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security (gov. cn , 2011).

“Injured flesh. The flesh inside the thumb is gone. The factory didn't instruct me to go through the work injury process, so I didn't discuss it, didn't understand it, and didn't pursue it. Because the drill didn't reach the bone, I felt like it wasn't necessary. When I returned to my hometown, my brother asked me why I didn't go for a work injury rating since I injured the flesh. I asked that I didn't hurt the bone, how can there be a rating? He answered that I've injured the flesh and lost sensation of a finger, I can get a rating.” (Lan, 33 years old , female migrant).

5. 5 Summary

Previous studies have demonstrated the challenges migrant workers face in Chinese factories. However, most of these influential studies were conducted during a period of rapid industrial growth in China, before social media became prevalent in factories. Consequently, they often overlook the role of social media in shaping migrant workers' experiences and empowerment dynamics in today's factory environments. This chapter carefully investigates the empowerment of rural-urban factory workers through social media, examining empowerment both within and outside the workplace. The findings suggest that good career development and proper rights' protections lead to better engagement in urban society, demonstrating the embeddedness of individuals in urban life. Social media has the capability to empower rural-urban factory workers, however, the extent and willingness of this empowerment is limited.

In the workplace, social media serves as a channel that enables rural-urban factory workers to participate in production adjustments. This strengthens factory workers' self-

esteem and communication abilities. In some piecework positions, this leads to an increase in income. However, within the traditional Taylorism management system, there is no factory policy aimed at empowering factory workers, nor is there a systematic provision of external or internal rewards to encourage empowerment. While factory workers have the ability to participate in production adjustments, some may not feel empowered, and others may view empowerment via feedback sharing as a burden. Managers retain the authority to determine the extent of empowerment for rural-urban factory workers. In this case, assembly-line workers are excluded from decision-making processes, and only information deemed necessary by the management team is released to them. The empowerment that social media provides to workers remains largely nominal and limited in effect. While social media offers a platform for workers to voice ideas and thoughts, it does not fundamentally alter working conditions or control management structures. Workers remain vulnerable to capital and management decisions, lacking the support needed to negotiate effectively for improved benefits or working conditions—demands that might conflict with the financial interests of the factory owners.

Outside of the workplace, factory workers aspire to utilise social media as a tool to empower themselves in transitioning to alternative career paths. Their strong desire to empower themselves makes them targets for online training businesses. Empowerment through social media may lead them to be misled by online training businesses or may not meet their expectations in practice. In addition, empowerment via social media is not suitable for all rural-urban factory workers, as most of them already bear heavy economic burdens. The urgent need for money often prevents them from investing in long-term planning. For them, social media serves primarily as a leisure activity, and empowerment through social media does not pertain to their circumstances. For both within and outside the workplace, social media offers the potential for empowerment. However, the depth of

this empowerment is constrained by power dynamics, the profit-driven nature of some online training, and individual circumstances.

As illustrated in the previous chapter, a large body of research has widely established that urban migrant life and rural origin connections are the main components influencing their migration (example: Meng , 2014; Pun, 2005; Li, 2013; Webster, Wu and Fang, 2014). This understanding forms the foundation for analyzing Chinese rural-urban migrant workers and is considered academic common sense. Therefore, the next chapter will examine the mechanisms through which social media supports connections with rural family and community, exploring how and to what extent it fosters long-distance embeddedness in rural origins.

Chapter 6 : The Influence of Social Media on Migrants' Families and Communities in Rural China

The average age of rural-urban migrant workers is 43.1 years, with 81.4% being married (NBS, 2024). Not all migrants are able to bring their family members to the urban locations to which they have migrated. A lack of stable economic resources to support family expenses in cities, along with feelings of cultural exclusion, negatively impact migrant families' ability to live together in an urban family home (Goodburn, 2009; Huang and Tao, 2015; Chen et al., 2020). Hukou, China's household registration system, is another important factor. Traditionally, migrants with agricultural hukou have limited access to urban public services, such as children's education, in the urban setting (Chen et al., 2020; Zhou et al., 2022). As a result of migrant household separation, a large number of left-behind family members remains in rural areas. China currently has 47 million left-behind women, 11.9 million rural left-behind children of compulsory education age, and 16 million left-behind elderly (BBC, 2010; Yu, 2019; CCTV, 2022). This demographic is referred to as the "386199 group," with the numbers representing important dates in China: March 8th for Women's Day, June 1st for Children's Day, and September 9th for Elder's Day (Bai and Li, 2008). In some rural areas, where the working-age population predominantly migrates elsewhere, a lack of population and economic vitality has led to a "hollowing out" process (Liu et al., 2010; Liu et al., 2021). Maintaining connections with left-behind individuals and their villages becomes essential for rural-urban migrant workers, as it is deeply rooted in their blood ties and rural embeddedness.

In the research, it was found that for participants, WeChat has replaced the function of phone calls. Since its launch, WeChat has become well-established with an extremely large user base. Its functions encompass all the features of phone calls, making it suitable for use as the primary communication tool. Based on the data analysis, I found that

migrants' embeddedness in their rural origins is concentrated in two aspects: their connections with left-behind family members and their engagement in rural communities. With large-scale rural-urban migration, a significant number of people of working age have left their hometowns. Migration has significantly challenged traditional family customs in rural areas. To adapt and maintain resilience, rural-urban migrants are using the WeChat platform to engage in new forms of interaction and cooperation with left-behind families, thereby fostering long-distance rural embeddedness. Another category is communities, particularly villages as rural communities. For villagers in urban areas, maintaining connections and participating in village activities through WeChat enables them to benefit from these relationships even from a distance. Within the village, there are also sub-communities that facilitate connections between rural-urban migrants and their rural origins. These community connections further foster rural embeddedness for rural-urban migrant workers.

6. 1 Social media and Family members

Family members are widely regarded as the primary anchors that maintain the connection between rural-urban migrant workers and their rural origins. These deep familial ties, rooted in love and a sense of obligation, often serve as powerful motivators for migrants to stay closely connected to their hometowns. In China, the concept of family often has an ambiguous boundary, particularly in rural areas. A family can include any members who are connected through marriage and blood ties, however distant, encompassing countless past, present, and future members. In the field of Chinese anthropology, Fei Xiaotong described rural family relationships as "Chaxu geju." He likened an individual to a stone thrown into water, creating ripples. Social relationships spread out like these ripples, moving further and becoming thinner as they expand. In the innermost circles are the immediate family members—parents, children, and spouses—representing the strongest familial ties (Fei, 1947, p. 33). The bonds with parents, children and spouses

are not merely sentimental but also involve significant social and cultural responsibilities that migrants feel compelled to fulfil. This enduring connection is reinforced through frequent and sustained communication, particularly through modern digital tools like WeChat, which allow rural-urban migrants to stay involved in the daily lives of their family members despite their physical distance. Consequently, these ongoing interactions play a crucial role in strengthening the rural embeddedness of migrant workers.

6. 1. 1 Connecting with Left-Behind Elderly in the Rural Hometown

In traditional Chinese norms, filial piety is a core value in family relationships. Adult children are responsible for caring for their aging parents financially, physically, and emotionally (Luo and Zhan, 2012). Although being a migrant can improve the son or daughter's financial support for elders, it poses significant challenges in monitoring their health conditions and providing companionship. Left-behind elders are highly vulnerable, especially when facing illness, and it is particularly difficult for them to receive timely treatments without an adult living with them (xinhuanet, 2022). Additionally, the research by He and Ye (2014) shows that over 36% of left-behind elderly individuals feel very lonely, with more than 95% of left-behind widowed elderly reporting extreme loneliness. The migration of children can lead to emotional issues among left-behind elders, such as frustration, depression, and anxiety (Zhong and Zhao, 2020). All participants, except for those whose elders in left-behind families have already passed away, believe that WeChat helps them practise their duty of filial piety remotely. The most common way to use WeChat is through its audio and video chat functions to engage in small talk about the elder's health and living conditions, which enables them to monitor their elders' health and understand their needs. Daily conversations via WeChat itself help alleviate the loneliness of left-behind elders, serving as a form of emotional care for them.

“ WeChat definitely makes it easier to stay in touch. Whenever I find a moment, I catch up with my parents; we just chatted today. Our talks usually revolve around whether I’m busy, that sort of thing. I check in with the elders about the weather, asking if they feel the cold since it tends to be chillier back home. I worry more because the elderly at home tend to have higher blood pressure during the colder months. I’m also really worried about them slipping and falling. Since I can’t be there, all I can do is call to show I care” (Xiu, 44 years old, female migrant) .

In addition, participants use WeChat to help mitigate safety risks for their left-behind family members. Previous studies in Western countries show that elderly individuals living in rural areas face potential risks at home, such as uneven floors and rugs. They also encounter hazards due to rural conditions, such as icy roads in winter and the presence of wild animals (Henning-Smith et al. , 2024) In China, the risks that participants in the research are particularly concerned about regarding their left-behind elders are different, but include fire hazards and earthquakes.

In China, the elderly are a vulnerable group when it comes to fire hazards. Improper use of household appliances, burning incense for prayer, and hoarding combustible materials are common habits among Chinese elderly individuals. These practices significantly increase the risk of fire-related accidents among them (Xiao, 2015). In one case, a participant from Jiangxi Province mentioned her concern about fire hazards. She reported that in her hometown, an elderly person had forgotten to turn off an electric blanket, which eventually caught fire after prolonged use. By the time the fire department arrived, the house had already sustained significant damage. After this incident, the participant became highly attentive to fire risks for her left-behind elderly parents and regularly monitors potential fire hazards through WeChat communication.

“ There was a fire near our house; it even made the news . I checked it out and realized it wasn’t too far from our place . I quickly used We Chat to make sure my family was safe. I also reminded the elders at home about how to properly use the electrical appliances and to be careful with fire and electricity. It’s better to be safe than sorry” (Chun, 35 year old, female migrant) .

In another case, a male participant from Sichuan reported his concern about the possibility of left-behind elderly relatives suffering from an earthquake. The male participant’s hometown is in the seismic belt. In 2008, when he was only 9 years old and a primary school student, he experienced the Wenchuan earthquake. The Wenchuan earthquake was one of the most devastating in recent Chinese history, resulting in 69, 227 deaths and 17, 923 people missing (the Wenchuan Earthquake Sichuan Earthquake Relief Chronicle, 2018). The experience of this earthquake profoundly traumatized him. To this day, he habitually searches for news about earthquake warnings in his hometown. Whenever he receives updates about earthquakes in his hometown, he becomes anxious and uses WeChat to check on the situation of his left-behind elderly.

“I pay close attention to earthquake information, mainly checking each year to see if there have been any earthquakes. My hometown is very close to Ya’an and Wenchuan. Because of my experiences, especially with the Wenchuan earthquake, I tend to pay more attention to seismic activity. My parents are still living in my hometown. Sometimes, when I come across news of earthquakes in Sichuan, I get worried and make a WeChat call to check on them. That’s why I focus more on this kind of news” (Ming, 25 years old ,male migrant) .

Through WeChat, rural-urban migrants can monitor the health and safety of left-behind elderly family members, allowing them to practise long-distance filial piety.

This digital connection enhances the quality of life for those left behind, as it facilitates communication and support despite the physical distance.

6. 1. 2 Connecting with Left-Behind Children in the Rural Hometown

Due to parent migration and the phenomenon of left-behind children, parenting becomes quite challenging. When only one parent migrates, the left-behind parent remains as the primary caregiver. However, when both parents migrate, it often results in children living with their grandparents in skip-generation families (Gu, 2022) or with relatives as temporary guardians (Zhang et al. , 2016). WeChat serves as a tool to help parents maintain long-distance relationships with their children, allowing them to engage in their children's lives despite physical absence. WeChat can help reduce the challenges associated with parental absence, allowing parents to fulfill some parenting duties remotely.

6. 1. 2. 1 Left-behind Children's Education

China has proverbs such as “Hope children will become a dragon” and “The carp jumps over the dragon gate and becomes a dragon” In Chinese folklore, the dragon symbolizes auspiciousness and power. These expressions reflect the hope for the next generation to achieve social upward mobility and aspire to become elites. In rural areas, it is a widespread wish of parents for the next generation to become “dragons” (Kong, 2016). The desire for “children to become a dragon” is common among the participants, with many migrating to provide their children with greater educational resources and financial support for education (Lu et al. , 2021)

With one extreme exception— where a participant's ex-husband does not allow her to connect with her children—other participants report that WeChat is their main channel

for remotely “guan” their children. “Guan” is directly translated as “discipline”, but in this context, it implies a caring form of discipline that emphasises parental involvement and supervision with affection, rather than harsh punishment (Du, 2022). Participants make significant efforts to remotely “guan” their children, ensuring that they have the opportunity to “become a dragon”. Participants use WeChat’s audio and video call functions to “guan” their children. Remote “guan” typically includes supervising homework, monitoring their growth progress, and teaching moral values, among other aspects.

“I often make video calls on WeChat to check on my child’s studies because I worry about their education. What parent doesn’t want to be right there to guan them? It’s only because I have no choice but to work away from home. The grandparents don’t really get how to teach schoolwork, and even if they did, it wouldn’t matter because they tend to spoil the child. I have to manage my child through WeChat. I try to be more strict during the video calls. Also, when I assign educational tasks to the grandparents to carry out on my behalf, they end up not enforcing them at all. They spoil the child too much. Whenever the child is naughty, they just won’t enforce the rules I’ve set for guan the child” (Jun, 35 year old, male migrant) .

Two participants mentioned that they also follow their children’s schools through WeChat Official Accounts . WeChat Official Accounts are a one-to-many platform which allows for content to be published and distributed to a wide audience on WeChat. WeChat Official Accounts offer several features. They can send mass notifications and content to a broad audience, automatically reply to users based on predefined keywords to provide routine information, and offer one-to-one communication for personalised

responses to specific queries. WeChat Official Accounts support the publishing of text, images, audio, and video content. Schools can register a WeChat Official Account to publish a variety of information, such as work schedules, target setting, school activities, and instructions for parents on how to cooperate (Zhu and Zhao, 2024). WeChat Official Accounts provide an additional channel for parents to stay informed about their children's educational status, reducing the need to inquire directly with their children and elderly family members. Children and elderly family members may either miss important information or misunderstand it. Moreover, participants in the research have reported that they prefer using WeChat Official Accounts and WeChat messages from schools rather than receiving phone calls from school teachers, especially if the matters are not urgent. They find that calls from schools can be stressful, as they worry about potential issues with their children before answering.

“I have the school’s WeChat Official Account and am in the school We Chat group. Information about fees or activities the children are participating in—you as a parent need to know. I rely on the WeChat Official Account to keep up with what’s happening at school” (Yu, 34 years old, female migrant) .

However, using WeChat to communicate with left-behind children also introduces new challenges for long-distance parenting. Over 90% of Chinese families impose restrictions on their children's internet use (CNNIC, 2024). This concern is also evident among the participants, who are worried about problematic smartphone use. Left-behind children, without the presence of their parents, are more likely to experience mental well-being issues, leading to a higher risk of problematic smartphone use compared to their non-left-behind peers. Supervising their phone use presents a significant challenge (Shan et al. , 2023; Wu et al. , 2024). The policy ‘*Strengthening the Management of Mobile Phones for Primary and Secondary School Students*’ issued by the Office of the Ministry of

Education states that mobile phones are generally not allowed on school premises. Schools are required to inform students and parents that, as a general rule, personal mobile phones should be prohibited in campus. If a student needs to bring a mobile phone, they must obtain parental consent and submit a written application. Once in school, the mobile phone must be handed over to the school for safekeeping and it is not allowed in the classroom (gov. cn, 2021). This policy has heightened participants' concerns about their children's smartphone usage. Two participants mentioned that they bought Xiaotiancai watch phones as a replacement for WeChat. Xiaotiancai watch phones are smartwatches designed specifically for children. These watches work through an app that parents set up on their smartphones. The app allows parents to call their children, who can then answer video or audio calls directly on their watch, but the watch cannot be used to access games or social media apps which are solely for leisure purposes.

“My child is ten years old, so I definitely need to stay in touch with him. I used to give him an old-style phone, but now I've got him a smartwatch. I prefer him using the watch because I'm worried he might get too addicted to a smartphone.” (Xiu , 44 years old, female migrant)

“Yeah, I don't let my kids use smartphones, and they don't watch TV either—both of my kids are like that. So, I bought them smartwatches instead. The school doesn't allow phones anyway, so most of the time, the phones just stay at home. When we need to get in touch, we use an old-style phone at home. The kids don't have WeChat or smartphones”. (Wei, 35 years old, male migrant)

6. 1. 2. 2 Aspects of Everyday Life

Alinejad (2019) mentioned that social media platforms and mobile devices play a key role in creating emotional experiences of togetherness despite long-distance and long-

term separation. Chinese rural-urban migrant workers often face overwork (Zhang et al. , 2023), driven both by their desire to extend working hours to earn more money and by the inadequate protection of their legal right to vacation time (People's Daily, 2014). Even when they wish to take time off, obtaining permission from their employers is often difficult. Chinese rural-urban migrant workers typically return home only for a few public holidays, such as the Spring Festival. Their home visits are typically short-term and cyclical, often occurring only during major festivals (Li, 2014; T. Zhou et al. , 2020). For rural-urban migrants, returning home on non-festival days solely for family time is challenging. In-person family reunions are a luxury for these migrants. Using WeChat, they can participate in their children's daily lives from a distance, thereby reducing the effects of their absence from their children's upbringing.

Food is a basic necessity for left-behind children, and it is something that all guardians should provide. A large number of studies show that left-behind children tend to have poorer physical health compared to their non-left-behind peers. Left-behind children receive less than 60% of the recommended intake of protein, zinc, calcium, and vitamins. Left-behind children are more likely to suffer from malnutrition, stunted growth, underweight, poor nutrition, and anaemia (Wu and Guo, 2020). Parental migration negatively impacts the monitoring of children's nutritional intake, and guardians have less awareness of left-behind children's physical condition (Zhang et al. , 2013). WeChat has become a tool for sending remittances. Since WeChat supports money transactions, migrant parents can link their bank cards to WeChat and transfer money directly to the guardians of left-behind children. This makes financial support for left-behind children's nutrition more immediate and accessible. WeChat's communication function also helps migrant parents monitor their children's food intake and their growth, reducing the likelihood that the health of left-behind children goes unnoticed.

“My husband and I have both come to the city for work, so we’ve left our child in my sister-in-law’s care. We stay in touch occasionally through WeChat and use it to send money for her care. My sister-in-law has two children of her own, and with my child, there are three kids in total—all girls. My child isn’t used to the food my sister-in-law cooks and has become thin and small. I can only tell her on WeChat not to be picky about food. After all, my sister-in-law has three kids to look after, plus she has to do farm work and house chores. It’s not realistic to expect her to cook an extra meal just for my child. ” (Yong, 29 years old, male migrant)

Sending clothes and shoes to left-behind children is a common way for migrant parents to strengthen their family relationships. Beyond meeting the children's material needs, this gesture reinforces emotional bonds (Gan, 2023). Previous studies have found that left-behind children are more satisfied with their clothes compared to non-left-behind children, as migrant parents buy clothing for them more frequently. However, the cleanliness and state of repair of these clothes are often worse for left-behind children (Ye et al. , 2006). With WeChat, migrants can better understand their children's preferences and sizes, which is typically gathered through daily interactions that they would otherwise often miss due to migration. Social media helps migrants send clothing to left-behind children, building intimacy and demonstrating their care for them.

“Since my son's birthday is coming up, I wanted to buy him a pair of sports shoes because he loves sports. He's now in the fourth grade, and I remembered his mom mentioning that he wears size 36 shoes, so I ordered a pair in that size. However, as soon as the shoes arrived, my wife called me on WeChat saying they were too small. I was confused because I was sure it was size 36. She laughed at me, reminding me that I had asked about his shoe size half a year ago, and his feet have grown since then. The shoes were bought online, so I took a screenshot of the

purchase and sent it to her, asking her to contact the seller to exchange them for the correct size”. (Cheng, 39 years old, male migrant)

However, none of the research participants believes that remote interaction can match the intimacy of in-person interactions. In the interviews, when researchers asked if social media interactions with family members could replace in-person interactions, all participants immediately responded, “No, definitely not”. A feeling of emptiness stems from the lack of quality companionship and loss of many high-quality parent-child interactions. A participant returned to her rural family to see her children on her last birthday. Her children surprised her by suddenly presenting her with flowers as birthday gifts. At that moment, she felt truly gratified and cherished the experience deeply. This year, she is staying in Wenzhou for her birthday. Although her children wished her a happy birthday via WeChat video, she feels a deep sense of emptiness.

“When I first came here, I really missed my kids. Without them by my side, it feels very empty. It’s definitely better when they’re around. Every time I video call them, I wish we could be with each other in person . There are some things that just can’t be compensated for emotionally, and there’s a lot that We Chat can’t do. I just want to hug my children and see them in person” (Ping, 35 years old, female migrant) .

6.1.2.2 Long-Distance Parenting Cooperation

The caregiving pattern for left-behind children is not fixed. Families have their own dynamics and adjustments to mitigate the impact of the absence due to migration. Over the long course of migration, parent-child interaction patterns are flexible, existing in a middle state between permanent separation and constant reunification. In migrant-sending provinces, a significant phenomenon occurs during summer and winter vacations: left-behind children travel to the cities where migrants work, only to return to

rural areas once the vacation ends. These children are referred to as "Little Migratory Birds." (Zhu, 2011). This dynamic parenting pattern requires remote cooperation between the migrants and the left-behind caregivers. In this research, I found that left-behind wives and migrant husbands deliberately shift parenting roles for short periods to ensure that children can build intimacy with the migrant parent. This often occurs when children are sent to the cities during vacations. Left-behind wives sometimes accompany the children to join their family, but in other cases, they remain in the rural area and guide their migrant husbands' parenting from a distance through WeChat.

For example, one male participant in the research mentioned that his 8-year-old son and wife are left behind in their rural hometown. When school closes for the summer and winter holidays, his wife usually brings their son to Wenzhou for a family reunion. This year, as the wife had urgent matters to attend to in their rural hometown and could not stay in Wenzhou, they both agreed it was important for their son to spend time with his father. As a result, they decided to send their son to Wenzhou, allowing the father to parent his son for the summer. Because the participant in the research has been a migrant for many years, he lacks sufficient parenting experience and is eager to build intimacy with his son. His wife was concerned that he might end up spoiling their son during this time. Every day, she called the participant to carefully check on their son's situation and provided detailed parenting tips through WeChat.

“During the summer vacation, my wife sent my son over for me to take care of him for a few days. I took the boy out for barbecue and ate fish balls, trying to bond with him. Every night, I had to report back on his' activities via WeChat. My wife kept reminding me to keep an eye on his homework and not just let him have fun. There was one winter break when I focused too much on playing with the kid and didn't pay

much attention to his studies. When he returned home, his homework was completely unfinished, and my wife was furious (Qiu, 45 years old, male migrant)”

Migration creates a strong demand for long-distance parenting. WeChat's voice and video chat functions allow parents to engage with left-behind family members, and they provide a form of long-distance companionship with their children. This helps reduce the negative impact on children's education and daily life, supportive cooperative parenting between couples despite the separation, helping to mitigate some of the challenges brought by family separation.

6. 1. 3 Left-behind Women in the Rural Hometown

In traditional Chinese ideology, men are viewed as embodying the masculine role of breadwinners, while women are expected to fulfil a more feminine role, managing the household, caring for family members, and taking on domestic chores. Domestic tasks, such as daily household chores and family care, have traditionally been regarded as women's natural responsibilities (Brownell and Wasserstrom, 2002). These traditional ideologies remain deeply entrenched in rural China. In the era of large-scale rural-urban migration, when family caregiving demands in rural areas are high and spouses cannot both migrate to work simultaneously, women, influenced by traditional ideology, often stay behind. With their husbands migrating for work, left-behind women are burdened with managing all household affairs. In addition, they are often required to participate in agricultural or other production activities to earn income in their rural communities (Jacka, 2012; Luo et al. , 2017). Left-behind women struggle to maintain a functioning family in the absence of their husbands, and with insufficient public support (Ye et al. , 2016). Even when women have migrated to cities, they are often pushed out of the labour market once they become pregnant (Chu, 2016). Many lack access to maternity insurance in urban areas, rendering them ineligible for reimbursement in city hospitals. Being

unable to afford the costs of giving birth and raising children in urban settings, many are forced to return to their rural hometowns, relying on local resources to manage maternity (Wang, 2022). These circumstances force migrant women to halt their migration trajectories, and the result is that they become left-behind women. The heavy workload, loneliness, stress and vulnerability to sexual assault and robbery make left-behind women an at-risk group, often leading to poor overall well-being (BBC, 2010). WeChat provides a platform for left-behind women to express their struggles and hardships to their husbands, giving them a voice to highlight their contributions to the family. Previous research indicates that left-behind women use ICT to have conversations with their migrant husbands (Ye et al. , 2016;). In the findings of this research, ICT has largely been replaced by WeChat for such discussions.

6. 1. 3. 1 Left-Behind Women as Mothers

A primary reason husbands migrate to the city is to earn money to better invest in their children's education, while wives stay behind mainly to care for and educate the children, especially if there is no other suitable guardian. In children's education, it is very common for migrant husbands to provide financial support while wives provide care, forming cooperative and interdependent relationships between couples. (Ye and Wu, 2014). Migrant families describe this as a choice, a self-sacrificing separation for the sake of their children's future (Wu and Ye, 2016). Through WeChat, left-behind women can better discuss and cooperate with their migrant husbands, identify any problems that may threaten their children's education, and maximize educational opportunities and resources for their children. Should this cooperation face problems from the migrant husband's side, WeChat allows left-behind women to quickly assess any impact on their children's education, giving them more time to take action.

“My wife thinks I’m spending too much money while I’m away and told me to send back more. It’s time to pay for the kids’ school expenses, but we’re short of money. Whatever the school says about the deadline, we have to meet it. I told her to figure it out, and then she started arguing with me on WeChat, asking if I was wasting money drinking and smoking. She complained, saying she’s the one managing everything—our kids’ and looking after our parents. She said I’ve left the entire family for her to handle. She’s also working back home, while I’m only responsible for earning money. She thinks I don’t worry about anything at home, yet I don’t send enough back to support our children’s education. She said that if we keep living like this, then what’s the point of me working away from home?” (Bo, 40 years old, male migrant).

6. 1. 3. 2 Left-behind Women as Daughters-in-Law

When the husband migrates to the city, the left-behind women and elderly have to rely on each other to maintain daily family life. If the elderly parents’ health declines, this can potentially lead left-behind women to endure the burden of caring for them (Ye et al. , 2014). WeChat, as a communication channel, can help migrant workers become quickly aware of the elderly care situation, allowing for immediate updates. It also helps them better understand the intensive care burden on left-behind women.

“My wife and mom look out for each other since I’m busy working. My mom usually makes dinner, but one time she cut her finger while chopping vegetables. The knife was really sharp, and she ended up with a deep cut on her index finger that wouldn’t stop bleeding. My wife took her to a nearby small hospital, where the doctor gave her a tetanus shot. However, the small hospital recommended that we take my mom to a bigger hospital for better care. When they arrived at the hospital, it was late evening. At the big hospital, they put in three IV drips. The doctor didn’t let my wife

sleep because she needed to keep an eye on the IVs. When one finished, she had to let the nurse know to replace it with a new one. By the time that the three IV drips had finished, the sky started to lighten up. My wife called my younger sister first because she was in our hometown and had a car to help. My sister could assist. After my wife got my mother treated, she used WeChat call me. I was out and couldn't do anything, so my wife took care of the emergency first and then filled me in on what happened. I used WeChat to call my mom and have a caring chat. I also saw a picture of her injured finger. That was all I could do, but I was so worried. ”

(Rui, 34 years old, male migrant).

6. 1. 3. 3 Left -Behind Women as Wives

When men migrate for economic reasons, women are left behind, leading to strains on marital life and diminished intimacy as economic stability takes precedence over marital satisfaction. Left-behind women, due to their husbands' absence, often face both physical and mental health issues. Physically, the long-term burden of caregiving, household chores, and farming can lead to exhaustion, placing left-behind women in a state of poor health. If a left-behind woman suffers from an illness, she may experience a significant lack of care from her husband. Especially with chronic illnesses, left-behind women often hesitate to ask their husbands to return to care for them due to fear of risking their husbands' jobs. By the time they request help, their condition has often worsened significantly (Ye et al. , 2014). Mentally, left-behind women often experience prolonged feelings of loneliness, sexual frustration, depression, anxiety, and a lack of security. Without their husbands in the family, the need for emotional support and overall mental well-being often goes unnoticed and unaddressed (Qiu et al, 2018). WeChat provides a

platform for migrant husbands and left-behind women to stay in communication, but it cannot replace in-person connection.

“My wife was diagnosed with cataracts, which isn’t an emergency, but the doctor thinks she needs surgery. Since I’m away, I can’t take care of her. She really hopes I can come back for a few days to be with her during the surgery. Afterward, her eyes will be bandaged, and she’ll need help in daily life. The elderly and children at home also need care, and I’ll need to take her for recovery check-ups after the surgery. I really hope the surgery can be scheduled during the holidays, so I can use my time off to handle this. However, the doctors will also be on holiday during that time, and there won’t be many available. The doctors prefer not to schedule surgeries during holidays since they only arrange urgent procedures then. My wife mentioned that while waiting for me, her cataracts have worsened”. (Kai, 52 years old, male migrant).

6. 1. 3. 4 Left-Behind Women as Maintainers of ‘Renqing’

Every region has different renqing norms regarding specific situations, but in general, they all refer to maintaining mutual economic and social support. Renqing practices are most evident in ceremonial and ritual situations, such as weddings and funerals (Jiao, 2022). In non-migrant families, both husband and wife typically engage in renqing practices. However, in migrant families, it mainly falls to the left-behind women to carry out these practices within rural society. For left-behind women, engaging in renqing practices is an important way to ensure their family remains connected to the rural hometown's social network and does not lose social capital (Liang and Qi, 2013). If the husband is not living in the family home, traditional renqing practices, which usually require both spouses' involvement, are disrupted. New renqing practices must be navigated to ensure the family stays within the norm of renqing obligations, while

ensuring that these remain manageable for the left-behind women. Through WeChat, migrant husbands and left-behind women can discuss renqing practices, navigate each obligation together, and determine how to handle them. This allows them to maintain the subtlety and flexibility required in renqing practices.

“For red and white celebrations⁶, it's customary to give cash gifts. My wife represents our family along with two elders, and if it's a holiday Sunday, she takes our child too. When our child was younger, it didn't matter much if she attended, but now she fills my role. Typically, children give separate cash gifts after starting their own families. Since I'm away for work, my wife combines our family's cash gifts with my parents' into one large red envelope⁷, and we discuss the amount through WeChat. When a relative gets married or a cousin is starting their own family, my wife informs me via WeChat. We discuss how much to give, and I usually send some money through Wechat. Typically, I send my portion first, and then the elders back home add a little more, combining everything into that large red envelope”. (Zhi , 41 years old, male migrant).

6. 1. 3. 5 Left-behind Women as Farm Workers

With men migrating for non-agricultural employment in pursuit of monetary income, the labour distribution between husband and wife changes. In addition to caregiving and household chores, which are traditionally seen as women's responsibilities, left-behind women also need to take on additional duties that traditionally belong to men, such as farming. On average, left-behind women need to farm 0. 24 hectares, working around 8. 5 hours per day (Sun, 2018). Left-behind women gain more autonomy and decision-

⁶ In China, red in rituals symbolizes joyful events like weddings, birthdays, business openings, and housewarmings. White, on the other hand, is used in ceremonies to convey solemnity and respect, especially in funerals

⁷ In renqing practices, a red envelope symbolizes economic support, where money is gifted in a red packet to give others

making power in farming in the absence of their husbands, a role they traditionally did not have the right to undertake (Tang, 2023). However, with this increased power in farming, the importance and value of agricultural work have diminished, with lower expectations placed on it.

“I don’t handle any of the farm work anymore; my wife takes care of all that. We don’t really discuss farming on WeChat either. The main income comes from my job. Occasionally, we might chat about it, but she makes the decisions about what to plant—like fruit trees, eggplants, radishes—and she also keeps a few chickens for eggs. It’s mostly for our own use, though sometimes we’ll take extra to family or friends in town (An, 46 year old, male migrant).”

WeChat provides an open channel for communication between migrant husbands and left-behind women, giving women a voice to share their situations directly. This also enables migrant husbands to engage more with rural hometown affairs through their wives, allowing them to stay informed and involved despite the physical distance. WeChat enables couples to coordinate on daily tasks and household maintenance, improving overall organisation. However, despite this added connectivity, left-behind women continue to carry significant burdens, including heavy caregiving responsibilities, Renqing social pressures, and agricultural work. Online communication does not ameliorate the sacrifices these women make.

6. 2 Lineage Cooperation in the Rural Hometown

Lineage networks, which include individuals with kinship ties to rural-urban migrants, can be traced back through unilinear ancestry in a family tree or genealogy book (Foltz et al. , 2020). Well-organized lineage networks possess cohesiveness and a group identity (Xu and Yao, 20155). Lineage is traditionally based on patrilineal descent and genealogy

(Cohen, 1990). In this system, male members are considered to belong to a lineage from birth, while women are integrated into their husband's lineage through marriage, typically becoming acquainted with other lineage members only after their marriage. In traditional contexts, lineage members are closely bound through rites, close personal interactions and cooperation (Guo and Herrmann-Pillath, 2019). However, with younger lineage members being rural-urban migrants, participating in traditional lineage activities offline has become more challenging due to the increased physical distance between members. Consequently, lineage practices have shifted to online WeChat groups, or a combination of both online and offline. In China, lineages often have dedicated WeChat groups that span across generations, bringing all the members into contact with one another. These groups have become spaces for carrying out lineage activities and displaying lineage membership. In daily life, lineage WeChat groups are used for casual chatting, sharing life moments, and building intimacy and solidarity online (Xiong, 2024). When help is needed, cooperation becomes a key function of lineage. On one hand, as blood relatives, the interactions among lineage members are naturally repetitive. Members often anticipate that they may need assistance from their lineage in the future, which motivates them to provide help when requested. The long-term nature of these interactions helps foster a sense of mutual reciprocity and expectation (Coate and Ravallion, 1993). On the other hand, if a lineage member refuses to assist others, they may be excluded from lineage benefits and ostracised (Basu, 1986). Therefore, cooperation is very common among lineage members. WeChat groups facilitate the maintenance and strengthening of lineage cooperation by making requests for help and responses quicker and more accessible across distances. In the research finding, four participants shared similar experiences: when their left-behind children were sick, they requested which lineage members still remained in their hometowns to take care of them.

“Sometimes when my child gets sick, I worry because I can’t be there . My child’s aunt lives back home, so I send her a message on We Chat asking her to go and help out. It’s tough being so far away” (Shu, 34 years old, female migrant) .

Participants also mentioned their assistance to lineage members. For example, a male participant from Fujian Province shared how he donated blood to his cousin. During the COVID-19 period, the number of voluntary blood donors dropped significantly. In February 2020, the total amount of blood donations nationwide decreased by approximately 67% compared with the same period in previous years (Wang and Wang). During that time, the participant's cousin became ill and needed a blood transfusion. The cousin’s parents, who are the participant’s uncle and aunt, decided to call for blood donations through the lineage WeChat group. A call for blood was made in the lineage WeChat group, where members could quickly share the state of their health, their location, and their availability. Wechat facilitated a highly efficient response to the blood donation request. Young lineage members, including the participants, who had migrated to different locations, traveled to the hospital where the cousin was waiting for blood. Their donations helped resolve the blood shortage.

“There was this one time my cousin got sick. The older generation couldn’t donate blood, so they contributed money instead. She really needed a lot of blood at that time. We called on lineage members in the WeChat group to donate because there wasn’t enough blood available. The younger members of our lineage were eager to help and raced to donate. Normally, we’re too busy to donate blood without a specific reason. I’ve donated blood twice; once to save my cousin. The other time, I donated because being a volunteer blood donor could help my daughter get admitted to a public school. ” (Ping, 35 years old, male migrant) .

6. 3 Natal Family Networks in the Rural Hometown

In modern China, married daughters' relationships with their natal families are gradually becoming closer. In traditional Chinese family norms, married women have often been metaphorically referred to as "spilt water" because, upon marriage, they are considered outsiders to their natal family and become part of their husband's lineage. Married women typically fulfil filial duties to their parents-in-law, rather than to their birth parents (Croll, 1983). In the People's Republic of China, government policies promoting marketisation and birth control have contributed to an increase in women's employment and education as well as declining fertility rates, leading to a weakening of traditional values (Zhang, 2009). Women now also participate in filial practices for their natal families, roles that were previously handled exclusively by their brothers (Wong, 2016). Even after marriage, female participants continue to collaborate with their natal family members to improve the quality of life for their elderly birth parents via Wechat.

"Recently, I was catching up with my mom over WeChat and learned she was having joint issues. I use WeChat calls to stay in touch, and when I need someone to stand in for me, I reach out. I arranged for my nephew (my brother's son), who's still in our rural hometown, to take her to see an orthopedist. We mostly communicate through WeChat, using both calls and messages. If it turns out she needs surgery, like a joint replacement, I'll definitely go to see her." (Xi, 41 years old, female migrant)

Married women's brothers often serve as their protectors and supporters. They are seen as a source of backing, which can help prevent married siblings from being abused in their marital homes and uphold the dignity of their natal family. Married women's brothers usually hold a position of respect across various Chinese ethnic groups and regional cultures. As uncles, they are expected to receive high respect from their nephews

and possess a significant voice in decisions concerning their nephews' affairs (Obendiek and Helena, 2013; Liu and Hu, 2013; Peng, 1989). This custom is maintained through WeChat, whose functions enable brothers to support their married siblings and exercise their role as uncles, even if they are living away as migrants and their siblings are not in their rural hometowns.

It should be noted that support from the natal family (a brother 's support for his married sister and her children) via WeChat is not as frequent as daily interactions between children and parents; it typically arises in specific situations when needed. For example, during the spring of 2024 when researchers conducted fieldwork at the factory, no male participants mentioned providing support to their married sisters or nephews. However, in an August update, several male participants reported that as uncles, they were consulted by their married sisters via WeChat for advice on choosing universities or schools for their nephews. Since university and high school entrance examinations typically occur in the summer, this period represents a critical time when middle-aged male participants acting as uncles, are called upon to provide support and advice. One male participant was excited when his nephew's university entrance exam results were released, showing that his nephew had scored highly enough to qualify for a prestigious 985 university. Generally speaking, the term "985" in China refers to top-tier universities, similar to the Russell Group in the UK or the Ivy League in the US. His younger sister naturally reached out via WeChat to involve the male participant in choosing a university, as she trusts her brother's judgment and finds him reliable.

"I have a sister who married many years ago. This year, her son took the university entrance exams and did very well. My sister sent me his transcript and his college preferences over WeChat. Recently, we spent a lot of time online researching which universities are good, what the previous admission scores were like, and

which majors have promising prospects. We've had discussions over WeChat to decide on his university applications. I acted as an advisor. Eventually, we settled on applying for a major in Electronic Information at a 985 university, and he was accepted. After his acceptance, my sister and brother-in-law hosted a teacher appreciation dinner, and I even took time off to attend it. ” (Ning, 50 years old, male migrant)

WeChat helps migrants maintain connections with their social networks, preserving mutual support and cooperation within the community. This digital link supports access to social resources and encourages collective assistance even across distances. This is important for long-term social network maintenance.

6. 4 Social Media and Community

The Chinese have a long-standing tradition of living in clusters of blood relatives (through the male line). In this system, a village typically consists of one or multiple lineages. Many villages are named after the lineage surname, such as “Zhang’ Village” or “Li’ Village, ” further illustrating this practice (Zhang and Zhang, 2021). Non-lineage individuals can integrate into a village by owning land or marrying into a lineage. If they do not, they may still be marginalized even if they reside in the village (Fei, 1947, p. 79). Although lineage members and village residents often overlap to some extent, this chapter includes a section on villages because they are fundamental units for rural life and governance (Sun et al. , 2021). Additionally, villages comprise a diversity of sub-communities, which enriches the discussion on rural embeddedness.

6. 4. 1 Village Activities

One village activity involving rural-urban migrant workers through WeChat is the payment of the New Rural Cooperative Medical System (NRCMS) and the Old-Age Pension Plan for Urban and Rural Residents. China has multiple public insurance schemes. For medical insurance, there is the Urban Employees Basic Medical Insurance, the New Rural Cooperative Medical System, and the Urban Residents Basic Medical Insurance. For pension insurance, the schemes include the Old-Age Insurance for Urban Employees and the Old-Age Pension Plan for Urban and Rural Residents (NHSA, 2021; Liu and Sun, 2016). Legally, rural-urban migrant workers are eligible to participate in insurance schemes designed for urban employees. However, in practice, several factors complicate this participation. For instance, the insurance schemes for urban employees often require employers to contribute a portion of the premium. Driven by cost concerns, many employers are reluctant to include rural-urban migrant workers in these schemes. Additionally, since the insurance schemes for urban employees are tied to specific workplaces, transferring insurance can be challenging when changing jobs (Deng et al., 2023; Chan and Hui, 2017; Gao et al., 2012). Some participants mentioned that they lack insurance coverage as urban employees. When village leaders announced the initiation of rural insurance scheme payments in the village WeChat group, it provided them with an alternative. If participating in the urban employee insurance scheme is too difficult, rural-urban migrants can instead join the rural insurance scheme as village members. Since their hukou (household registration) is still registered in their rural hometown, they are eligible to participate in the rural insurance scheme, even if they no longer reside there physically.

This way, they would still have access to some form of insurance, serving as a safety net. A few participants initially lacked awareness about insurance, feeling that they were still too young to be concerned about it. However, upon seeing many villagers following the

village leaders and participating in insurance payments through the village WeChat group, they experienced a sense of crowd mentality. To align with their fellow villagers, they also decided to contribute to the New Rural Cooperative Medical System (NRCMS) and the Old-Age Pension Plan for Urban and Rural Residents.

During the process of paying for rural insurance, some participants in the research used WeChat to connect with well-known individuals in the village, asking them to submit the insurance premium payments to the village committee on their behalf. Participants can also use WeChat to pay insurance premiums directly. WeChat serves not just as a communication tool but also as a meta-platform featuring a channel called Life Payments, where users can pay insurance premiums and other bills.

Back in our hometown, there's a WeChat group for the whole village, including the village chief. They post any relevant information there, anything that comes up, really. Yes, it's basically the village group, managed by the village chief and other officials. Usually, we discuss things like when we need to make payments for pensions or medical insurance. They'll remind us in the group to make our payments. We mainly talk about those things; I don't chat much otherwise. When the time comes, everyone pays. It doesn't look good if you don't. "

(Fen, 39 years old, female migrant)

According to Twine, citizenship is a 'three-legged stool' and can be divided into political, civil, and social citizenship (Dwyer, 2010). Rights-based social citizenship includes citizens' right to enjoy appropriate welfare and security to maintain a basic living standard, corresponding to the government's responsibility to provide social welfare (Yang et al. , 2022). Participating in social insurance, as a social citizenship practice requires help from the village. China's welfare system has a significant characteristic:

welfare is segmented by region. With participation in rural insurance schemes, government welfare has regional boundaries: citizens are fully entitled to welfare in their rural origin but only partially entitled in their host city (Xu, 2016). Although the village encourages them to participate in the rural origin's insurance scheme, providing some protection when insurance is needed in rural area, this limits participants to only partial social citizenship in the host city. Facing this situation, participants need to gather information to figure out the best solutions for accessing social citizenship and achieving maximum personal benefits.

Since village members, especially in areas with a migrant culture, often have multiple people migrating to the same places, they may have experienced similar dilemmas before and can help participants understand how best to manage different situations. In this regard, communication among village members can provide important information.

“Once, I had some bleeding in my stool and wanted to see a doctor. Since I was working out of my village, I was worried my social insurance wouldn't work well here, and going back home for treatment seemed like a hassle. I thought I'd see if anyone else had dealt with this. I asked two people from my village who are also working in Wenzhou. One of them said that big hospitals here should be fine; there's a new policy, so if I take my insurance card to a major hospital in Wenzhou, they should be able to swipe it. And if not, the hospital can show me how to activate it. The other person hadn't tried it personally, but his relative used rural insurance for treatment here in Wenzhou. It worked, but they had to pay more out of pocket and didn't get as much reimbursed. After thinking it over for a while, I realized the big hospital here is too far from where I work. I'd have to go back to my hometown eventually, and I have other things to take care of there, so I decided to wait until

I'm back in my hometown to get checked. That way, if I need treatment, it'll be a bit more affordable. " (Na, 48 years old, female migrant)

6. 4. 2 Sub Communities' Activities in in the Rural Hometown

Chastity, or 'zhenjie' in Chinese, has a long history in the lives of Chinese women. Chastity refers not only to sexual fidelity but also to a broader set of behavioural norms aimed at preventing sexual and social improprieties (Hinsch, 2003). In Chinese rural culture, the gender norm of "nannvshoushoubuqing" emphasizes a strict separation between men and women, advocating for distinct roles with minimal overlap in daily life. This separation extends even to marital relationships, where interactions are predominantly regulated and revolve around economic cooperation and childbearing, rather than emotional intimacy or psychological connection. The expectation of emotional distance between spouses often leads to a stronger reliance on same-sex friendships and same- sex social groups for emotional support, which fulfil an essential role in maintaining an individual's emotional well-being (Fei, 1947).

Even as these traditional concepts have gradually diminished with the influence of modernisation and urbanisation, the strong cohesion within same-sex village groups persists. One female participant told me that married women, whether they married within or outside their birth village, are all part of the same WeChat group, where she refers to the members as her "sisters" . They share similarities in gender, background, and marital status, allowing them to better understand each other emotionally and provide more effective psychological support. This empathy and support enhance their solidarity (Yalom and Brown, 2015). This solidarity continues to play a crucial role in maintaining migrants' attachment to their home villages, despite the physical distance created by migration.

In our village, when the girls get married, we create a WeChat group just for us . Hahaha, it's not for gossiping about our husbands, but more for talking about our kids, our husbands. It's sisterhood feeling. ” (Rong, 32 years old, female migrant)

6. 5 Summary

This chapter finds that social media enables a strong, long-distance attachment to rural origins. Even without a physical presence in their home area, rural -urban migrants can maintain rural embeddedness. Firstly, the findings in this chapter suggest that social media helps rural-urban migrant workers maintain strong connections with close family members, including parents, children, and spouses. Migrants can practice filial piety from afar by offering emotional support and monitoring the health and safety of elderly relatives, providing them with protection. Social media also enables migrants to participate in their children's education, monitor their daily lives, support healthy development, and alleviate some of the negative effects of parental absence. By cooperating with children's guardians through these platforms, migrants gain flexibility and adaptability in their parenting roles. Traditional gender norms often dictate that, in migrant couples, men leave to earn additional income while women stay behind to manage family responsibilities. Social media allows migrant husbands to stay in touch with their wives, bridging the distance in a way that supports household management. Wives can discuss children's education, elderly care, personal needs, social obligations, and farm work with their husbands, fostering effective long-distance teamwork.

Secondly, social media also strengthens ties with members of the extended family, including lineage connections and natal family connections. Lineage connections provide not only daily communication but also mutual support, serving as important social resources for rural migrant workers. The migrant workers can gain social resources from

these connections while also being valuable social resources themselves. Social media also enables female migrants to move beyond traditional family expectations, fostering a deeper attachment to their natal families.

Finally, social media supports migrants in maintaining a strong, sustained connection to their rural communities. Even though rural-urban migrants leave their rural origins, the village remains a unit that helps them access public welfare and guides them toward social citizenship. In China, social insurance is segmented and has regional boundaries. Rural-urban migrant workers, as cross-regional labourers, enjoy and practice social citizenship that is still linked to their rural origins. Via social media, they participate in social insurance schemes in their rural origins and learn to practise social citizenship via the social networks established in the rural community. In addition, rural communities form sub-community groups that maintain long-distance connections through social media, serving as a form of mental support.

Chapter 7. The Influence of Social Media on Factory Workers' Leisure Time and Pursuits

In transnational migrant research, scholars have found that leisure helps develop ethnic identity among young migrants and adults, while also reducing stress, improving self-esteem, and increasing life satisfaction (Kim et al. , 2011; Li and Stodolska, 2022). Leisure activities also help migrants form new connections, acquire cultural and language skills, and deepen their understanding of the host society (Li, 2006; Stodolska, 2013). Leisure is also important in contributing to the daily lives of Chinese rural-urban migrants. Leisure, for migrants, is a realm that can create emotional closeness to both the host society and their places of origin, while also shaping and transforming the migration experience (Mata-Codesal et al. , 2015). Before the social media era, reading second-hand newspapers and books was the most popular leisure activity for Chinese rural-urban migrant workers, whose financial and time constraints limited their leisure options (Li, 2006). With the widespread use of social media among Chinese rural-urban migrant workers, engaging with social media has become a common leisure activity (Wang, 2016).

In the previous chapter's discussion of Chinese rural-urban migrants' social media usage, the focus was primarily on the utilitarian use of social media. This chapter shifts attention to its everyday use for leisure and relaxation, a topic that has not received enough attention but represents a meaningful contribution to the lived realities of rural-urban migrants. This chapter will explore the leisure uses of social media through different dimensions and practices of engagement, showing how free time spent on social media can deepen both rural and urban embeddedness. Rural embeddedness is strengthened when migrants engage with their hometown's local traditions and special qualities via social media, thereby enhancing their attachment to their hometowns. Urban embeddedness, on the other hand, happens when migrants are influenced by urban modernisation through social media, which shapes their thoughts and actions.

Additionally, rural-urban migrants can absorb urban culture and gain information about the host city to better adapt to their new environment.

7.1 Rural Embeddedness in Social Media Leisure

Within China, the regional disparities are substantial and manifest in many and various ways. Within the predominantly Han nation, regional differences such as geography, climate, and local products further divide the country into various sub-cultural circles, each with its own unique traditions and social practices (Zhu et al. , 2022). Beyond the Han ethnic majority, China is home to 55 officially recognized ethnic minorities, categorized according to shared territory, language, economic structures, and psychological make-up (Wu and Ingram, 2019). These many cultural variations contribute to the diversity of China's broader cultural landscape. Chinese cities are undergoing a rapid process of homogenization (Chen, 2020) whereas local tradition has been better preserved in rural communities. In this research study, the majority of the participants' social media usage revolves around their lives in their rural origins; rurality is a significant aspect of their content browsing and recording. Their ongoing contact with their home region via social media reinforces to them the unique qualities and characteristics of their origins, underscoring that these memories are tied to specific places rather than any random rural area in China. Their rural memories and attachments are refreshed, clarified, and reinforced through social media, (Zheng and Zhao, 2015). This experience of connecting with their roots provides a sense of spiritual refuge, and strengthens their rural embeddedness. In the following section, I will focus on three aspects: festivals, cuisine, and minority cultural activities. These are the elements participants feel most deeply connected to in terms of maintaining local traditions that have resisted homogenization. They often browse and create video content related to these topics on social media, showcasing their rural embeddedness through their online presence.

7. 1. 1 Hometown in Social Media Browsing and Recording

7. 1. 1. 1 Festivals

In addition to the Gregorian calendar, China also uses the traditional Chinese calendar, known as the lunar calendar or agricultural calendar. This lunisolar calendar combines solar, lunar, and other cycles, and it was created for agricultural and social purposes (Sivin, 2011). Traditional festivals are celebrated according to the Chinese traditional calendar, and influenced by local historical circumstances. It thus follows that each festival develops its own regional characteristics.

A female worker happily describes her hometown's lunar new year activities, particularly the tradition of collecting wood. In her Douyin, she uploaded a video from last Lunar New Year, showing herself collecting wood in her hometown. In Guizhou, it is a tradition to go to Qianling Mountain to collect firewood on the first day of the Lunar New Year. In Guizhou dialect, the word for "picking wood" sounds the same as "picking wealth." People make sure to pick only dry wood because "wet wood" is pronounced similarly to "losing wealth" in the local dialect. In Guizhou, people believe that this custom will bless them with good fortune and prosperity in the New Year. This practice, observed during the Lunar New Year, reflects both cultural and linguistic significance in Guizhou.

“During Chinese New Year, on the first day, in my hometown, we have a tradition of gathering New Year's firewood. We climb up the hill to chop firewood, and I always take my child along and film it. It's a kind of superstition, but it's fun to capture the process. Gathering firewood is gathering wealth. These are things that people from our neighbourhood watch. On Douyin, my video is pushed to people from our neighbourhood. . Everyone knows about it and understands what it means when you say you're going to collect firewood on the mountain.” (Ru, 37 years old, female migrant).

A male participant from Hubei province shares his experience of watching dragon boat races in his hometown on Douyin. The origin of the Dragon Boat Race can be traced back to Taoist religious practices, where people showed dedication to their sea goddess. It was first held in the 4th century BC to commemorate the death of Qu Yuan, a famous revered statesman and poet in China (McCartney and Osti, 2007). It is usually seen as a nationwide traditional sport, as many places hold dragon boat races during the Duanwu Festival (also known as the Dragon Boat Festival), which falls on the 5th day of the 5th month of the lunar calendar. The participant repeatedly emphasised that he could explain to me how the size of the boats and the rowing techniques differ from those used elsewhere. For him, the unique aspects of the dragon boat race in his hometown give him a stronger sense of home when he uses Douyin to watch local dragon boat races. He also mentioned that in his hometown, people sing folk songs for the dragon boat race, which is a unique cultural aspect of their local tradition. By listening to Douyin, the Dragon Boat Song hasn't been forgotten by him; instead, it has become clearer in his mind during the quiet evenings of his migrant life

“I watched the Dragon Boat Festival from my hometown on Douyin. There were more than fifty people on one boat, all standing while rowing. The boats are much longer than those in Wenzhou, and they're different from other places. It gets more lively every year. . . You can even download our local songs on Douyin. I really like the songs from my hometown. ‘The Dragon Boat Song’ and ‘ This Mountain Looks at That Mountain ’ are both from my hometown’ ”. (Hong, 39 year old, male migrant)

7. 1. 1. 2 Hometown Cuisine

Regional food tastes develop as an integral part of the region, interacting with the local population and helping to construct a sense of belonging, as reflected in the saying, "We are where we eat." (Bell and Valentine, 1997; Lin and Waley, 2022). As a country with vast territory, China exhibits significant regional, religious, and ethnic differences in cooking styles and ingredients, (Liu, 2011). These factors cause Chinese people across different regions of China to have distinct tastes when it comes to hometown flavours, making food deeply tied to a sense of place for them.

A participant from Shandong province shared that browsing persimmon on Douyin triggers childhood memories, with many nostalgic recollections flooding his mind. His rural place of birth, Shandong Province, is an important fruit-exporting region in China. It is particularly known for its persimmons, earning it the title "Hometown of Persimmons" (Zhao, 2016; Chen et al. , 2017).

"I previously saw the food from my hometown on Douyin, and the persimmons looked so tempting. The persimmons there are delicious, especially the round persimmon cakes, the round ones are a bit chewier. When I was a kid, I loved sweet things, but eating too many of them gave me cavities. I also used to go to collect wild honey to pour over the persimmons, which didn't help my teeth at all. My mom knows I'm craving sweets again and has been advising me to eat less sugar. " (Yue, 24 year old, male migrant)

A male participant from Hubei Province also mentioned that hometown food acts like a trigger, awakening his memories of home. His hometown has a lake, and the unique soil at the bottom affects the starch content and texture of the lotus roots. When using these

hometown lotus roots to cook soup, the body of the lotus root breaks, but the fibres remain connected. This local soup can only be made with the lotus from his hometown; it has thus become a regional speciality which cannot be made with lotus from other parts of China which are sold in Wenzhou supermarkets (Zhao, 2016; Han et al. , 2020).

“Douyin kept showing me videos about lotus roots from my hometown, and I suddenly got a craving for them. The lotus roots back home have a unique flavour and texture—they’re softer and more powdery. My hometown has a lake, and when the season comes, we can dig up lotus roots for free. Seeing them on Douyin made me so hungry for them! I asked my family to mail me some, but I was too busy when they arrived, so my wife cooked them. She’s not from Hubei, though, so she didn’t quite get the flavour right. (Hong, 39 years old, male migrant)”

7. 1. 1. 2 Ethnic Minority Cultural Activities

China is officially defined as a "united, multinational country, " with the Han majority accounting for 91% of the population. The remaining 55 recognised minority ethnic groups make up the rest of the population, with the minority population totalling approximately 125. 47million people (Mullaney, 2011; State Council of the People's Republic of China, 2021). This figure exceeds the population of Japan. Large minority groups in China can often be further divided into sub-groups based on internal differences and historical roots within the broader ethnic category. These divisions reflect diverse regional cultures, dialects, customs, and ancestral ties (Yan and Lv, 2020). Although many ethnic groups in China have been largely assimilated into the dominant Han society, minority nationalities continue, to varying degrees, to preserve and pass down their traditional customs. Some areas in China with a particularly high proportion of minority groups actively protect and promote their traditional cultural practices and customs, using

them as a resource to facilitate local economic development (Schein, 2007; Yang and Wall, 2009; Zhou et al. , 2020).

In the research factory, while most participants use Douyin, one female participant of Miao ethnicity, Pei, consistently prefers Kuaishou as her primary social platform for daily leisure. Kuaishou and Douyin both focus on short videos as their main digital offerings, incorporating features like live broadcasting and interactive text (Lin and de Kloet, 2019; Xi, 2024). Their functions are similar. Pei's decision is based on her personal experience that Kuaishou feels more aligned with her community, as it seems to cater specifically to their ethnic culture and events. In previous research, it was found that Kuaishou is widely popular among Chinese minority communities. With its straightforward and user-friendly interface, even those with limited Chinese language skills can use the platform to share and transmit their culture within the Kuaishou digital space. This makes Kuaishou an important tool for preserving and promoting their cultural heritage among Chinese minorities (Tsering Samdrup, 2023). Pei's community actively uploads their ethnic cultural activities on Kuaishou, which greatly appeals to her. The platform's ability to better represent rural origins compared to Douyin is a key reason she chooses Kuaishou.

“I use Kuaishou because I feel like it talks more about our lives.....In our area, we have bullfighting, every village has it. Each village raises its own bull, and there are specified times and locations for the fights. It's about who wins and who loses. Every village has it, so I watch bullfights on Kuaishou. Seeing bulls from my own home village is the best. They just had one the day before yesterday in our area. We are a minority ethnic group and we like this kind of thing” (Pei, 35 years old , female migrant).

Rong, another participant from the Miao ethnic group, from one of the Guizhou Miao Autonomous Prefectures, also emphasised the uniqueness of her community to me. Miao ethnicity is an umbrella term for a generic category recognised by the government in the national census (Diamond, 1995), while Miao can be further divided into more sub-groups (Cheung, 2003). In the Miao ethnic group, there are subgroups such as Black Miao, White Miao, Green Miao, Red Miao, and Flower Miao, names based on the dominant colours in their traditional attire (Harrell, 2011). Rong shared a Douyin video she recorded during her younger brother's ritual marriage ceremony. Rong pointed out a special hat the bride wore, physically gesturing to the hat with her finger:

“These are videos taken at my brother and sister-in-law's wedding. In our Miao ethnic group, we wear this type of clothing. However, the colours of the hats we use are different from those of other Miao people. Each Miao group's colors are somewhat unique. This is one of our wedding ceremonies.” (Rong, 32 years old, female migrant) .

7. 1. 2 A Case Analysis of Rurality within the Research Field: Village Super League

Certain communities which have sent many migrants to the cities, now have established migrant networks. Pioneer migrants arrive first, and pass on their information and resources to assist fellow villagers and relatives migrating subsequently (Sha, 2021). Guizhou Province is one of the main sources of migrant workers for Wenzhou. At the research site factory, approximately 51% of the migrant workers originated from Guizhou Province. Pioneer migrants have brought new migrants to the factory, forming a large regional group within the workforce. Guizhou is a place where local football is highly

popular, functioning as a sport that reinforces local identity, and fosters a deep sense of embeddedness with the home teams. Participants in the research from Guizhou, regardless of age and gender, showed a palpable enthusiasm in supporting their hometown football team. This loyalty to their home team reflected a strong attachment between them and their birthplace, even across significant geographical distances. Given that migrants from Guizhou form the largest regional group in the research field, their attitude provides valuable insights into rural embeddedness. Therefore, a section of this chapter is dedicated to a case analysis of Guizhou football.

When I visited the factory, the Guizhou Village Super League was underway. The Guizhou Village Super League is a football tournament organised and participated in by local residents of Guizhou. Each local community forms a football team with male community members and also assembles cheerleading teams to perform local traditional dances during the opening ceremonies and halftime (Zhang and Dai, 2023). The Village Super League has garnered significant attention on social media. Supported by the Guizhou local government, there are currently over 12, 000 new media accounts, with more than 2, 200 live streaming marketing teams (Yang, 2023). Participants can easily watch live broadcasts and recordings via social media. Workers from Guizhou displayed great enthusiasm for the league, even though they could not return to their rural hometowns to cheer for their village football team in person. They still enjoyed following the Village Super League on social media.

The Village Super League deepens participants' rural embeddedness, which operates on two different levels. These two levels of rural embeddedness coexist with both cohesion and tension.

Firstly, at the community level, Guizhou participants have greater rural embeddedness. Unlike major football clubs like Manchester United, which have the strategies and capabilities to build a global brand with an international fan base (Edensor and Millington, 2008), supporters in the Village Super League usually come from the place the team represents. This support is deeply rooted in the region where the team originates. Participants, their relatives, and fellow villagers naturally share an additional identity as supporters of the same football team. The concepts of ‘Football team’ and ‘hometown’, are interlaced, as both contain a direct link to the same place. For the duration of The Guizhou Village Super League, the community represented by each football team demonstrates strong fan solidarity, rallying behind their teams, cheering them on, and offering consolation when the team experiences a loss. Participants can use Douyin and Kuaishou to live stream and record updates on football game results. Additionally, WeChat facilitates discussions about the games with individuals in the hometown as well as with fellow villagers who have migrated elsewhere. By these means, they do not miss out on the local solidarity and happiness generated by the Guizhou village Super league.

“My fellow villagers and I support the same team since we’re from the same county. I’ve been watching less on Douyin lately because I’ve been busy with work. The top players get to compete in Hong Kong, and it seems like our county’s players have already finished their matches. I feel that after this village super league, people from the same county have become more united”. (Xue, 26 years old, female migrant)

“Every place in our area participates; each village takes part. I keep an eye on the matches every day, especially on Fridays and Saturdays when they play. Our village isn’t very strong, but I still watch our village’s last match. Now, whenever

we sit down, we just talk about football —who played, how they did—it's all about football. Back home, that's the main topic of conversation". (Le, 30 years old, female migrant)

Secondly, at a provincial level in the Guizhou province, the participants also demonstrate deeper embeddedness. The Guizhou Super League is strongly supported by the authorities. Rongjiang, a county in Guizhou Province, is the site where the Guizhou Village Super League is held. The local government aims to use the league as a showcase for the traditional ethnic culture and spirit of its local people, promoting Rongjiang as a tourist destination (Zhou, 2023). Under the leadership of local governments, the Guizhou Super League is characterised by low monetary incentives and a focus on exhibiting Guizhou's culture. In the Guizhou Super League, the antagonism among football teams is relatively mild. During the opening ceremony and mid-game warm-ups, traditional folk dancers, along with cheerleaders dressed in traditional Guizhou minority ethnic clothing, energize the atmosphere. Guizhou's culture is symbolically and performatively showcased, making it easily recognisable to social media audiences and acting as an advertisement for the province to attract tourism (Oakes, 1997). Non-local football fans are warmly welcomed; even if they are not supporting a specific team, their presence is encouraged and appreciated as part of a positive communal experience. Compared to other leagues, the Guizhou Super League plays a greater role in promoting local traditional culture. With county-level and provincial-level targets, the plan is for Guizhou Super Village to become a sports and cultural carnival. The 'Village Super League' had over 78 billion online views, attracting 116,924 million tourists to Rongjiang (Guizhou Provincial People's Government, 2024)

The Guizhou Village Super League is a valuable opportunity to positively showcase Guizhou culture on a large scale. This enhances the local pride of Guizhou's rural-urban migrant workers, deepening their sense of longing for home and strengthening their connection to their roots. Guizhou Province was formed for military reasons in 1413. The Ming government used central administrative orders to carve out sections from the border areas of Sichuan, Yunnan, and Huguang provinces, piecing them together to create Guizhou (Oakes, 2000). Since its formation from less developed border areas, Guizhou has faced challenging developmental conditions since its formation. Guizhou Province has consistently ranked near the bottom in terms of provincial GDP ranking. In addition to this, Guizhou's karst topography contributes to rocky desertification, and currently, over 20% of the region has become so degraded that farming and development are no longer possible. The severe land-human conflict has forced many Guizhou residents to migrate to places like Wenzhou in search of a livelihood (Yan, 2008) ; (Wu et al. , 2011)

Outside Guizhou, the province is often stereotyped as remote, backward, barren, and hopeless. The most famous proverb used to describe Guizhou is "The land has no flat three miles, the sky has no three days of clear weather, and people have no three silver coins"(Liu, 2013). Guizhou rural-urban migrants, as socio-economically disadvantaged individuals outside their own province, are often victims of regional stereotypes. But the Guizhou Super League, by becoming a trending event on social media, offers a new narrative, shifting the focus from poverty and underdevelopment to one of passionate emotional resonance and cultural diversity. Positive comments online and an influx of visitors in person flow to the Village Super League (Zhang and Dai, 2023). In this narrative, Guizhou's culture is viewed as attractive and appealing to audiences, and is a place worth visiting and appreciating. This stands in stark contrast to the traditional portrayal of Guizhou as a barren and hostile land. For Guizhou migrants who have long suffered from regional discrimination, this shift is highly valuable. As many Guizhou

participants mentioned, even if the team representing their community is not strong, they still feel passionate about the Guizhou Village Super League. For them, the fact that both locals and non-locals appreciate Guizhou and come together to enjoy the Super League as a football and cultural carnival in a friendly atmosphere is more important than just their teams winning.

“In our area, Longjiang in Guizhou, there’s a village football league. Each village has its own specialities, and after the matches, we bring those local products and give them away for free to the visitors. Both the tourists and we are really happy about it. Every time I see this, I feel a bit homesick”. (Yong, 29-years-old, male migrant)

“I’ve checked out the village football league online, even though I didn’t go to the matches in person. It’s not really about making money; it’s more about the spirit of the game. The prizes are pretty small—just symbolic, really. What matters most is how it brings people together and encourages cultural exchange. The vibe and excitement of these events really make a difference! ” (Gao, 42 years old, male migrant)

In summary, rural embeddedness through social media is largely intertwined with the presentation of hometown traditions. In Wang (2015)’s study on the geo-identity of Guangzhou city residents, social media is shown to present Guangzhou's traditions, language, and lifestyle, highlighting the city's distinctiveness from the rest of China. The research findings indicate that participants' browsing and creating social media content, similar to Wang’s research in Guangzhou city, highlight the uniqueness and traditions of their rural origins. This process reinforces their strong sense of belonging and connection

to their rural roots. Also, by effectively representing their locality on social media and receiving positive feedback about their hometown, individuals can experience a sense of pride in their hometown, further deepening their rural embeddedness.

7. 2 Urban Embeddedness in Social Media Leisure Activities

Research has revealed that while rural-urban migrant workers' leisure use of social media reinforces their rural embeddedness, it simultaneously facilitates their urban embeddedness. Firstly, social media promotes the absorption of urban aesthetics and ideologies. Through social media, migrant workers increasingly adopt urban practices, reflecting their pursuit of modernity. Social media leisure helps female migrants develop gender consciousness, allowing them to consider their lives beyond traditional rural gender and family norms. It enables them to challenge traditional rural patriarchal culture and to pursue their individual needs as women. Secondly, when rural-urban migrants settle in specific places like Wenzhou, their embeddedness extends to incorporating the city's unique culture and lifestyle, further deepening their integration into Wenzhou.

7. 2. 1 General Urban Embeddedness

7. 2. 1. 1 Aesthetics

A widely observed activity among migrant workers is the practice of recording videos, often in a selfie style. Participants open the front-facing camera, usually showing their faces and smiling while looking at the camera, often accompanied by a song in their selfie video posts. They typically portray pale white skin and thin faces. All participants use heavy filters when they post, with a few also using Douyin's AI functions to change their body shape and clothes. In Wang's 2013 research on social media ethnography, she discovered that taking and uploading artistic photos to social media was highly popular

among female migrant workers. The process involves two hours of makeup, during which female migrants wear bra pads and hip-exaggerating folds beneath a rented evening dress. Wang analyses this as not recording youth, but creating a different version of youth (Wang, 2016). The phenomenon of representing a "better self," distinct from offline life, emerged early on. As social media's photo enhancement features improved, the ways in which this practice was carried out evolved. With reduced time and financial costs, showcasing a "better self" via filters and AI on social media has become normal, rather than the previously rare experience of taking artistic photos.

During the recording process, participants often, whether intentionally or unintentionally, alter their appearance to minimize or conceal visible signs of their farming background. This occurs even though, in their *hukou* (household registration), they are officially recognized as part of the agricultural population. For example, they may use filters to lighten their tanned skin, giving it a paler appearance. This is especially common among female participants, who often use filters to achieve an "egg-white" complexion. In China, tanned skin has historically and culturally been associated with outdoor labour, particularly agricultural peasant work (Jablonski, 2012; H. Y. Chen et al. , 2018). Female participants also use filters to make their faces appear thinner and smaller, which contrasts with the traditional image of peasants, which is often seen as robust and sturdy, symbolising strength and hard work (Leung et al. , 2001).

*“Who doesn't use beauty filters? How could you face people without them in douyin?
With beauty filters on, there are no bad angles. I wish I could weld filters onto my
face” (Qi, 36 years old, female migrant) .*

I have also identified a male participant who began utilising AI features available through Douyin's built-in functionality. Using AI, his focus was not on facial features but on digitally altering his attire. He used AI to replace his regular clothes with a suit, an outfit he has never actually owned, giving his selfie videos a polished and professional appearance, which hides traits associated with farming and physical labour.

“I edit the suit on my phone. You just tap on the picture, and you can change the suit to whichever style you like. Even though I don't look that good in real life, I can edit it to make myself look better. Since I have nothing else to do at home, I play around with it. It's as simple as tapping a button, and you can figure it out yourself.”

(Tao, 50 years old, male migrant) .

7. 2. 1. 2 Feminism

The belief that a woman is an appendix to a man deeply rooted in traditional Chinese gender norms prevalent in rural areas, especially in migrant-sending regions. These values have significantly shaped the gender perspectives of rural-urban migrants. However, rapid modernisation in urban areas is beginning to erode these traditional norms (Zhang, 2022). Modernity suggests that all individuals should participate in rational thinking, the public sphere, and capital accumulation—domains traditionally belonging to men. For women, pursuing modernity is increasingly connected to feminism. Female individuals are able to re-position themselves in modern society, which often involves achieving independence and autonomy while competing in the public sphere (Wei, 2009).

Social media, to some extent, subtly inspires viewers, including the participants, with feminist ideas. In rural areas, marriage often reflects patriarchal culture. For women, being married is often seen as the key to a complete and normal life. A woman is expected to find her life's meaning and value by securing her position in her husband's family. Her

life's purpose is rooted in establishing herself within her husband's household (Wang, and Zuo, 2016; Yang and Wang, 2017). Marriage is emphasized and placed at the centre of importance in a woman's life. Even when women receive some form of masculine power, it does not truly belong to them; they are simply the representatives of the male members of their family (Kristeva, 1977). Divorced women and single mothers are far from the traditional standard of a “good woman”. However, on social media, those who are successfully running social media careers are not discriminated against by female participants. Female participants feel encouraged to see them leave unhealthy relationships and bravely start their careers. Participants are shown other possibilities for women's lives, where marriage is no longer the central focus.

“Several female streamers doing mukbang (Live streaming eating food) have been divorced. I think that’s fine. It’s not like they can’t take care of themselves. Honestly, I think divorce was the right choice. If she stayed home all day with the kids, the husband would still complain, and the mother-in-law would mock her. Now she’s divorced, earning a lot from mukbang, and living her life with her kids. ” (Rou, 27 year old, female migrant)

Some social media content by female influencers displays a strong sense of competitiveness and self-interest, which are traditionally not considered female virtues in Chinese culture. However, female participants feel positively about this. A woman can be competitive, and ambitious, despite this challenging the traditional patriarchal culture in rural societies. In one recent social media video, a female singer is performing a duet with a male singer; at one point, the man asked the female singer to step back, leaving the stage to him. The female singer deliberately pushed the male singer aside, stood in the centre of the stage to sing, and made a rather aggressive gesture, pointing at the male singer. Yu and Ping, participants in the research commented:

“I really like her. She's beautiful and has an amazing voice. Plus, she doesn't rely on those cheap tricks like some others, which makes her even more appealing (Yu, 34 years old, female migrant)”

“She's gorgeous and has a beautiful singing voice. She really shines!” (Ping, 35 years old, female migrant)

With the policy of Reform and Opening-up, Western neoliberal discourse on the 'autonomous individual' has accompanied the development of the Chinese market. People need to take responsibility for their success in life, regardless of gender or external factors. Contrary to traditional beliefs that require women to show obedience, modern womanhood emphasizes a strong will to compete, asserting that women should achieve success through competition (Liu, 2014). Browsing social media content gives female participants an opportunity to reflect on traditional womanhood, shaped by their rural upbringing and education, and how it conflicts with modern womanhood. It allows them to realise that they can also adopt "manly traits", which can help them navigate, and succeed in, a male-dominated society.

Furthermore, Chinese internet feminism strongly advocates that the family sphere needs to place fewer demands on women in terms of sacrifice, but instead should give women more care and consideration. Social media allows female participants to reflect on family values and norms of family interactions, enabling them to reevaluate, and create a family environment that is more beneficial for their career and well-being. A female participant in the research, whose family has moved to Wenzhou for a reunion, mentioned that she really enjoys watching vlogs of men who cook well and do housework, as well as parent-child videos that showcase fathers actively participating in their children's lives and care.

“On Douyin, you often see videos of husbands doing housework and taking care of the kids, doing everything around the house. After watching those, I feel like couples really need to share the responsibilities. It can't just be the woman doing all the work. Whoever has more time should handle the chores. And taking care of the kids should be a joint effort too. The children belong to both parents, not just the mom! (Hui, 32 year old, male migrant)”

Gendered labour, with men working outside and women handling household duties, is still prevalent in rural areas (Jankowiak and Robert, 2016). Previous research shows that even when female rural-urban workers contribute economically to the family, they still bear a greater burden of domestic duties, including housework and childcare (Choi and Peng, 2016). In non-reunited families, women are often expected to sacrifice their jobs when conflicts arise between breadwinning and family duties (Fan, 2007). This aligns with the life experiences of my participants. Many participants whose families have reunited are required to care for family members after long workdays. Most female participants with young children left behind in their hometowns mentioned having to pause migration and return home to care for their children. Once their children were able to attend school, they moved again to urban settings and found new jobs, essentially starting from scratch. However, social media offers a new perspective on intrafamilial dynamics, encouraging female rural-urban migrants to rethink the gendered division of labour and parenting roles they have internalised as natural. This helps female rural-urban migrant workers negotiate within their families, enabling them to find a better work-life balance and resist patriarchal oppression in their personal lives.

Moreover, feminism encourages women to value their emotions and experiences, promoting self-care and prioritising their well-being in modern society (Wei, 2009).

Social media also facilitates participants' consideration of this. A female participant mentioned that she enjoys watching vlogs where women humorously give their family members a telling-off. The vlog offers female participants a view into different family dynamics. When disagreements arise, such as over finances or educational decisions, the vlogger handles these calmly, discussing matters with her husband and mother-in-law instead of merely obeying or complaining. These aren't seen as serious arguments, but rather as normal parts of life, adding interest to daily routines. If a family member makes a mistake, the vlogger uses humour, not anger, to address it, avoiding the role of a resentful wife or victim.

“I really like this vlog , She's super positive about being a wife and really knows how to run her family well. Sometimes, I think her mother-in-law doesn't handle things very well. But what I love is that she just jokes around with her mother-in-law instead of getting mad about little things. She keeps it light and funny, which is really refreshing. It's nice to see someone who doesn't let the small stuff bother her! ” (Xian, 38 years old, female migrant)

Influenced by Confucian family ethics, traditional Chinese families have a hierarchical structure, where the wife is subordinate to her husband and senior family members (Han, 2012; Shuhui, 2017). But, rural family ethics are undergoing changes, and women are seeking new family interaction patterns that better accommodate individual well-being. In rural areas, the number of men of marriageable age is much higher than that of women, leading to a marriage squeeze (Jin et al. , 2013; Yang et al. , 2017). This gives women more bargaining power and enables them to challenge traditional Confucian family ethics (Li, 2024). The influence of social media can inspire female participants to negotiate

their individual well-being and family dynamics, helping them achieve the best family environment that suits their needs.

However, what is worth mentioning is that some male participants showed not only indifference but even aversion toward feminism on social media. In an extreme case, during an interview, a young male worker used the term 'little fairy', to refer to women who discuss female rights topics online. In Chinese online discourse, 'little fairy' is a popular term used to mock feminists as self-important and unrealistic. This reflects how social media can facilitate migrants' understanding of feminism, while also exposing them to online misogyny.

7. 2. 1. 3 Influencers

In every aspect of social media, viewers are immersed in influencer-created content that exposes them to modern ideals and practices, which often conflict with the traditional rural values of their origins. This allows them to engage with urban and global perspectives, creating a contrast between the modernity they encounter online and the more conservative cultural norms of their rural backgrounds.

An example of this phenomenon was the revelation of Ming, one of the male participants in the research. Ming disclosed that he follows Tong Jingcheng. On Douyin, Tong Jingcheng is known as the "Master of Scumbags." He is famous for hooking up with beautiful girls and posting about it on social media.

*"I like Tong Jingcheng, he's a master at picking up girls. Honestly, once he gets married, his charm will disappear. He doesn't go live on Douyin. On Douyin, he just does advertisements, F**king advertisements! Every day on Douyin, it's just*

endless ads. It really annoys me. He charges 300, 000 yuan for one ad. Each of his videos has a different girl, none of them are the same. ” (Ming, 25 year old, male migrant).

Unmarried men from rural areas who are past the socially defined marriageable age are often viewed as a distinct group with a heightened desire to marry. In patriarchal cultures, men often feel a strong, inescapable obligation to marry and continue their family's patrilineal line (Keith, 2003). In addition to this internal pressure, they also face significant external pressure from the community. Unmarried men are often portrayed as being excluded from family life and broader social life, creating a sense of social isolation (Zhang and Bélanger, 2018, p68). Single rural men often migrate to cities primarily to earn sufficient income to build a house. This is seen as a key factor in enhancing their marriage prospects and overall marriageability (Li and Li, 2008). In some provinces, single men who are less competitive in the courtship process experience a "marriage squeeze ". As a result, some of these men pursue foreign brides, such as women from Vietnam and other less-developed countries. This demand has also contributed to large-scale human trafficking, including the trafficking of women for forced marriages, which has become a serious issue in certain regions (Zhang, 2017).

By following social media influencers like Tong Jingcheng, some young men have gained a new perspective on courtship and marriage, broadening their understanding of modern relationship dynamics. From following Tong Jingcheng, the male research participant Ming began to internalise and normalise hookup—characterised by casual, non-committed relationships—rooted in the sexual liberation movements of the 1960s in the Western world (Bogle, 2008; Garcia et al. , 2012). This is a subculture in China that sharply contrasts with traditional rural Chinese values, where marriage remains a

significant life goal, and casual sexual behaviour is still stigmatized (McDonald, 2016). This reflects an interesting example of how modern, Western ideals are absorbed through social media, exposing individuals to values that are not typically rooted in traditional Chinese rural culture. But, in the case of my participant, while he enjoys viewing Tong Jingcheng's content that objectifies women based on appearance and engages with the idea of casual relationships, he ultimately still values a more traditional, committed marriage. He expresses a desire for a strong, long-term bond, which aligns with the rural Chinese cultural emphasis on marriage and family, revealing a complex interplay between exposure to modern sub-culture and adherence to traditional values.

Moreover, a young female participant in the research developed a deep admiration for Chinese actor Xiao Zhan after the 227 incident. The 227 incident occurred when a fan of Xiao Zhan wrote a fan fiction on a website called AO3 (Archive of Our Own). In this creative work, Xiao Zhan, a male actor, was portrayed as a transgender person involved in prostitution, who falls in love with a high school boy. After the piece was published, many fans expressed discomfort with the content and reported the AO3 website to the Chinese government. This led to AO3 being blocked in China by the authorities. As AO3 is a non-Chinese website, it had not been subject to Chinese government censorship for a long time. Many Chinese writers used the platform to create fan art and literature that could not pass domestic censorship. When the reports led to AO3 being blocked in China, it sparked heated discussions on social media. Debates emerged about whether the reporting stifled artistic creativity, whether portraying a male celebrity as transgender was offensive, and whether the incident reflected anti-transgender sentiment. This incident caused widespread online debate around creative freedom, LGBT representation, and cultural sensitivity in Chinese fan culture (Gao, 2020).

The 227 incident caused my young participant to engage in serious conversations, marking the first time she had considered the topic of LGBT in Chinese society. She concluded that it was Xiao Zhan's fans who caused the problems, as he himself did not say or do anything that led to the outcome, making him a victim. Regardless of whether the issue involved harming creativity or being anti-LGBT, the attacks should not be directed at him; instead, it was his fans' misbehaviour that was at fault. So, she decided to watch Xiao Zhan's new TV series as a way of showing her support for him, especially during a time when many people were attempting to cancel him by boycotting his movies and TV shows.

*“I started following him because of *The Untamed*, and it's not just because of his looks. It's really his determination; he sticks with whatever he does until the end. Just look at how he handled that tough time in 227. He managed to pull through on his own, which shows that during low points, it's all about your own willpower. Sometimes you get help from others, but if you don't have the heart to push through, it's really hard to come out of it. The 227 incident was caused by his fans, and he didn't even go out to talk about it.” (Chun, 35 years old, female migrant)*

Through social media, participants gain access to a wider range of ideas and ideologies, offering them more opportunities to think critically and respond to new social concepts. While they may not fully agree with or adopt a particular ideology, the process of being exposed to and reflecting on modern ideologies—ones absent from their rural upbringing—also highlights the role of social media in shaping their worldview. This helps further cultivate an urban mindset, deepening their sense of urban embeddedness. By engaging with modern ideologies and distancing themselves from traditional rural values, they increasingly align with an urban thinking style.

7. 2. 2 Wenzhou Urban Embeddedness

Social media serves as an important channel for understanding Wenzhou culture, providing a facilitator that helps migrant workers integrate smoothly into Wenzhou society.

One example of this is food. As a cultural element of the city, food can evoke a sense of "strangeness" for migrants, leading to either positive or negative feelings toward the city depending on the context (Neil, 2017; Bascuñan-Wiley, 2021). As an important cultural sensory experience for rural-urban migrants (Tang et al., 2022), having positive feelings towards the local cuisine helps them develop embeddedness in their new urban environment. Conversely, negative feelings toward the food may create barriers to their integration into the new urban setting.

As a coastal city, Wenzhou's food culture relies heavily on raw and semi-cooked seafood dishes (Jiang, 2015). Most participants in the research come from inland regions, such as Guizhou Province and Jiangxi Province, where the food culture is quite different from that of Wenzhou. More than one participant shared their experiences of ordering seafood in Wenzhou restaurants out of curiosity. They found that some of the dishes they had ordered were raw, marinated or semi-cooked. This shocked them, as in their hometowns, fully cooked food is preferred. The experience left them horrified, and led to them avoiding trying Wenzhou cuisine again. When I discussed Wenzhou food with the participants, comments such as "disgusting," "inedible," "no flavour," and "bloody" were common. The criticisms primarily focused on seafood dishes.

Only one participant had a positive impression of Wenzhou food. His experience with Wenzhou cuisine did not begin by visiting restaurants in the city but rather through discovering it on Douyin. Douyin helped him discover Wenzhou food that was more acceptable for migrants and the site provided cooking instructions, allowing him to adjust

the dishes based on his own taste preferences. As a result, he avoided unpleasant experiences with raw or half-cooked seafood in Wenzhou restaurants and instead developed a love for Wenzhou snacks.

“I enjoy cooking, and recently I've been learning how to make Wenzhou spring rolls. I asked people for tips, but they didn't explain the steps in detail. So, I searched on Douyin for simple and easy-to-follow recipes. The filling for Wenzhou spring rolls is quite complicated—it requires bean sprouts, chives, pork, dried tofu, shiitake mushrooms, and a lot of other ingredients. It took me a while to gather everything at the market. I felt that the dried tofu made the spring rolls too hard, so I replaced it with scrambled eggs instead. When I first tried making the rolls,, I accidentally added too much oil, and instead of frying, I ended up deep-frying them! I wasted quite a few rolls. After that, I poured most of the oil out and just left a little bit, which turned out much better. The ones I made that looked nice, I posted online, but the ones that didn't turn out well, I quietly ate without wasting them”. (Yi, 48 years old, male migrant).

Additionally, social media can provide local knowledge that is informal and not typically found in regular government migrant assistance resources. For example, Ze, a middle-aged participant, planned to travel with his family to Wenzhou's famous Yandang Mountain.

“My wife and daughter came to Wenzhou to visit me, but my daughter couldn't stay inside and wanted to go out to play. Since Yandang Mountain is famous, I thought we should check it out while we're in Wenzhou. I looked up some travel tips on

Kuaishou, where there are travel bloggers. I found the comments section quite helpful. One local person mentioned that the Couple Peak looks better at night than during the day; at night, it really resembles a couple, while during the day, it doesn't quite have the same effect. As an outsider, I definitely wouldn't have known this without checking" (Ze, 37 years old, male migrant).

The internet empowers citizens by opening up possibilities for them to voice their opinions about their hometowns and engage with their individual memories, which can challenge the discourse established by local authorities (Svensson, 2012). In a similar way to modern tourism markets around the world, the local government in Wenzhou paints a positive picture around places based on customer expectations and iconic features (Scarles, 2004). In the case of the Couple Peak, the advertisements centre on themes of romance and loyalty between partners, appealing to visitors seeking a romantic experience. Local government highlights that the Couple Peak consists of two slender peaks standing very close to each other, resembling a couple leaning on each other for support. The government makes significant efforts to promote Couple Mountain as a romantic landmark on Yandang Mountain. They have worked hard to create a romantic atmosphere around the peaks by, for example, inviting famous couples to visit, hosting romantic stage shows, and designing a mascot featuring a pair of swans to symbolize love (Chen and Zhao, 2020). However, with heavy tourism packaging, locals tend to view these places with a sense of disenchantment. Through social media, they challenge the romanticised discourse and point out their own local perceptions, offering a more authentic perspective. Social media serves as an informal information channel in Wenzhou, providing local perspectives that complement more regulated government information. This helps rural-urban migrants explore the city more effectively and integrate better into Wenzhou's social and cultural environment.

Overall, urban embeddedness operates on two layers. The first is general urban embeddedness, where modernisation in Chinese cities influences rural-urban migrant workers' aesthetics, values, and practices through use of social media for leisure. This process shapes migrants' appearance, mindset, and behaviour in an urban way, helping them move beyond the limitations of rural traditional thinking. Some influences affect both men and women, while others are more gender-specific. For example, topics like feminism are more frequently browsed and deeply considered by female participants. The second layer involves becoming more familiar with and enjoying the host city in informal ways, which helps rural -urban migrants settle down more effectively and enhances their happiness in the host city.

7.3 Summary

Many scholars have examined both transnational and internal migrants, focusing primarily on integration through employment or social networks. However, few studies address migrant workers' leisure activities, which provide a significant perspective on their willingness to engage with urban or rural embeddedness. This chapter examines social media as a leisure tool in rural-urban migrant workers' migration journeys. The findings suggest that social media reinforces rural town locality and traditionality in their minds, while also fostering ideational change and better understanding of the host society. Through social media, both rural and urban embeddedness deepen, having a blend of rural rootedness and urban adaptation with enjoyment.

On the one hand, there is a drastic and uneven process of social change across urban and rural areas in contemporary China. Cities, experiencing rapid social change, are becoming more modernised and increasingly homogenised. Rural areas tend to better preserve

locality and traditionality. Rural-urban migrant workers connect with their rural origins through festivals, cuisine, and local activities shared on social media. This engagement acts as a trigger, continuously consolidating their sense of belonging and reinforcing their belief in the uniqueness of their hometowns. In regions like Guizhou, rural-urban migrants participate in regional collective leisure. Guizhou rural-urban migrants are in the habit of watching village super leagues on social media. This fosters community-level rural embeddedness through local team support and provincial-level rural embeddedness as Village Super Football garners positive recognition even outside the province. This positive recognition enhances a collective pride in Guizhou's identity among these migrants.

On the other hand, social media provides migrant workers with the opportunity to immerse themselves in modernity, enhancing their general urban embeddedness.

Social media platforms offer technological advances, such as filters and AI tools, that allow migrant workers to shape their appearance in ways that align more closely with urban styles. Female rural-urban migrants, influenced by social media, begin to explore feminist ideas and contemplate modern womanhood while striving for greater autonomy and competitiveness. This journey fosters self-esteem, and challenges traditional gender values that suppress women and undermine their independence. Also, rural-urban migrant workers are exposed to modern ideologies that deviate from traditional Chinese values. This exposure fosters a more urban mindset and provides them with new ways of thinking, facilitating potential ideological change and the adoption of new values. In addition, social media can deepen rural-urban migrant workers' urban embeddedness in their specific host city by providing them with informal information that aids in adjusting to their new environment. This facilitates quicker integration into city life.

This chapter demonstrates that the leisure use of social media can promote both rural and urban embeddedness simultaneously. This chapter also observed that within the rural-urban migrant group, social media content preferences vary internally based on factors such as gender and life status. Migrants' social media preferences resonate with their circumstances and challenges. Regarding gender, both groups are exposed to urban modernisation discussions. Female participants are more willing to engage with content related to women's independence and family power structures. In contrast, male participants show less interest in these topics; regarding individuals' status in life, participants with different circumstances have varying preferences for social media content.

Chapter 8. Conclusion and Discussion

"I feel like I can't do without WeChat and Douyin. They're really important. I feel like I have no soul without my phone for a day. It's really like that. " (Chun, 35 years old, female migrant)

China is the country with the largest rural-to-urban population flow and it simultaneously holds the largest smartphone user base worldwide. This research incorporates social media as a new element to analyse the lives of Chinese rural-urban migrant workers within the conceptual framework of embeddedness. It carefully examines how social media influences the embeddedness of Chinese rural-urban migrants within the context of their rural origins and host cities. By discussing the role of social media platform usage, this research reflects on the mechanisms of embeddedness in both in places of origin and urban destinations. This chapter will briefly summarise the key findings of the research, then provide further theoretical discussion for embeddedness in the context of Chinese rural-urban migrants using social media.

8. 1 Research Summary: Key Findings

Based on empirical data from 41 semi-structured interviews in Wenzhou city, known as rural-urban migrants' destination place, this research found that social media plays a very important role, particularly in aspects of employment, family and community relationships, and leisure activities. Firstly, regarding employment, it is clear that social media websites are widely used by Chinese rural-urban migrant workers to empower their careers, both within and outside the factory, and that this deepens their urban embeddedness. Factories create WeChat online working groups for better cooperation and communication. WeChat facilitates Chinese rural-urban migrant workers in sharing

professional knowledge and expressing their opinions on the work in which they are engaged. In previous research on traditional Taylorism-based factories, management teams were regarded as playing the role of “measuring, judging, prying, intruding”; this offended workers' dignity. But in the research field factory in Wenzhou, participants in the research survey under discussion here —especially those actively sharing their knowledge and opinions—felt they gained respect from the management team, as the managers highly valued their first-hand feedback. Participants who feel their intellectual contributions earn them respect are more confident and comfortable when making requests, such as for rest or short leave (Sprague, 2007; Kanigel, pp. 466). However, their empowerment via social media is limited by the factory's traditional Taylorism management system, which locks decision-making power within the management team and provides no material incentives for actively contributing ideas and opinions in the factory.

Social media also helps Chinese rural-urban workers access online training and educational opportunities, supporting more ambitious career goals and facilitating career transitions from the assembly line to more skilled sectors. This research finds that participants engage in online training to improve their skills, and online training helps them overcome work-study conflicts, as the training time is more flexible and the study material is broken down into smaller and more manageable sections. A few participants have received more formal online education to obtain certification. Their reward for gaining extra qualifications is that besides gaining skills, they enjoy talent allowances and welfare benefits in the host city. However, the need for immediate income prevents many participants from engaging in long-term training and educational investment provided by social media. Among the older generation, there are workers who are illiterate or semi-literate, which hinders their ability and confidence to fully utilise social media for training and education purposes. A more negative consideration to be taken

into account, is that the online training participants receive from social media is profit-driven and market-driven. The quality of online education and training is hard to guarantee, leading some participants who have invested in these resources potentially to face setbacks in their future career trajectory, due to the poor quality of the online training and education they have undertaken.

This research study demonstrate the potential of social media to affect workers' understanding of labour rights protections does not fully explored. Although labour rights information is easily accessible on social media platforms, participants still tend to rely on methods more familiar within the migrant worker group, such as leaving one job and moving to another similar one, or obtaining labour rights advice by word of mouth.

Secondly, social media is an important platform for *workers' family relationships and community attachments*, both of which increase rural embeddedness. Rural-urban migration usually involves individuals migrating alone, rather than the whole household migrating together. Consequently, many households face separation. Social media helps participants maintain meaningful connections with left-behind family members, primarily parents, children, and spouses. Chinese rural-urban migrants use social media to fulfil their filial duties to the left-behind older generation. By employing social media, they can monitor the elders' health conditions, and provide them with emotional support. They can also perform long-distance parenting roles, involving themselves in their children's education and everyday life. Also, they use social media to maintain family cooperation with left-behind spouses or other family members, helping to keep the separated family functioning.

Social media enables migrants to maintain relationships based on cooperation and assistance. Lineage refers to kinship ties traced back through the patrilineal line. Mutual reciprocity is a key function of lineage. Social media, particularly WeChat, helps facilitate

long-distance lineage engagement and supports the maintenance of traditional mutual reciprocity within lineage groups. Regardless of their physical distance from one another, members of the wider family help and support each other. An example of this, is migrant workers relying on lineage members in their hometown to take care of their children. Kinship bonds also provide support to members of the WeChat lineage group when they request assistance, for example, by responding to calls for blood donations or financial assistance. Social media enables this mutual support based on blood ties, across widespread geographical distances.

Social media also helps to sustain relationships between natal family members; female migrants use social media to maintain close ties with their birth parents and siblings, challenging the traditional saying that "a married daughter is like water splashed out of the family." Both male and female workers utilise social media to monitor the health of their parents. Male participants feel responsible for supporting their married sisters, even if those sisters have moved to other places, with most of this support being conducted online. This supportive and protective attitude can extend to the next generation of married sisters. In the research study, cases were found where male participants became key providers of advice, helping their married sisters and nephews/nieces make important decisions via WeChat.

Chinese rural-urban migrant workers can also maintain social networks and sub-community social ties as channels for information and mental support. Community chat groups and the exchange of messages among community members enhance migrant workers' sense of social citizenship, primarily represented by participation in insurance schemes and insurance reimbursement. Often, the information regarding insurance comes from their hometown communities. Sub-community chat groups, consisting of a subset

of community members, facilitate online exchanges, offering emotional support and understanding.

Thirdly, social media, as a leisure tool, provides participants with both urban and rural information, leading to their simultaneous urban embeddedness and rural embeddedness. Social media can trigger memories of their rural hometowns. Based on geography, climate, ethnicity, and other factors, Chinese culture is diverse across different regions. This diversity is maintained more effectively in rural areas, while by contrast, urban areas are experiencing a trend towards homogenization. By browsing, recording, and sharing local food, culture, and festivals, Chinese rural-urban migrant workers continuously refresh their sense of belonging to their hometown and strengthen the belief that their hometown is not simply a name on the map of China, but a unique and meaningful place for them. Rural hometowns develop local special events that Chinese rural-urban migrant workers can participate in from a distance, which also deepens their rural embeddedness to their hometown. In the research, participants from Guizhou engaged online in the Guizhou Village Super League, developing community-level local solidarity and provincial-level local pride, which is clear evidence of this phenomenon.

This research study further shows that leisure use of social media can deepen both rural and urban embeddedness simultaneously. Social media introduces new aesthetics and ideologies that introduce Chinese rural-urban migrant workers to a more modern mindset. In terms of aesthetics, participants exploit social media filters and AI technologies to remove rural traits from their appearance. In terms of ideology, the information found on social media challenges traditional rural gender and marriage values, prompting reflection on the patriarchal culture prevalent in rural areas. Social media enables incomers to discover more information about the host city, such as local food recipes and travel

information. Detailed and unofficial information from social media platforms, serving as a supplement to official government information, helps Chinese rural-urban migrants better to embed themselves in their host cities.

8. 2 Conceptual Discussions: Embeddedness in Both Rural and Urban Social Spaces

This section mainly focuses on insights into the conceptual framework of this research, based on previous research on 'embeddedness'. The section addresses two main aspects of the concept of 'embeddedness'. The first one is that, similarly to transnational migrants' embeddedness, embeddedness for rural-urban migrant workers takes different forms, namely, economic embeddedness, cultural embeddedness, and social embeddedness. The second aspect is that embeddedness is a dynamic process, which is not static, levels of embeddedness vary among migrant workers due to differences in personal circumstances.

8. 2. 1 Different Forms of Embeddedness

In transnational migrant research, researchers have challenged the traditional immigrant assimilation paradigm, seeking alternative patterns that suggest migrants can simultaneously engage with both their original and their new environments over time (Tsuda, 2012). This research follows this line of thought, recognising that embeddedness in two social spaces, with different forms of embedding, navigates and demonstrates the complexity in the interplay between embeddedness in both societies. Furthermore, this research considers the possibility of lives conducted in different spaces being bridged by means of social media, thus making dual embeddedness a modern possibility.

8. 2. 1. 1 Economic embeddedness:

Earlier research has revealed that economic dual embeddedness for transnational migrants is a zero-sum relationship. As wages are considered primarily to be for the purpose of

remittances sent to left-behind families to support their social standing in the homeland, these remittances consume resources that could otherwise be used to improve the workers' lives in the host city (Lianos et al. , 2005; Lowell and de la Garza, 2002; Marcelli and Lowell, 2005). Findings in Chapter 5 show that the dual embeddedness of Chinese rural-urban migrant workers is also influenced by the balance between remittances and self-investment. Many participants in this research study were reluctant to allocate financial resources to accessing online training and educational opportunities through social media. With greater remittance pressure, such as funding the education of left-behind children, supporting elderly family members, or repaying loans for rural house construction, they need to send regular and significant amounts of money back to their rural homes. This is related to the historical background introduced in the literature review that, after market reforms, rural life in all its aspects has become more dependent on money, making it difficult to sustain the traditional rural subsistence-based small peasant economy (Pun et al. , 2012). Additionally, due to the migrants' need to work overtime for extra income, they lack the time to engage in online self-investment activities. These factors hinder their career development in the host city, leaving them locked in low-skill, assembly-line jobs, which undermines their potential for urban embeddedness.

This research found that social media, to some extent, alleviates the conflict between sending remittances and self-investment. Some participants, under the pressure of sending remittances, utilise free resources on social media to avoid spending money and engage in asynchronous online courses to manage their finances more efficiently.

8. 2. 1. 2 Cultural embeddedness:

Cultural dual-embeddedness, where rural and urban embeddedness intertwine via social media, varies across different scenarios. The first cultural dual-embeddedness scenario involves tension and conflict between modern urban culture and traditional rural-origin

culture. In this situation, maintaining rural culture and internalising urban culture is in a relationship of confliction. Under the section on absorbing modern ideology, female participants in the research study mentioned the importance of social media in triggering their awareness of feminist and LGBT ideas. This challenged the gender values they had formed during their upbringing in traditional patriarchal rural environments. Male participants expressed their courtship and marriage values, which also deviated from traditional rural values. Some men were influenced by hookup culture on social media platforms. This research suggests that cultural embeddedness involves navigating and choosing between conflicting values.

The second scenario of cultural dual-embeddedness demonstrates the co-existence of rural and urban cultures. In the section concerning workers' browsing and recording their hometowns via social media, it appears that the uniqueness, locality and traditions of their hometown play a crucial role in shaping their rural embeddedness, which is reflected in their social media content preferences. Many participants shared their experiences of watching content about their rural homes on social media. Some of this revolves around sensorial resonance, such as social media videos featuring local foods that evoke familiar flavours for participants. Others more directly highlight cultural and ethical uniqueness, such as local activities, festivals and customs. This cultural embeddedness in rural areas runs parallel to urban cultural embeddedness, where both occur independently without interfering with the absorption of the other one.

The third scenario of cultural dual-embeddedness is that one aspect of cultural embeddedness strengthens the other one. Participants in the research survey who originally came from Guizhou Province are in the habit of watching 'Guizhou Village Super League' via social media. Participants often support their village's football team on social media platforms, helping them to feel a sense of belonging to their community.

Moreover, the Guizhou Village Super League also enhances participants' overall sense of local pride and attachment to Guizhou Province. Guizhou migrants' enthusiasm has increased the popularity of the Guizhou Village Super League more generally on social media. With its spread online, more non-Guizhou people have also begun to watch it. The Guizhou Village Super League, as showcased on social media, has elevated Guizhou's image from one of poverty and backwardness to one of warmth, cultural prosperity, and a destination worth visiting. This positive feedback on social media is particularly valuable for Guizhou migrant workers, who have long faced regional discrimination. The Guizhou Village Super League going viral has potential to improve the host destination's perception of Guizhou, creating a less discriminatory and less hostile environment for migrants, and facilitating easier urban cultural embedding.

In addition, as the environment changes, Chinese rural-urban migrants update their cultural embeddedness processes and strategies accordingly. Previous research and documentaries have explored the emergence of a distinct subculture among factory workers, often referred to as a working-class subculture (Li,2019). This subculture diverges from traditional rural culture while also failing to align with urban mainstream culture. This subculture, born from the collective migrant experiences of migrant labour groups, reflects their agency and distinct identity.

8. 2. 1. 3 Social embeddedness:

Social embeddedness in the research mainly focuses on social networks and social ties. Rural social embeddedness reinforcing urban social embeddedness is particularly evident when considering that a large portion of the research sample consists of rural-urban migrants from Guizhou. If fellow villagers express interest in migrating to Wenzhou, the pioneering migrants often assist their neighbours by offering them information about city life, and introducing them to factory job opportunities (Zhuoma and Kong,2016).

From this research, it can be seen that rural social embeddedness not only reinforces urban social embeddedness but also strengthens other forms of urban embeddedness. Rural social embeddedness reinforces urban social embeddedness in various forms, as exemplified by a case where a participant finds out about insurance practices in their urban destination. Consistent with previous research, this study confirms that social media helps rural-urban migrant workers maintain close communication with left-behind family members, which in turn reinforces their rural embeddedness (Murphy and Wu, 2024). This is clearly demonstrated in Chapter 6, where familial ties and filial piety are highlighted as strong emotional bonds. The point of contention between previous research results and my findings is the strength of weak ties within community connections. In previous research on Chinese rural-urban migrant workers, it has been found that they have gradually lost connection with weaker social relationships in their village, even though the possibility of connecting through social media was available to them. This loss is due to the lack of shared experiences and changes in mentality brought about by migrant trajectories (McDonald, 2016; Wang, 2016). Transnational migrant studies also observe the phenomenon of weakened friendships between migrants and their friends left behind (Ryan, 2015).

In contrast to the previous literature, this research demonstrates that migrant workers regard weak social relationships within rural communities as a very important channel for information and resources, especially in villages with a strong migrant culture. In this research, an example of cooperation is described in a village where many migrants move to the same city. Villagers have accumulated practical knowledge and experience of issues such as medical insurance reimbursement with rural hukou. When participants need guidance on this, or other matters, they can obtain relevant information from their

village social media chat groups. The information provider/s may have only a weak relationship with the migrant, but are nonetheless willing to help. This can be seen as a form of weak rural relationships (rural social embeddedness) helping rural-urban migrant workers acquire social embeddedness through social media in their urban destination .

8. 2. 2 Differentiated Embeddedness among Migrant Workers

The process of embeddedness in this research , echoes Ryan (2018)'s discussion around embeddedness as a dynamic process, not a static state. It varies in extent rather than being an "all or nothing" phenomenon. This research found migrants, based on their personal circumstances, can experience significantly different depths of embeddedness (Korinek et al. , 2005). In this section, I will discuss this from two perspectives: age and gender.

8. 2. 2.1 *The Age and generation Perspective*

This research shows varying depths of economic embeddedness based on age and generation. This research has found that young migrants are willing to actively participate in self-investment by means of online training. But the middle-aged migrant , who bear the dual responsibilities of caring for elderly parents and raising children, value a stable income, are less likely to leave their jobs and have a greater capacity to "endure hardship. " With families relying on their financial support, they are obliged to provide a consistent income and cannot afford to take any financial risks. They lack the career mobility and open-horizon ambition seen in younger rural-to-urban migrant workers, instead focusing firmly on monetary income. Empowerment and self-training opportunities are constrained by the financial pressures upon them.

A factor that is highly related to age but focuses more on shared and group-based experiences is *generation*. Different generations have different collective experiences in their formative years. The way they use social media for embeddedness tends to share common features within each generation, but differs across generations. In this study, participants aged between 25 and 59 can be classified, following the generational divisions commonly used in China, into four cohorts: post-60s (born in 1960–1969), post-70s (1970–1979), post-80s (1980–1989), and post-90s (1990–1999).

In the 1980s, China introduced the *Compulsory Education Law*, which required all children to complete nine years of basic education. Since then, government funding and subsidies for 9-year compulsory education have gradually increased (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 1986; Ding, 2008). This suggests that literacy skills vary significantly across generations. Only the post-60s and post-70s participants mentioned having reading difficulties when processing information on social media, whereas the post-80s and post-90s groups could read and interpret content more easily. China began its process of digitalisation in the late 1970s. Digital technologies became increasingly prevalent during the childhood and adolescence of the post-80s and post-90s generations. They are naturally more comfortable with the use and development of digital technologies, having grown up during a period of rapid digital transformation.

As a result, younger generations tend to be more skilled and confident in using social media for achieving embeddedness. The depth of embeddedness therefore differs across generations, reflecting a clear digital gap between older and younger cohorts.

8. 2. 2.1 The Gender Perspective

This thesis also shows differentiated cultural embeddedness among rural-urban migrants based on gender. In Chapter 7, the mindset of urban embeddedness is discussed

Differential embeddedness based on gender is particularly evident in the context of feminism. In absorbing modern ideologies, both men and women view social media as an important channel for understanding modern ideas. However, based on gender preferences, the outcomes of social media in shaping the attitudes and thought processes of male and female participants can differ significantly. Under the influence of social media, female participants become more attentive to topics such as family responsibilities, gender power, and gender stereotypes. However, this feminist influence does not extend to male participants. They tend to show indifference to feminism, and, in some cases, male migrant workers even engage in misogynistic behaviour on social media. These research results mirror previous studies, which found that women migrating to urban areas adopt modern values to advocate for gender equality, a shift that induces gender-based conflicts (Lee, 2005; Zhuang et al. , 2014). These findings also support discussions in the social media gender studies reviewed in the literature, particularly regarding the discourse on gender in Chinese social media.

Social media has been instrumental in sparking reflections on gender-related experiences among Chinese women. This has led to deeper contemplation of gendered experiences and, to some extent, has caused tensions in gender relationships (Bao, X, 2023; Li et al. , 2023). The indifference and opposition to feminism by male participants are rooted in the patriarchal culture in which they have long been immersed (Moloney and Love, 2018). Adopting negative attitudes towards online feminism is a way for them to defend their male superiority, which has persisted in rural traditions. Their attitude towards online feminism mirrors the offline gender culture and gender power structure.

A further notable difference is that female participants, especially younger ones, are more inclined to discuss LGBT topics. While they may not directly engage with LGBT ideas from social media, some young female participants are celebrity worshippers, or fans of

variety shows and TV series. Fan culture includes secondary creations, such as creating same-sex CP (couple pairings) and fan-created literature. Idols, especially male idols, are often imagined as homosexual or their gender is altered to be bisexual or female in these works. This engagement often leads women to explore LGBT issues indirectly, starting with celebrities, variety shows, or TV series. In one case, the idol's portrayal as transgender in fan-created literature prompted a female participant to reflect on transgender-related issues. This aligns with previous studies, which indicate that in China, sub-fantasy culture, particularly homosexual love art creation, is more popular among women on social media (Zhou, 2014).

Differential embeddedness in social norms based on gender is also found in this research project. Male and female participants show a notable difference in their rural embeddedness connected with lineage. In Chinese tradition, the paternal lineage is of great importance, and mutual support within the lineage is considered an obligation. Male participants in the study showed a strong attachment to their lineage, and they actively used social media to maintain and cooperate with their lineage members. Social media is an important platform for maintaining the function of lineage and sustaining rural social embeddedness. Although traditional Chinese social norms, rooted in Confucian philosophy, dictate that married women belong to their husband's lineage, this research finds that women often view their husband's lineage in a more utilitarian way, lacking the strong engagement with their husband's lineage activities that male participants demonstrate. The most commonly mentioned situation is seeking help from lineage members via WeChat, such as relying on lineage members to care for left-behind children. Since the children also share the lineage's blood, seeking help in child-related matters feels acceptable to women.

Women's rural embeddedness, in terms of lineage attachment, is shallower than that of men's. In this research, female participants showed emotional attachment to their natal families, using social media to maintain connections with them. This research also found feelings of sisterhood among village girls, whether married into or born in the village. Personal relationships play a significant role in building females' rural embeddedness. Through social media, women create closed, girls-only chat groups that reinforce their connection to their rural origins. Women's rural social relationships are closely maintained, with social media serving as a key tool for sustaining these bonds.

The conceptual development of 'embeddedness' demonstrates this research's theoretical originality, going beyond the simple presentation of empirical data. In the next section, I will focus on the significance of this research, its contributions to the research field, and its social significance, particularly its policy implications.

8.3 Research Reflection, Contribution and Policy Implications

This section will discuss this research's contributions, including the supplementary empirical data, the addition of social media as a new element in concepts of 'embeddedness', and its application to internal migration research—an area that has been overlooked thus far by scholars of 'embeddedness'. Then, based on the understanding of Chinese rural-urban migrants outlined in this study, this chapter puts forward suggestions derived from the research findings for policy implications.

8.3.1 Research Reflection

Digitalization has also introduced new risks and challenges. As I mentioned earlier in Section 8.2.2.1, many older-generation participants struggle to seize new opportunities due to limited digital literacy. In addition, although younger participants are generally more adept at using digital technologies and social media, they remain vulnerable within

the broader online environment. In my fieldwork, several young participants' experiences revealed their difficulties in assessing the credibility of online information. For example, one case showed a young participant who spent money on a low-quality online course that made exaggerated and unrealistic claims.

Moreover, the role of social media in the construction of rural–urban culture is not entirely positive. This study also documents the fading of the once-prominent “migrant beauty” culture. Migrant beauty cultures *Shamate*, characterized by flamboyant punk hairstyles and exaggerated fashion, were prevalent among rural-urban migrants during the millennial period. These subcultures were once developed by migrant workers to seek a sense of belonging and find emotional support within the migrant group. Using *Shamate* as a culture base, migrant workers fostered *Shamate* both on social media groups and offline. This formed an important part of their particular social network within urban embeddedness. Rural-urban migrants, identified as *Shamate*, however, faced hostility from the urban mainstream. They experienced online harassment, such as receiving hate messages and interference in their online group chats. The unwelcome reception of the migrant *Shamate* subculture led rural-urban migrants to abandon it. Now considered a “tear of the times” and a millennial internet memory, these subcultures have faded into the realm of nostalgia (Tao and Donald, 2015; Li, 2019). Participants now express a strong desire to align with urban mainstream ideals of aesthetics and ways of thinking. To some extent, this change comes at the cost of losing their group identity. Through the use of filters and AI technology, participants modify or even fabricate their online images, creating a version of themselves that aligns with urban ideals but distances them from their original collective identity. Seen positively, social media can help migrants integrate into urban life. From a negative perspective, however, this form of urban cultural embeddedness can be criticised for causing migrant labourers to concede aesthetic autonomy.

8. 3. 2 Research Contribution

Firstly, this research collects contemporary interview data about the usage of social media in the migration trajectories of Chinese rural-urban migrant workers. As China becomes more digitalised, increasing numbers of rural-urban migrant workers have become active users of social media. Despite this widespread phenomenon, there is a scarcity of qualitative data on the use of social media by Chinese rural-urban migrant workers in academia. This discrepancy may be due to the misalignment between the peak period of research on Chinese rural-urban migrant workers and the period when these workers began widely using social media. During the 2000s and 2010s, when the field of Chinese rural-urban migrant worker research was most active and data were being collected, social media usage was not a prominent phenomenon, and many workers were still using ICT (Information and Communication Technology). This research fills the gap in data related to social media, which helps in understanding the current everyday experiences of Chinese rural-urban migrants. This update is crucial to the study of Chinese rural-urban migration.

Secondly, previous migrant research, adopting the conceptual framework of embeddedness, primarily focused on offline domains, analysing typical offline spheres of embeddedness. This research adds an online perspective, examining how social media influences migrants' feelings, mindset and behaviour to better understand their continuous entanglement with where they come from, where they are now. The research provides insights into the complexity and dynamics of embeddedness, positioning the influence of social media and online activities as new explanatory sources and as an analytical element in embeddedness migrant studies, aiding in the understanding of the migrant phenomenon.

Thirdly, dual-embeddedness, a concept which stems originally from transnational studies, discusses those migrants who are embedded in multi-layered and multi-site contexts transnationally (Levitt and Schiller, 2004). Rural-urban migrants, who are larger in number and migrate on a more frequent basis, are overlooked.

This research applies the concept of dual embeddedness to the study of rural–urban internal migration. For countries in the Global South, where large-scale population mobility from rural to urban areas remains a defining feature of development, this study offers fresh theoretical insights into how internal migrants negotiate and maintain connections across both their rural origins and urban destinations during processes of urbanization. Although national contexts differ, many Global South countries share similar developmental stages and face comparable structural challenges of internal migrant flow. The theoretical innovation developed in this research therefore has broader applicability and relevance to other Global South contexts.

8. 3. 3 Contributions of This Research to Future Policy Making

This research can provide insights into migrant facilitation policy-making in China.

Firstly, the government could launch government-led online training and certification programs for migrant workers on social media, encouraging rural-urban migrant workers to utilise their limited free time to enhance their skills and avoid being confined to low-end positions in perpetuity. With government involvement, migrant workers could improve their academic and vocational skills through social media. This would enable them to avoid relying solely on private training options, where the quality of training is often difficult to guarantee.

Secondly, social media is a valuable aid to migrant workers to remotely parent and care for left-behind family members. The government has the opportunity to enhance the role

of social media in this context. To better facilitate migrants' long-distance parenting roles for left-behind children, the government could require schools in rural areas where left-behind children study to regularly contact parents via WeChat to communicate about the children's development and academic progress. This approach could, to some extent, overcome the challenges faced by "skip generation left-behind families" (where the middle generation has migrated to work in the city, leaving grandparents as the guardians of left-behind children living in the village). This could mitigate the issue of left-behind elders who may lack the capacity to supervise children's education, thereby reducing the academic gap caused by the absence of parental guidance.

Additionally, many hospitals and health centres have already launched services that allow medical advice and diagnoses to be accessed via WeChat mini programs. The government could encourage hospitals and health centres to further optimise their information services. With the elderly patients' consent, their migrant adult children could directly pay for their medical expenses and medication, and assist online in communicating with doctors about their health conditions. This enables migrants to better fulfil their filial duties remotely, while also helping left-behind elderly relatives experience the benefits of digitalisation.

8. 4 Research Limitations and Future Research Direction

This chapter reflects on the limitations of this research, which are the absence of long-term data and the fact that most participants were inter-provincial migrants. Future research possibilities might include conducting longitudinal studies and collecting data from intra-provincial Chinese rural–urban migrant workers.

Gender and age are very important perspectives, particularly age. However, the time-limited nature of the PhD research restricted the collection of long-term data tracking changes in participants' migration trajectories as they aged. This research study focuses

on the stage when migrants have a job in the urban destination. If time allows in the future, long-term tracking of participants' migration could also be conducted, observing migrants from the beginning of their migration, through their period of working in urban areas, returning to their hometowns, and subsequently re-migrating, thereby covering the full migration cycle with changes in migrants' age. This would allow for a deeper exploration of the broader dynamics of embeddedness, including how embeddedness in both rural and urban areas either deepens or becomes superficial, and how this process develops. A more detailed research of this nature could reveal a bigger and more complex pattern of Chinese rural-urban migrant embeddedness.

Secondly, in this research, most of the recruited participants were inter-provincial migrants, with very few being intra-provincial migrants. This can be explained by the situation of Wenzhou as a second-tier city in Zhejiang Province. Native Zhejiangians usually choose to move to the provincial capital, Hangzhou, or to the nearby megacity of Shanghai. Wenzhou is not an attractive destination for intra-provincial migration and thus Wenzhou's migrant labour force consists mostly of people from other less-developed provinces rather than from within Zhejiang Province. A future research project could change the study site to a city that attracts more intra-provincial migrants to examine intra-provincial migrants' migration trajectories and the role of social media in these trajectories, potentially offering new perspectives and insights into this topic.

Reference

- Agergaard, J. and Thao, V.T. (2011) 'Mobile, flexible, and adaptable: Female migrants in Hanoi's informal sector', *Population, Space and Place*, 17(5), pp. 407–420. doi:10.1002/psp.622.
- Al Wazni, A.B. (2015) 'Muslim women in America and hijab: A study of empowerment, feminist identity, and body image', *Social Work*, 60(4), pp. 325–333.
- Alinejad, D. (2019) 'Careful co-presence: The transnational mediation of emotional intimacy', *Social Media and Society*, 5(2).
- Alinejad, D. and Ponzanesi, S. (2020) 'Migrancy and digital mediations of emotion', *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 23(5), pp. 621–638. doi:10.1177/1367877920933649.
- Andreas, J. and Zhan, S. (2016) 'Hukou and land: Market reform and rural displacement in China', *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 43(4), pp. 798–827.
- Anh, N.T., Rigg, J., Huong, L.T.T. and Dieu, D.T. (2012) 'Becoming and being urban in Hanoi: Rural-urban migration and relations in Viet Nam', *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 39(5), pp. 1103–1131.
- BBC (2010) '50 million rural left-behind women in China face difficulties', *BBC News*. (Accessed: 05 July 2023).
- Bacigalupe, G. and Cámara, M. (2012) 'Transnational families and social technologies: Reassessing immigration psychology', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 38(9), pp. 1425–1438. doi:10.1080/1369183x.2012.698211.
- Bai, N. and Li, J. (2008) 'Migrant workers in China: A general survey', *Social Sciences in China*, 29(3), pp. 85–103.
- Bakewell, O. (2021) 'Unsettling the boundaries between forced and voluntary migration', in Carmel, E. et al. (eds.) *Handbook on the Governance and Politics of Migration*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing, pp. 783–813.
- Baldassar, L., Kilkey, M., Merla, L. and Wilding, R. (2016) 'Transnational families, care and wellbeing', in Thomas, F. (ed.) *Handbook of Migration and Health*. Cheltenham, Glos, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing, pp. 477–493.
- Baldassar, L. (2016) 'De-demonizing distance in mobile family lives: Co-presence, care circulation and polymedia as vibrant matter', *Global Networks*, 16(2), pp. 145–163. doi:10.1111/glob.12109.
- Baldassar, L. (2015) 'Guilty feelings and the guilt trip: Emotions and motivation in migration and transnational caregiving', *Emotion, Space and Society*, 16, pp. 81–89. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emospa.2014.09.003>.

- Bali, S., Chen, T-C., Liu, M-C., Klangrit, S. and Lin, C-Y. (2024) 'Navigating interactions and challenges in online learning: a qualitative study through social presence theory', *Qualitative Research Journal*, EarlyCite. doi: 10.1108/QRJ-04-2024-0077.
- Bamman, D., O'Connor, B. and Smith, N. (2012) 'Censorship and deletion practices in Chinese social media', *First Monday* [Preprint].
- Bao, X. (2023) 'The intimacy trap: PUA based on personal and relational perspectives – a qualitative study of relationships—an arsenic “love”', *Applied & Educational Psychology*, 4(10).
- Barbalet, J. (2021) 'The analysis of Chinese rural society: Fei Xiaotong revisited', *Modern China*, 47(4), pp. 355–382.
- Basch, L.G., Glick, N.S. and Blanc-Szanton, C. (1992) *Nations unbound: Transnational projects, postcolonial predicaments, and deterritorialized nation-states*. London, UK: Gordon & Breach.
- Bascuñan-Wiley, N. (2021) 'Migration and the senses', *Sociology Compass*, 15(3).
- Basu, K. (1986) 'One kind of power', *Oxford Economic Papers*, 38(2), pp. 259–282.
- Baym, N. (2021) *Creator culture: An introduction to global social media entertainment*. New York, USA: New York University Press.
- Bell, D. and Valentine, G. (1997) *Consuming geographies: We are where we eat*. London: Routledge.
- Bent-Goodley, T.B. (2018) 'Empowerment in action: #SWLeadAdvocateChampion', *Social Work*, 63(2), pp. 101–103.
- Benítez, J.L. (2012) 'Salvadoran transnational families: ICT and communication practices in the network society', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 38(9), pp. 1439–1449. doi:10.1080/1369183x.2012.698214.
- Bertaux, D. (1981) 'From the life-history approach to the transformation of sociological practice', in Bertaux, D. (ed.) *Biography and society: The life history approach in the social sciences*. London, UK: SAGE Publications, Inc., pp. 29–45.
- Bintao, H. (2018) *Research on the influence strategy of WeChat official accounts of colleges and universities*.
- Boccagni, P. (2017) 'Aspirations and the subjective future of migration: Comparing views and desires of the “time ahead” through the narratives of immigrant domestic workers', *Comparative Migration Studies*, 5(1). doi:10.1186/s40878-016-0047-6.
- Bogle, K.A. (2008) *Hooking up: Sex, dating and relationships on campus*. New York, NY: New York University Press.

- Boyd, D. (2011) 'Social network sites as networked publics: Affordances, dynamics, and implications', in Papacharissi, Z. (ed.) *A networked self: Identity, community and culture on social network sites*. New York, USA: Routledge, pp. 39–46.
- Boyd, M. (1989) 'Family and personal networks in international migration: Recent developments and new agendas', *International Migration Review*, 23(3), pp. 638–670. doi:10.1177/019791838902300313.
- Brannick, T. and Coghlan, D. (2007) 'In defense of being "native": The case for insider academic research', *Organizational Research Methods*, 10(1), pp. 59–74. doi: 10.1177/1094428106289253.
- Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2023) 'Thematic analysis', in Denzin, N.K., Lincoln, S.Y., Giardina, D.M. and Cannella, S.G. (eds.) *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research*. 6th edn. Los Angeles, USA: SAGE Publications, Inc., pp. 385–402.
- Brettell, C. and Hollifield, J.F. (2022) *Migration theory: Talking across disciplines*. New York, USA: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
- Brownell, S. and Wasserstrom, J. (2002) *Chinese femininities/Chinese masculinities: A reader*. Berkeley, USA: University of California Press. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1525/california/9780520211032.001.0001> (Accessed: 10 July 2025).
- Brox, T. (2015) 'The formation of Tibetan characteristic spaces in Chinese cities – take a Tibetan street in Wuhou District of Chengdu as an example', *Western China Borderlands Studies Review*, pp. 121–137.
- Brox, T. (2019) 'Landscapes of Little Lhasa: Materialities of the vernacular, political and commercial in urban China', *Geoforum*, 107, pp. 24–33. doi: 10.1016/j.geoforum.2019.10.017.
- Bucher, T. and Helmond, A. (2016) 'Social media affordances and interfaces', in Burgess, J., Poell, T. and Marwick, A. (eds.) *The SAGE handbook of social media*. London, UK: SAGE Publications, pp. 1164–1180.
- Burawoy, M. (1985) *Politics of production: Factory regimes under capitalism and socialism*. London: Verso Press.
- Burawoy, M. and Lukacs, J. (1985) 'Mythologies of work: A comparison of firms in state socialism and advanced capitalism', *American Sociological Review*, 50(6), p. 723. doi: 10.2307/2095501.
- Cabiddu, F., Carlo, M.D. and Piccoli, G. (2014) 'Social media affordances: Enabling customer engagement', *Annals of Tourism Research*, 48, pp. 175–192. doi:10.1016/j.annals.2014.06.003.
- Cai, F. (2010) 'Demographic transition, demographic dividend, and Lewis turning point in China', *China Economic Journal*, 3(2), pp. 107–119. doi:10.1080/17538963.2010.511899.
- Cai, F. and Wang, M. (2005) 'An economic analysis of "peasant laborer shortage" based on the Pearl River Delta survey', *Social Sciences in Guangdong*, 2, pp. 5–10. [In Chinese]

Cai, Y. (2006) *State and laid-off workers in reform China: The silence and collective action of the retrenched*. London, UK: Routledge.

Cai, Y. (2023) 'Popularizing racial discourse: The visual and verbal representation of Africans in Chinese social media', *Asian Ethnicity*, 24(3), pp. 369–389. doi:10.1080/14631369.2023.2192906.

Cao, A. and Li, P. (2018) 'We are not machines: The identity construction of Chinese female migrant workers in online chat groups', *Chinese Journal of Communication*, 11(3), pp. 289–305. doi:10.1080/17544750.2018.1435555.

Cao, G., Li, K., Wang, R. and Liu, T. (2017) 'Consumption structure of migrant worker families in China', *China & World Economy*, 25(4), pp. 1–21. doi:10.1111/cwe.12203.

Cao, H., Chen, S. and Xi, X. (2023) 'Aging, migration, and structural transformation in China', *Economic Modelling*, 126, p. 106430. doi:10.1016/j.econmod.2023.106430.

Carling, J. and Collins, F. (2018) 'Aspiration, desire and the drivers of migration', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 44(6), pp. 909–926. doi:10.4324/9780429281181.

Carretero, S., Vuorikari, R. and Punie, Y. (2017) *EUR 28558 EN: The digital competence framework for citizens with eight proficiency levels and examples of use*.

Cassar, C., Gauci, J. and Bacchi, A. (2016) 'Migrants' use of social media in Malta', *The People for Change Foundation*, pp. 1–37.

Castles, S., de Haas, H. and Miller, M.J. (2015) 'Walking the tightrope: Between global trends and regional detail', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 38(13), pp. 2377–2385. doi:10.1080/01419870.2015.1034746.

CCTV (2022) *Report on the development of rural education in China from 2020 to 2022*. China Education News Network. Available at: <https://edu.cctv.com/2022/12/26/ARTI04L9MJku3MGHbADljtcD221226.shtml> (Accessed: 05 July 2023).

CCTV (2024) 'Rural "Kenglao" phenomenon on the rise'. Available at: http://news.china.com.cn/2024-11/04/content_117525807.shtml (Accessed: 17 December 2024).

Ceccagno, A. and Gao, R. (2023) 'The making of a skilled worker: The transnational mixed embeddedness of migrant workers', *Mobilities*, 18(2), pp. 250–266. doi:10.1080/17450101.2022.2082882.

Chan, C.K.C. and Hui, E.S.I. (2017) 'Bringing class struggles back: A Marxian analysis of the state and class relations in China', *Globalizations*, 14(2), pp. 232–244. doi:10.1080/14747731.2016.1207935.

Chan, K.W. (1996) 'Post-Mao China: A two-class urban society in the making', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 20(1), pp. 134–150. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2427.1996.tb00305.x.

- Chan, K.W. (2010) 'The global financial crisis and migrant workers in China: "There is no future as a labourer; returning to the village has no meaning"', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 34(3), pp. 659–677. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2427.2010.00987.x.
- Chan, J. (2013) 'A suicide survivor: The life of a Chinese worker', *New Technology, Work and Employment*, 28(2), pp. 84–99. doi:10.1111/ntwe.12007.
- Chan, J., Ngai, P. and Selden, M. (2015) 'Interns or workers? China's student labor regime', *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, pp. 1–24.
- Chan, K.W. (1996) 'Post-Mao China: A two-class urban society in the making', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 20(1), pp. 134–150. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2427.1996.tb00305.x.
- Chan, K.W. (2001) 'Recent migration in China: Patterns, trends, and policies', *Asian Perspective*, 25(4), pp. 127–155. doi:10.1353/apr.2001.0005.
- Chan, K.W. (2010) 'A China paradox: Migrant labor shortage amidst rural labor supply abundance', *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, 51(4), pp. 513–530. doi:10.2747/1539-7216.51.4.513.
- Chan, K.W. (2010) 'Fundamentals of China's urbanization and policy', *China Review*, pp. 63–93.
- Chan, K.W. (2010) 'The global financial crisis and migrant workers in China: "There is no future as a labourer; returning to the village has no meaning"', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 34(3), pp. 659–677. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2427.2010.00987.x.
- Chan, K.W. (2012) "Crossing the 50 Percent Population Rubicon: Can China Urbanize to Prosperity?," *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, 53(1), pp. 63–86. doi:10.2747/1539-7216.53.1.63.
- Chan, K.W. and Zhang, L. (1999) "The Hukou System and Rural-Urban Migration in China: Processes and Changes," *The China Quarterly*, 160, pp. 818–855. doi:10.1017/S0305741000001351.
- Chan, M. (2015) 'Multimodal connectedness and quality of life: Examining the influences of technology adoption and interpersonal communication on well-being across the life span', *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 20(1), pp. 3–18. doi:10.1111/jcc4.12089.
- Chandrasekhar, S. and Sharma, A., 2015. Urbanization and spatial patterns of internal migration in India. *Spatial demography*, 3(2), pp.63-89.
- Chen, C. and Fan, C.C. (2016) *China's Hukou Puzzle: Why Don't Rural Migrants Want Urban Hukou?* The China Review.

Chen, C. and Zhao, M. (2017) ‘The undermining of rural labor out-migration by household strategies in China’s migrant-sending areas: The case of Nanyang, Henan Province’, *Cities*, 60, pp. 446–453. doi:10.1016/j.cities.2016.04.009.

Chen, H. (2019) *Transnational families and digital technologies: Parenting at a distance among Chinese families*. Dissertation.

Cheung, S. (2003) ‘Miao identities, indigenism and the politics of appropriation in Southwest China during the Republican period’, *Asian Ethnicity*, 4(1), pp. 85–114. DOI: 10.1080/14631360301649.

Chen, H., Wang, X., Liu, Y. and Liu, Y. (2020) “Migrants’ choice of household split or reunion in China’s urbanisation process: The effect of objective and subjective socioeconomic status,” *Cities*, 102, p. 102669. doi:10.1016/j.cities.2020.102669.

Chen, H.Y., Yarnal, C., Chick, G. and Jablonski, N. (2018) “Egg White or Sun-Kissed: A Cross-Cultural Exploration of Skin Color and Women’s Leisure Behavior,” *Sex Roles*, 78(3–4), pp. 255–271. doi:10.1007/s11199-017-0785-4.

Chen, J., Chen, C. and Yao, D. (2017) “Analysis on the Comparative Advantage and Export Competitiveness of China’s Fruit Products,” in *Proceedings of the International Conference on Transformations and Innovations in Management*. Paris, France: Atlantis Press. doi:10.2991/ictim-17.2017.36.

Chen, K., Luo, Y., Hu, A., Zhao, J. and Zhang, L. (2021) ‘Characteristics of misinformation spreading on social media during the COVID-19 outbreak in China: A descriptive analysis’, *Risk Management and Healthcare Policy*, 14, pp. 1869–1879. doi:10.2147/rmhp.s312327.

Chen, Q. and Zhao, Y. 陈青, 赵宇统. (2020) *With the love of a billion-year-old volcano, we offer you a legendary romance – The 8th Yandang Mountain Couple Tourism Culture Festival sweetly kicks off*. Yandangshan: Yandangshan guan wei hui. 以亿年火山之爱, 许你一场旷世浪漫——雁荡山第八届夫妻旅游文化节甜蜜开启.

Chen, S. 陈圣来. (2020) *Character of the city: Research on large scale characteristic activities and characteristic cultural city*. 城市的秉性: 大型特色活动与特色文化城市. Beijing: Renmin chubanshe.

Chen, S. (2017) ‘The ideal Confucian mode for “mother-in-law being loving and daughter-in-law being filial pious” in traditional China’, in *Proceedings of the 2017 3rd International Conference on Humanities and Social Science Research (ICHSSR 2017)*. Paris: Atlantis Press, pp. 302–305.

Chen, S.Y., Zhang, Q., B., and Zhang, T.T. (2020) ‘Review on the petroleum market in China: History, challenges and prospects’, *Petroleum Science*, 17(6), pp. 1779–1794. doi:10.1007/s12182-020-00501-6.

Chen, T. (2020) *Why is Kuaishou Better than douyin for e-commerce conversion & social engagement*. WalktheChat. <https://walkthechat.com/why-is-kuaishou-better-than-douyin-for-e-commerce-conversion-social-engagement/> (Accessed: 07 July 2023).

Chen, W., Kiat Bong, W. and Li, N. (2017) 'The accessibility of Chinese social media applications', in *Chinese Social Media*. Routledge, pp. 144–160. doi:10.4324/9781315160214-14.

Chen, X. (2023) 'Adult literacy policy and practice in post-1949 China: A historical perspective', *Studies in the Education of Adults*, 55(1), pp. 120–137.

Chen, Y., Mao, Z. and Qiu, J.L. (2018) 'Super-sticky design and everyday cultures', in *Super-sticky WeChat and Chinese Society*. Leeds: Emerald Publishing Limited, pp. 47–76. doi:10.1108/978-1-78743-091-420181004.

Chen, Z.T. (2021) 'Poetic prosumption of animation, comic, game and novel in a post-socialist China: A case of a popular video-sharing social media Bilibili as heterotopia', *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 21(2), pp. 257–277. doi:10.1177/1469540518787574.

Cheng, Y., Rosenberg, M., Winterton, R., Blackberry, I. and Gao, S. (2019) 'Mobilities of older Chinese rural-urban migrants: A case study in Beijing', *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 16(3), p. 488. doi:10.3390/ijerph16030488.

Cheng, Y., Li, S. and Xiong, X. (2018) 'The association of the digital divide and self-rated health among the elderly—Taking Beijing as an example', *Scientific Research on Aging*, 6, pp. 14–25.

Cheng, Y., Rosenberg, M., Winterton, R., Blackberry, I. and Gao, S. (2019) 'Mobilities of older Chinese rural-urban migrants: A case study in Beijing', *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 16(3), p. 488. doi:10.3390/ijerph16030488.

Cheng, Z. (2014) *The new generation of migrant workers in urban China in Urban China in the New Era*. Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer Berlin Heidelberg, pp. 125–153. doi:10.1007/978-3-642-54227-5_7.

Cheng, Z., Nielsen, I. and Smyth, R. (2014) 'Access to social insurance in urban China: A comparative study of rural–urban and urban–urban migrants in Beijing', *Habitat International*, 41, pp. 243–252. doi:10.1016/j.habitatint.2013.08.007.

Cheng, Z., Wang, H. and Smyth, R. (2014) 'Happiness and job satisfaction in urban China: A comparative study of two generations of migrants and urban locals', *Urban Studies*, 51(10), pp. 2160–2184. doi:10.1177/0042098013506042.

Cheung, S. Woo (2020) 'Festivals and re-ethnicization of China's Miao migrant community: Culture for network linkage and institutional embeddedness', *Asian Education and Development Studies*, 9(1), pp. 1–14. doi:10.1108/AEDS-02-2018-0030.

Chiang, Y., Hannum, E.C. and Kao, G. (2013) *It's not just about the money: Motivations for youth migration in rural China*.

Chib, A., Bentley, C. and Wardoyo, R.J. (2019) 'Distributed digital contexts and learning: personal empowerment and social transformation in marginalized populations', *Comunicar*, 27(58), pp. 51–60.

Chib, A., Wilkin, H.A. and Hua, S.R.M. (2013) 'International migrant workers' use of mobile phones to seek social support in Singapore', *Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism*, 9(4), pp. 19–34.

China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC) (2024) *The 55th statistical report on China's internet development* [PDF], published May 2025. <https://www.cnnic.com.cn/IDR/ReportDownloads/202505/P020250514564119130448.pdf> (Accessed: 11 June 2025).

China Labor Watch (2022) *The dark side of the glittering world: A report on exploitation in toy factories in China*. China Labor Watch. <https://chinalaborwatch.org/the-dark-side-of-the-glittering-world-a-report-on-exploitation-in-toy-factories-in-china/> (Accessed: 07 July 2023).

China News. 中国新闻网. (2021) '16 million elderly left behind in rural areas: Who will solve their pension problem?' Nongcun liushou laoren da 1600 wan: Shui lai jie jue tamen de yanglao nanti? 农村留守老人达 1600 万 谁来解决他们的养老难题? *China News 中国新闻网*, 27 October. Available at: <https://www.chinanews.com.cn/cj/2021/10-27/9595783.shtml> (Accessed: 30 July 2025).

Choi, S.Y.-P. and Peng, Y. (2016) *Masculine compromise: Migration, family, and gender in China*. University of California Press.

Chongqing Municipal Bureau of Statistics 重庆市统计局. (2019) *Migrant workers' survival conditions remain problematic and should not be overlooked*. 农民工认可生存现状存在问题不容忽视. Chongqing: Chongqing shi tong ji ju. <https://tjj.cq.gov.cn> (Accessed: 6 June 2025).

Chu, Q. (2016) 'An analysis of gender discrimination in the labor market of migrant workers', *Chinese Government and Power*, 1, pp. 19–21.

Chu, R. and Hail, H.C. (2013) 'Winding road toward the chinese dream: The U-shaped relationship between income and life satisfaction among Chinese migrant workers', *Social Indicators Research*, 118(1), pp. 235–246. doi:10.1007/s11205-013-0415-7.

Chu, R., Liu, M. and Shi, G.J. (2015) 'How rural-urban identification influences consumption patterns? Evidence from Chinese migrant workers', *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 27(1), pp. 40–60. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1108/APJML-10-2014-0143>.

CHSI. 中国高等教育学生信息网 (China Gaodeng Jiaoyu Xuesheng Xinxi Wang). (n.d.) *Introduction to the China Higher Education Student Information Network website*. Zhongguo Gaodeng Jiaoyu Xuesheng Xinxi Wang wangzhan jieshao 中国高等教育学生

信息网网站介绍 . Available at: https://www.chsi.com.cn/about/about_site.shtml (Accessed: 21 June 2025).

Cieslik, A. (2011) 'Where do you prefer to work? How the work environment influences return migration decisions from the United Kingdom to Poland', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 37(9), pp. 1367–1383. doi:10.1080/1369183X.2011.623613.

Coate, S. and Ravallion, M. (1993) . Reciprocity without commitment: Characterization and performance of informal insurance arrangements. *Journal of development Economics*, 40(1), pp.1-24.

Cohen, M.L. (1990) . Lineage organization in north China. *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 49(3), pp.509-534.

Craig, D.R., Lin, J. and Cunningham, S. (2021) *Wanghong as Social Media Entertainment in China*. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan. pp61-65

Croll, E. (1983) *Chinese Women since Mao*. London: Zed Books.

Curran, S.R. and Rivero-Fuentes, E. (2003) 'Engendering migrant networks: The case of Mexican migration', *Demography*, 40(2), pp. 289–307. doi:10.1353/dem.2003.0011.

Cyberspace Administration of China (2017) Mobile Internet Users Reach 95.1%, and Mobile App Services Have Significantly Improved, *China net credit network*.

Czaika, M. and Reinprecht, C. (2020) 'Drivers of migration: A synthesis of knowledge', *IMI Work*, 163, pp. 1–45.

Dados, N. and Connell, R. (2012) 'The global south'. *Contexts*, 11(1), pp.12-13.

Dai, W. et al. (2015) 'Sexual behavior of migrant workers in Shanghai, China', *BMC Public Health*, 15(1), p. 1067. doi:10.1186/s12889-015-2385-y.

Dai, W., Gao, J., Xia, X., Yang, H., Shen, Y., Gu, J., Wang, T., Liu, Y., Zhou, J., Shen, Z., Zhu, Z. and Pan, Z. (2015) 'Sexual behavior of migrant workers in Shanghai, China', *BMC Public Health*, 15(1). doi:10.1186/s12889-015-2385-y.

Dale, G. (2011) 'Lineages of embeddedness: On the antecedents and successors of a Polanyian concept', *American Journal of Economics and Sociology*, 70(2), pp. 306–339. doi:10.1111/j.1536-7150.2011.00776.x.

Damm, J. (2007) 'The internet and the fragmentation of Chinese society', *Critical Asian Studies*, 39(2), pp. 273–294. doi:10.1080/14672710701339485.

Davis, D. (2000) *The consumer revolution in urban China*. Berkeley, USA: University of California Press.

Dekker, R. and Engersen, G. (2014) 'How social media transform migrant networks and facilitate migration', *Global Networks*, 14(4), pp. 401–418. doi:10.1111/glob.12040.

- Dekker, R., Engbersen, G. and Faber, M. (2016) 'The use of online media in Migration Networks', *Population, Space and Place*, 22(6), pp. 539–551. doi:10.1002/psp.1938.
- Deng, L. and Ma, H. 邓力群, 马洪. (1987) . *Contemporary Chinese economy*. Dangdai Zhongguo jingji 当代中国经济. Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe.
- Deng, X., Fraser, K. and Shen, J. (2023) *Ageing in China: What does it mean for the job market?* Singapore: Springer Nature. doi:10.1007/978-981-19-9681-8.
- Desk, M. (2020) China and the history of its special economic zones, Global Village Space. Available at: <https://www.globalvillagespace.com/history-of-special-economic-zones-in-china/> (Accessed: 02 July 2023).
- Ding, X., 2008. The development of compulsory education finance in rural China. *Chinese Education & Society*, 41(1), pp.51-57.
- Dimaggio, P., Harittai, E., Celeste, C. and Shafer, S. (2020) . Excerpts from “digital inequality: From unequal access to differentiated use”. *Inequality in the United States*, pp.98-113.
- Dolfin, S. and Genicot, G. (2010) 'What do networks do? the role of networks on migration and “Coyote” use', *Review of Development Economics*, 14(2), pp. 343–359. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9361.2010.00557.x.
- Dong, Y. (2022) 'Repoliticizing the depoliticized: social practices of new workers in Picun', in Wang, M. (ed.) *Socially engaged public art in East Asia: Space, place, and community in action 217*. Vernon Press, pp. 240–271.
- Dong, Y. (2024) ““Red housekeeping” in a socialist factory: Jiashu and transforming reproductive labor in urban China (1949–1962)”, *International Review of Social History*, 69(1), pp. 1–24. doi: 10.1017/S0020859023000706.
- Dorabji Tata Trust (2011) 'National Workshop on Internal Migration and Human Development in India', *Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR)-UNESCO and UNICEF*, 2, pp. 1–239.
- Dou, C. (2013) 'An anthropological field study in a Tibetan community of Chengdu', *Asian Social Science*, 9(10). doi:10.5539/ass.v9n10p192.
- Drysdale, P. and Song, L. (2003) *China's entry into the World Trade Organisation*. Edited by Peter Drysdale and Ligang Song. Routledge. doi:10.4324/9780203398227.
- Du, S. (2022) . *Parenting styles and youth outcomes in contemporary China*. The University of Manchester (United Kingdom).
- Du, X., Liechty, T., Santos, C.A. and Park, J (2020) I want to record and Share my wonderful journey: Chinese millennials' production and sharing of short-form travel videos on TikTok or Douyin', *Current Issues in Tourism*, 25(21), pp. 3412–3424. doi:10.1080/13683500.2020.1810212.

- Du, Y. (2024) 'Aggression, disempowerment, and feminism in the "scum men" discourse on Chinese social media', *Critical Arts* [Preprint]. doi:10.1080/02560046.2024.2384632.
- Dutton, M.R. (1992) *Policing and Punishment in China: From Patriarchy to the People*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Diamond, N. (1995) . Defining the Miao. *Cultural encounters on China's ethnic frontiers*, pp.92-116.
- Dwyer, P. (2010) *Understanding social citizenship : Themes and perspectives for policy and practice*. Policy Press.
- Démurger, S. and Wang, X. (2016) Remittances and expenditure patterns of the left behinds in rural China Remittances and expenditure patterns of the left behinds in rural China . Available at: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=2711628WP1601-Electroniccopyavailableat:https://ssrn.com/abstract=2711628Electroniccopyavailableat:> <http://ssrn.com/abstract=2711628>.
- Edensor, T. and Millington, S. (2008) "'This is our city": Branding football and local embeddedness', *Global Networks*, 8(2), pp. 172–193. doi:10.1111/j.1471-0374.2008.00190.x.
- Ellison, N.B., Steinfield, C. and Lampe, C. (2007) 'The benefits of facebook "friends" : Social Capital and college students' use of online social network sites', *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 12(4), pp. 1143–1168. doi:10.1111/j.1083-6101.2007.00367.x.
- Eshet, Y. (2004) . Digital literacy: A conceptual framework for survival skills in the digital era. *Journal of educational multimedia and hypermedia*, 13(1), pp.93-106.
- Eshraghian, F. and Hafezieh, N. (2017) 'Affordance theory in social media research: systematic review and synthesis of the literature', *25th European Conference on Information Systems*, pp. 1–12.
- Evans, H. (2008) 'Sexed bodies, sexualized identities, and the limits of gender', *China Information*, 22(2), pp. 361–386. doi:10.1177/0920203x08091550.
- Faist, T. (2000) 'Transnationalization in international migration: Implications for the study of citizenship and culture', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 23(2), pp. 189–222. doi:10.1080/014198700329024.
- Fan, C.C. (2003) 'Rural-urban migration and Gender Division of Labor in transitional china', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 27(1), pp. 24–47. doi:10.1111/1468-2427.00429.
- Fan, C.C. (2006) 'China's Eleventh Five-Year Plan (2006-2010): From "Getting rich first" to "common prosperity"', *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, 47(6), pp. 708–723. doi:10.2747/1538-7216.47.6.708.

Fan, C.C. (2007) *China on the Move: Migration, the State, and the Household*. London: Routledge.

Fan, Y. 樊颖. (2016) 'On the reconstruction of Guizhou Province's image'. *Lun Guizhou shengyu xingxiang de chonggou* 论贵州省域形象的重构. *Guiyang Shiwei Dangxiao Xuebao* 贵阳市委党校学报, (5), pp. 52–55.

Fan, J. and Guan, R. (2023) 'Estimating the cost of internet censorship in China: Evidence from a gamified remote platform', *Journalism and Media*, 4(2), pp. 413–429. doi:10.3390/journalmedia4020027.

Fang, X. and Dou, S. 方晓恬, 窦少舸. 2018. The identity construction of the new generation of rural-urban migrant workers in online games—Based on interviews with 13 'Honor of Kings' players from the new generation of rural-urban migrant workers. *Xinshengdai nongmingong zai wangluo youxi zhong jiangou de shenfen rentong*——jiyu dui 13 wei "Wangzhe Rongyao" xinshengdai nongmingong wanjiade fangtan 新生代农民工在网络游戏建构的身份认同——基于对 13 位《王者荣耀》新生代农民工玩家的访谈. *Zhongguo Qingnian Yanjiu* 中国青年研究, (11), pp. 56–61.

Farred, G. and Litzinger, R.A. (2013) *Fanon: Imperative of the now*. Durham, NC, USA: Duke University Press.

Fatima, H., Zhao, S., Yue, A., Li, S. and Shi, Y. (2022) Parental discipline and early childhood development in rural China. *Sustainability*, 14(4), p.1988.

Fei, XT. (1947) *From the soil: The foundations of Chinese society*.

Ferrari, A. (2012) 'Digital Competence in Practice: An Analysis of Frameworks' *European Commission Joint Research Centre Institute for Prospective Technological Studies*, pp. 1–95.

Feyissa, D. (2022) 'Beyond Economics: The Role of Socio-Political Factors in Hadya Migration to South Africa', *The Journal of Critical Global South Studies*, 5(1/2). doi:10.13169/zanjglobsoutstud.5.1.0005.

Fiallos, A. and Figueroa, S. (2023) 'Detection of educational influencers and communities on TikTok', *2023 Ninth International Conference on eDemocracy & eGovernment (ICEDEG)*. IEEE, pp. 1–6. doi:10.1109/ICEDEG58167.2023.10122011.

Fields, G. and Song, Y. (2020) 'Modeling migration barriers in a two-sector framework: A welfare analysis of the hukou reform in China', *Economic Modelling*, 84, pp. 293–301. doi:10.1016/j.econmod.2019.04.019.

Flick, U. (2017) *The sage handbook of qualitative data collection*. Los Angeles, USA: SAGE.

- Foltz, J., Guo, Y. and Yao, Y. (2020) 'Lineage networks, urban migration and income inequality: Evidence from rural China', *Journal of Comparative Economics*, 48(2), pp. 465–482. doi:10.1016/j.jce.2020.03.003.
- Fong, H.F. and Mou, J. (2014) 'Migration and health: Lessons from China', in Griffiths, S., Tang, J.L. and Yeoh, E.K. (eds) *Routledge Handbook of Global Public Health in Asia*. Routledge, pp. 39–61.
- Fong, M.W.L. (2009) 'Digital divide between urban and rural regions in China', *The Electronic Journal of Information Systems in Developing Countries*, 36(1), pp. 1–12. doi:10.1002/j.1681-4835.2009.tb00253.x.
- Franceschini, I. (2020) 'At the roots of labour activism: Chinese and Cambodian garment workers in comparative perspective', *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 50(1), pp. 144–167. doi:10.1080/00472336.2018.1555272.
- Frijters, P., Gregory, R.G. and Meng, X. (2015) "The Role of Rural Migrants in the Chinese Urban Economy," in *Migration*. Oxford University Press, pp. 33–67. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198729624.003.0003>.
- Fu, X. and Qin, Y. 付晓光, 覃雅婷. 2023. On the changes of locality in short video social media from the perspective of post-rurality – Take TikTok platform "D'Village" as an example. Cong hou xiangtuxing shijiao kan duan shipin shejiao meiti zhong de xiangtuxing bianqian – yi Douyin pingtai "D cun" wei li 从后乡土性视角看短视频社交媒体中的乡土性变迁——以抖音平台"D村"为例. *Zhongguo Xinwen Chuanbo Yanjiu: Xinwen Chuanbo Jiaoyu* 中国新闻传播研究: 新闻传播教育, (06), pp. 208–221.
- Fussell, E. (2010) 'The cumulative causation of international migration in Latin America', *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 630(1), pp. 162–177. doi:10.1177/0002716210368108.
- Gaetano, A.M. (2015) *Out to work: Migration, gender, and the changing lives of rural women in Contemporary China*. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Gaetano, A.M. and Jacka, T. (2004) *On the move: Women and rural-to-urban migration in contemporary China*. New York, USA: Columbia University Press.
- Gaffric, G. (2019) *China's Youth Cultures and Collective Spaces*. Edited by V. Frangville and G. Gaffric. Routledge. doi:10.4324/9780429056093.
- Gameli, A.M. and Bokpin, H.A. (2021) 'Use of social media in migration decision making', *Journal of Internet and Information Systems*, 10(1), pp. 1–5.
- Gan, Y. (2023) 'Choreographing digital love: Materiality, emotionality, and morality in video-mediated communication between Chinese migrant parents and their left-behind children', *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 28(3). doi:10.1093/jcmc/zmad006.

Gao, D. 高丹. (2020) ‘肖战事件及二次元的升维打击 (Xiaozhan shijian ji erciyuan de shengwei daji) [Incident of Xiao Zhan and upscaling attack in ACG fandoms]’, *The Paper*, 7 March. Available at: https://www.thepaper.cn/newsDetail_forward_6368595 (Accessed: 23 July 2025).

Gao, M. and Zheng, X. 高梦媛, 郑欣. 2013. Cultural self-awareness: from entertainment consumption to the urban adaptation of the new generation of rural-urban migrant workers – A study of migrant workers in the Yangtze River Delta region. *Wenhua zijue: cong yule xiaofei kan xinshengdai nongmingong de chengshi shiying – jiyu Changjiang sanjiaozhou diqu wailaigong renyuan de kaocha. 文化自觉: 从娱乐消费看新生代农民工的城市适应——基于长三角地区外来务工人员的考察. Zhongguo Qingnian Yanjiu 中国青年研究*, (07), pp. 72–78. DOI: 10.19633/j.cnki.11-2579/d.2013.07.015.

Gao, Q., Yang, S. and Li, S. (2012) ‘Labor contracts and social insurance participation among migrant workers in China’, *China Economic Review*, 23(4), pp. 1195–1205. doi:10.1016/j.chieco.2012.09.002.

Gao, X. (1994) ‘China’s Modernization and Changes in the Social Status of Rural Women in Engendering china: Women, culture, and the State’. Cambridge, MA, UK: Harvard University Press, pp. 80–100.

Gao, X., 2003. Women existing for men: Confucianism and social injustice against women in China. *Race, gender & class*, pp.114-125.

Garcia, J.R., Reiber, C., Massey, S.G. and Merriwether, A.M., 2012. Sexual hookup culture: A review. *Review of General Psychology*, 16(2), pp.161-176.

Garriga, C., Hedlund, A., Tang, Y. and Wang, P. (2020) *Rural-urban migration and house prices in China*. Cambridge, MA. doi:10.3386/w28013.

Georgalou, M. (2020) ‘Emotions and migration in social media discourse: A new Greek migrant case study’, *Emotion, Space and Society*, 38, p. 100745. doi:10.1016/j.emospa.2020.100745.

Gibson, J.J. (1966) *Senses considered as Perceptual Systems*. Greenwood Press.

Gibson, J.J. (1979) *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception*. Boston, USA: Houghton Mifflin.

Goger, A. (2013) ‘From disposable to empowered: rearticulating labor in Sri Lankan apparel factories’, *Environment and Planning A*, 45(11), pp. 2628–2645.

Gold, S.J. (2005) ‘A Summary and Critique of Relational Approaches to International Migration’, in M. Romero and E. Margolis (eds.) *The blackwell companion to social inequalities*. Malden, Mass, USA: Blackwell, pp. 257–268.

Gong, W., Zhu, M., Gürel, B. and Xie, T. (2021) ‘The lineage theory of the regional variation of individualism/collectivism in China’, *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2020.596762.

Gong, X., Kong, S.T. and Meng, X. (2008) ‘Rural—urban migrants: A driving force for Growth’, *China’s Dilemma: Economic Growth, the Environment and Climate Change*, pp. 110–152. doi:10.22459/cd.07.2008.06.

Goodburn, C. (2009) ‘Learning from migrant education: A case study of the schooling of rural migrant children in Beijing’, *International Journal of Educational Development*, 29(5), pp. 495–504. doi:10.1016/j.ijedudev.2009.04.005.

Gov.cn (2021) *Main data from the Seventh National Population Census*. State Council of the People’s Republic of China.

Granovetter, M. (1985) ‘Economic action and social structure: The problem of embeddedness’, *American journal of sociology*, 91(3), pp. 481–510.

Grzymala-Kazłowska, A. and Ryan, L. (2022) ‘Bringing anchoring and embedding together: theorising migrants’ lives over-time,’ *Comparative Migration Studies*, 10(1), p. 46. doi:10.1186/s40878-022-00322-z.

Gu, X. (2022a) ‘Sacrifice and Indebtedness: The Intergenerational Contract in Chinese Rural Migrant Families’, *Journal of Family Issues*, 43(2), pp. 509–533. doi:10.1177/0192513X21993890.

Gu, X. (2022b) “‘Save the children!’: Governing left-behind children through family in China’s Great Migration”, *Current Sociology*, 70(4), pp. 513–538. doi:10.1177/0011392120985874.

Gu, X., Yang, L. and Cao, S. (2018) ‘Design and implementation of knowledge sharing system based on WeChat Small Program’, *2018 IEEE 3rd Advanced Information Technology, Electronic and Automation Control Conference (IAEAC)* [Preprint]. doi:10.1109/iaeac.2018.8577889.

Guarnizo, L.E. and Diaz, L.M. (1999) ‘Transnational migration: A view from Colombia’, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 22(2), pp. 397–421. doi:10.1080/014198799329530.

Guba, E.G. (1990) *The paradigm dialog*. Newbury Park, CA, USA: Sage.

Gui, Y., Berry, J.W. and Zheng, Y. (2012) ‘Migrant worker acculturation in China’, *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 36(4), pp. 598–610. doi:10.1016/j.ijintrel.2011.11.007.

Guizhou Provincial People’s Government(2024) *The Excitement of the “Village Super League” Continues*. Cunchao Jingcai Yanxun. 村超精彩延续 Available at: https://www.guizhou.gov.cn/ztl/gzcf/zxbd/202401/t20240109_83499138.html (Accessed: 6 June 2025).

Guo, J. (2022) 'The postfeminist entrepreneurial self and the platformisation of labour: A case study of yesheng female lifestyle bloggers on Xiaohongshu', *Global Media and China*, 7(3), pp. 303–318. doi:10.1177/20594364221095896.

Guo, M. and Herrmann-Pillath, C. (2019) 'Exploring Extended Kinship in Twenty-First-Century China: A Conceptual Case Study', *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs*, 48(1), pp. 50–75. doi:10.1177/1868102619845244.

Guo, S. (2018) 'Occupying the Internet: State media and the reinvention of official culture online', *Communication and the Public*, 3(1), pp. 19–33. doi:10.1177/2057047318755166.

Guo, X. and Yang, S. (2019) 'Memetic communication and consensus mobilization in the cyber nationalist movement', in *From Cyber-Nationalism to Fandom Nationalism*. Abingdon, Oxon; New York, NY: Routledge, pp. 72–92. doi:10.4324/9780429447754-5.

Guo, Y. (2015) *Constructing, presenting, and expressing self on social network sites: An exploratory study in Chinese university students' social media engagement*. Doctoral dissertation. University of British Columbia.

Guo, Y. (2015) *Constructing, presenting, and expressing self on social network sites: An exploratory study in Chinese university students' social media engagement*. Doctoral dissertation. University of British Columbia.

Guo, Y. and Huang, B. 郭于华, 黄斌欢. 2014. 'The "Chinese characteristics" of the world factory: A sociological bird's-eye view of workers' conditions in the new era'. *Shijie gongchang de "Zhongguo tese": xin shiqi gongren zhuangkuang de shehuixue niokang 世界工厂的"中国特色": 新时期工人状况的社会学鸟瞰*. *Shehui 社会*, 34(04), pp. 49–66. DOI: 10.15992/j.cnki.31-1123/c.2014.04.007.

Gutierrez, L.M. (1990) 'Working with women of color: An empowerment perspective', *Social Work*, 35(2), pp. 149–153.

Han, L. and Liu, Y. (2024) '#metoo activism without the #MeToo hashtag: online debates over entertainment celebrities' sex scandals in China', *Feminist Media Studies*, 24(4), pp. 657–674. doi:10.1080/14680777.2023.2219857.

Han, L., Huang, J., Li, Z., Yan, S. and Liu, Y. 韩丽娟, 黄楚雄, 李洁, 严守雷, 刘义满. 2020. 'Comparison of flavor substances in boiled lotus roots of different varieties'. *Butong pinzhong ou gunshui zhu fengwei wuzhi bijiao 不同品种藕滚水煮风味物质比较*. *Shipin Kexue 食品科学*, 41(22), pp. 245-251.

- Han, Q. (2012) 'The Ties That Bind: An Overview of Traditional Chinese Family Ethics 1', *Journal OF Chinese Studies*, 1(1), pp. 85–99.
- Han, R. (2019) 'Patriotism without state blessing: Chinese cyber nationalists in a predicament', in *Handbook of Protest and Resistance in China*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing, pp. 346–360.
- Han, W.J., Whetung, T. and Mao, X. (2020) 'One roof, three generations: grandparental co-residence and child outcomes in China', *Family Process*, 59(3), pp. 1144–1160. doi:10.1111/famp.12484.
- Han, X. (2020) 'Historicising Wanghong Economy: Connecting platforms through Wanghong and wanghong incubators', *Celebrity Studies*, 12(2), pp. 317–325. doi:10.1080/19392397.2020.1737196.
- Han, X., Han, W., Qu, J., Li, B. and Zhu, Q. (2019) 'What happens online stays online? — Social media dependency, online support behavior and offline effects for LGBT', *Computers in Human Behavior*, 93, pp. 91–98. doi:10.1016/j.chb.2018.12.011.
- Han, Z. and Ge, L. 韩兆洲, 戈龙. 2015. 'Statistical analysis of the contribution of migrant workers to China's economic growth and their benefit-sharing'. Nongmingong dui Zhongguo jingji zengzhang gongxian yu chengguo fenxiang de tongji fenxi 农民工对中国经济增长贡献与成果分享的统计分析. *Statistics and Decision 统计与决策*, (04), pp. 100–103.
- Hao, L., Wan, F., Ma, N. and Wang, Y. (2018) 'Analysis of the development of WeChat Mini Program', *Journal of Physics: Conference Series*, 1087(6), 062040. doi: 10.1088/1742-6596/1087/6/062040.
- Hardy, C. and Leiba-O'Sullivan, S. (1998) 'The power behind empowerment: Implications for research and practice', *Human Relations*, 51(4), pp. 451–483.
- Hargittai, E. (2002) 'Second-level digital divide: Differences in people's online skills', *First Monday*, 7(4). doi:10.5210/fm.v7i4.942.
- Harrell, S. (2011) *Defining the Miao: Ming, Qing, and Contemporary Views*. Available at: <https://muse.jhu.edu/book/21071>.
- He, C. and Ye, J. (2014) 'Lonely sunsets: Impacts of rural-urban migration on the left-behind elderly in rural China', *Population, Space and Place*, 20(4), pp. 352–369. doi:10.1002/psp.1829.
- He, Q., Pan, Y. and Sarangi, S. (2018) 'Lineage-based heterogeneity and cooperative behavior in rural China', *Journal of Comparative Economics*, 46(1), pp. 248–269.
- He, S. and Wang, K. (2016) 'China's new generation migrant workers' urban experience and well-being', in *Mobility, Sociability and Well-being of Urban Living*. Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer Berlin Heidelberg, pp. 67–91. doi:10.1007/978-3-662-48184-4_4.

- He, Z. and Yang, J. (2013) 'Settling down or lodging in cities? A comparative study of living conditions among internal migrants in China', *Population Research*, 37(6), pp. 17–30.
- Heer, D. (2002) 'When cumulative causation conflicts with relative economic opportunity: recent change in the Hispanic population of the United States', *Migraciones Internacionales*, 1(3), pp. 32–53.
- Henderson, J.V. and Turner, M.A. (2020) 'Urbanization in the developing world: Too early or too slow?', *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 34(3), pp. 150–173. doi: 10.1257/jep.34.3.150.
- Henning-Smith, C., Tuttle, M., Tanem, J., Jantzi, K., Kelly, E. and Florence, L.C. (2024) 'Social isolation and safety issues among rural older adults living alone: Perspectives of Meals on Wheels programs', *Journal of Aging and Social Policy*, 36(2), pp. 282–301. doi:10.1080/08959420.2022.2081025.
- Hess, M. (2004) "'Spatial" relationships? Towards a reconceptualization of embeddedness', *Progress in Human Geography*, 28(2), pp. 165–186.
- Hewitt, D. (2007) *Getting rich first: Life in a changing China*. London, UK: Vintage.
- Hidayati, I. (2019) 'The process of migration and communication technology roles among labor migrants in Batam - indonesia', *Society*, 7(2), pp. 173–184. doi:10.33019/society.v7i2.99.
- Higgins, E.T. (1987) 'Self-discrepancy: A theory relating self and affect.', *Psychological Review*, 94(3), pp. 319–340. doi:10.1037/0033-295x.94.3.319.
- Hiller, H.H. and Franz, T.M. (2004) 'New ties, old ties and lost ties: The use of the internet in Diaspora', *New Media & Society*, 6(6), pp. 731–752. doi:10.1177/146144804044327.
- Hinsch, B. (2003) 'The origins of the separation of the sex', *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 123(3), pp. 595–616.
- Hong, Y. (2017) 'Pivot to Internet Plus: Modeling China's Digital Economy for Economic Restructuring?', *International Journal of Communication*, 11, pp. 1486–1506.
- Hou, J. (2020) 'Contesting the vulgar Hanmai performance from Kuaishou', in D. Trotter, R. Gabdulhakov and Q. Huang (eds) *Introducing Vigilant Audiences*. Cambridge, UK: Open Book Publishers, pp. 49–76. doi:10.11647/OBP.0200.03.
- Hou, J. and Ma, X. 侯杰, 马晓驰. 2019. 'From common to festival: A case study on commemorative activities for the Chinese Fathers' Day (1945–1948)'. *Cong richang dao jieri: Shanghai "baba" fuqinjie huodong yanjiu (1945–1948) 从日常到节日: 上海“八八”父亲节活动研究 (1945–1948)*. *Funu yanjiu luncong 妇女研究论丛*, (1), pp. 69–77.

- Hou, J. and Zhang, Y. (2022) ‘“selling poverty” on Kuaishou: How Entrepreneurialism Disciplines Chinese underclass online participation’, *Global Media and China*, 7(3), pp. 263–282. doi:10.1177/20594364221095895.
- Hou, X. and Shi, J. (2021) ‘Literature review on hollowing change and planning policy of traditional villages’, *OALib*, 08(08), pp. 1–8. doi:10.4236/oalib.1107812.
- Hou, Z., Du, F., Hao, J., Zhou, X. and Lin, L. (2020) ‘Assessment of public attention, risk perception, emotional and behavioural responses to the COVID-19 outbreak: Social media surveillance in China’ [Preprint]. doi:10.1101/2020.03.14.20035956.
- Hu, J., Tao, X., Zhou, S. and Zuo, M. (2022, May) ‘Research on the impact of LGBT culture in social media on Chinese LGBT community’, in *2022 International Conference on Comprehensive Art and Cultural Communication (CACC 2022)*, pp. 58–64. Atlantis Press.
- Hu, W. (2022) ‘Motivations and barriers in becoming urban residents: Evidence from rural migrants living in public rental housing in Chongqing, China’, *Journal of Urban Affairs*, pp. 1–20. doi:10.1080/07352166.2021.2011302.
- Hu, X. (2012) ‘China’s “new generation” rural-urban migrants: Migration Motivation and migration patterns’, *SSRN Electronic Journal*, pp. 1–22. doi:10.2139/ssrn.1978546.
- Hu, Y. (2016) ‘Impact of rural-to-urban migration on family and gender values in China’, *Asian Population Studies*, 12(3), pp. 251–272. doi:10.1080/17441730.2016.1169753.
- Hu, Y., Lonne, B. and Burton, J. (2014) ‘Informal kinship care in rural China: The influence of Confucianism and attachment’, *Families, Relationships and Societies*, 3(2), pp. 287–302. doi:10.1332/204674314X13898785887043.
- Huang, B. 黄斌欢. 2014. Dual disembedding and class formation among the new generation of migrant workers. Shuangchong tuoqian yu xinshengdai nongmingong de jieji xingcheng 双重脱嵌与新生代农民工的阶级形成. *Shehuixue Yanjiu* 社会学研究, 29(02), pp. 170–188, 245. DOI: 10.19934/j.cnki.shxyj.2014.02.008.
- Huang, C. 黄晨嘉. 2020. The current situation, challenges and countermeasures of the digital divide among the elderly. Laonian shuzi honggou de xianzhuang, tiaozhan ji duice 老年数字鸿沟的现状、挑战及对策. *Renmin Luntan wang* 人民论坛网. Available at: <https://rmlt.com.cn/2020/1023/596984.shtml> (Accessed: 6 June 2025).
- Huang, H. and He, J. 黄昊舒, 何军. 2018. New media, social capital and job search among migrant workers: An empirical analysis based on four cities in the Yangtze River Delta. Xin meiti, shehui ziben yu nongmingong de gongzuo souxun——jiyu Changjiang sanjiaozhou si shi de diaocha fenxi 新媒体、社会资本与农民工的工作搜寻——基于长三角四市的调查分析. *Nanjing Nongye Daxue Xuebao (Shehui Kexue Ban)* 南京农业大学学报(社会科学版), 18(01), pp. 54–63, 161–162.

- Huang, Q. (2023) 'Anti-Feminism: four strategies for the demonisation and depoliticisation of feminism on Chinese social media', *Feminist Media Studies*, 23(7), pp. 3583–3598. doi:10.1080/14680777.2022.2129412.
- Huang, X., Dijst, M., van Weese, J., Jiao, Y. and Sun, Y. (2017) 'Residential choice among rural–urban migrants after hukou reform: Evidence from Suzhou, China', *Population, Space and Place*, 23(4), p. e2035. doi:10.1002/psp.2035.
- Huang, Y. and Guo, F. (2015) 'Boundaries, exclusion and identity construction: Experiences of rural–urban migrants in China', *Handbook of Chinese Migration* [Preprint]. doi:10.4337/9781783476640.00015.
- Huang, Y. and Guo, F. (2017) 'Welfare programme participation and the wellbeing of non-local rural migrants in metropolitan China: A social exclusion perspective', *Social Indicators Research*, 132(1), pp. 63–85. doi:10.1007/s11205-016-1329-y.
- Huang, Y. and Tao, R. (2015) 'Housing migrants in Chinese cities: current status and policy design', *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy*, 33(3), pp. 640–660. doi:10.1068/c12120.
- Hung, J. (2022) 'Hukou system influencing the structural, institutional inequalities in China: The multifaceted disadvantages rural hukou holders face', *Social Sciences*, 11(5), p. 194. doi:10.3390/socsci11050194.
- Hurst, W. (2004) 'Understanding contentious collective action by Chinese laid-off workers: The importance of regional political economy', *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 39(2), pp. 94–120. doi:10.1007/bf02686279.
- Hwang, H.S. and Choi, H. (2016) 'Exploring gender differences in motivations for using Sina Weibo', *KSI Transactions on Internet and Information Systems*, 10(3), doi:10.3837/tiis.2016.03.029.
- Ilag, B.N. and Sabale, A.M. (2022) "Microsoft Teams Overview," in *Troubleshooting Microsoft Teams*. Berkeley, CA: Apress, pp. 17–74. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4842-8622-7_2.
- Itō, M., Okabe, D. and Matsuda, M. (2005) *Personal, portable, pedestrian: Mobile phones in Japanese life*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Itzigsohn, J. and Saucedo, S.G. (2002) 'Immigrant incorporation and sociocultural transnationalism', *International Migration Review*, 36(3), pp. 766–798. doi:10.1111/j.1747-7379.2002.tb00104.x.
- Jablonski, N.G. (2012) *Living Color*. University of California Press. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1525/9780520953772>.
- Jabbar, S.A. and Zaza, H.I. (2016) 'Evaluating a vocational training programme for women refugees at the Zaatari camp in Jordan: women empowerment: a journey and not an output', *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, 21(3), pp. 304–319.

- Jacka, T. (2006) 'Approaches to women and development in rural China', *Journal of Contemporary China*, 15(49), pp. 585–602. doi:10.1080/10670560600836564.
- Jacka, T. (2012) 'Migration, householding and the well-being of left-behind women in rural Ningxia', *China Journal*, (67), pp. 1–22. doi:10.1086/665737.
- Jankowiak, W. and Robert, M. (2016) *Family life in China*. Cambridge: John Wiley & Sons.
- Janta, H. and Ladkin, A. (2013) 'In search of employment: Online Technologies and Polish migrants', *New Technology, Work and Employment*, 28(3), pp. 241–253. doi:10.1111/ntwe.12018.
- Jeffreys, E. and Xu, J. (2017) 'Celebrity-inspired, fan-driven: Doing philanthropy through social media in Mainland China', *Asian Studies Review*, 41(2), pp. 244–262. doi:10.1080/10357823.2017.1294145.
- Jiang, F. (2015) "A brief discussion on the culture of *Ou cuisine* and its English translation," *Forum*, pp. 155–157.
- Jiang, M. (2016) 'The Co-Evolution of the Internet, (Un)Civil Society & Authoritarianism in China', in J. deLisle, A. Goldstein, and G. Yang (eds.) *The internet, social media, and a changing China*. Philadelphia, USA: University of Pennsylvania Press, pp. 1–22.
- Jiang, Y. and Yang, F. (2022) 'Bridge of rainbow: Association between internet-based social media use and homosexuality inclusion in China', *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2022.882206.
- Jiao, D. (2022) 'Regional variations in Renqing in ceremonial or ritualized situations', in *Northern and Southern China*. London: Routledge, pp. 158–178. doi:10.4324/9781003182757-9.
- Jie, D. (2011) *Discourse, Identity, and China's Internal Migration*. Multilingual Matters. doi:10.21832/9781847694218.
- Jin, X. and Yang, J. 金小红, 杨杰. (2023) . 'The correlation between "dual disembedding" and psychological anomie among new-generation migrant workers'. "Shuangchong tuoqian" yu xinshengdai liudong laogong xinli shifan de guanlianxing yanjiu "双重脱嵌"与新生代流动劳工心理失范的关联性研究. *Changzhi Xueyuan Xuebao* 长治学院学报, 40(2), pp. 1–18.
- Jin, X., Liu, L., Li, Y., Feldman, M.W. and Li, S. (2013) "'Bare branches" and the marriage market in rural China: Preliminary evidence from a village-level survey', *Chinese Sociological Review*, 46(1), pp. 83–104.
- Jin, Y. (2011) 'Mobile Patriarchy: Changes in the Mobile Rural Family', *Social Sciences in China*, 32(1), pp. 26–43. doi:10.1080/02529203.2011.548917.

- Joseph, R. (2019) 'The theory of empowerment: A critical analysis with the theory evaluation scale', *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 30(2), pp. 138–157. doi: 10.1080/10911359.2019.1660294.
- Ju, B., Sandel, T.L. and Thinyane, H. (2019) 'WeChat use of Mainland Chinese dual migrants in daily border crossing', *Chinese Journal of Communication*, 12(4), pp. 377–394. doi:10.1080/17544750.2019.1593207.
- Jørgen, C. and Talleraas, C. (2016) 'Root Causes and Drivers of Migration: Implications for Humanitarian Efforts and Development Cooperation', *PRIO Paper*, pp. 1–40.
- Kai, T. (2014) 'Heterogeneous Spaces in the City: study on Spatial Characteristics of Tibetan Settlements in Chengdu' *Journal of Landscape Research*, 6(5/6), pp. 31–34.
- Kallio, H., Pietilä, A.M., Johnson, M. and Kangasniemi, M. (2016) 'Systematic methodological review: developing a framework for a qualitative semi-structured interview guide', *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 72(12), pp. 2954–2965.
- Kang, Y. and Fu, L. (2023) *SCIO briefing on China's economic performance in 2022*, *Scio briefing on China's economic performance in 2022*. Available at: http://english.scio.gov.cn/pressroom/node_9000450.htm (Accessed: 02 July 2023).
- Kaye, D.B.V., Chen, X. and Zeng, J. (2021) 'The co-evolution of two Chinese mobile short video apps: Parallel platformization of Douyin and TikTok', *Mobile Media & Communication*, 9(2), pp. 229–253. Kaye, D.B.V., Chen, X. and Zeng, J. (2021) 'The co-evolution of two Chinese mobile short video apps: Parallel platformization of Douyin and TikTok', *Mobile Media & Communication*, 9(2), pp. 229–253.
- Keith, P. (2003) 'Resources, Family Ties, and Well-Being of Never-Married Men and Women', *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*, 42(2), pp. 51–75. doi: 10.1300/J083v42n02_05.
- Kemp, S. (2024) *Digital 2024 April Global Statshot Report*. Available at: <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2024-april-global-statshot> (Accessed: April 11, 2025).
- Kent, M., Ellis, K., Zhang, H. and Zhang, D. (2017) 'WeChat and the Voice Donor Campaign', *Chinese Social Media*. Routledge, pp. 119–129. doi: 10.4324/9781315160214-12.
- Kent, M., Ellis, K. and Xu, J. (2018) 'The "Making" of an Online Celebrity', *Chinese Social Media: Social, Cultural, and Political Implications*. New York, USA: Routledge, pp. 42–57.
- Khanam, M. (2024) . Problem and prospect of rural-urban migration in Bangladesh: A review. *South Asian Journal of Development Research*, 4(1), pp.24-31.

- Kim, J., Heo, J., King, C. and Kim, S. (2014) 'Cultural understanding and personal growth through Taekwondo as cross-cultural activity', *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 54(3), pp. 356–376. doi:10.1177/0022167813504826.
- Kim, J., Dattilo, J. and Heo, J. (2011) 'Taekwondo participation as serious leisure for life satisfaction and health', *Journal of Leisure Research*, 43(4), pp. 545–559. doi:10.1080/00222216.2011.11950249.
- Kissau, K. (2012) 'Structuring migrants' political activities on the internet: A two-dimensional approach', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 38(9), pp. 1381–1403. doi:10.1080/1369183x.2012.698207.
- Knight, J., Deng, Q. and Li, S. (2011) 'The puzzle of migrant labour shortage and rural labour surplus in China', *China Economic Review*, 22(4), pp. 585–600. doi:10.1016/j.chieco.2011.01.006.
- Knight, J., Deng, Q. and Li, S. (2011) 'The puzzle of migrant labour shortage and rural labour surplus in China', *China Economic Review*, 22(4), pp. 585–600. doi:10.1016/j.chieco.2011.01.006.
- Kong, P.A. (2016) *Parenting, education, and social mobility in rural China*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Komito, L. (2011) 'Social Media and migration: Virtual community 2.0', *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 62(6), pp. 1075–1086. doi:10.1002/asi.21517.
- Komito, L. and Bates, J. (2011) 'Migrants' information practices and use of social media in Ireland', Proceedings of the 2011 iConference [Preprint]. doi:10.1145/1940761.1940801.
- Korinek, K., Entwisle, B. and Jampaklay, A. (2005) 'Through Thick and Thin: Layers of Social Ties and Urban Settlement among Thai Migrants', *American Sociological Review*, 70(5), pp. 779–800. doi:10.1177/000312240507000503.
- Kow, Y.M., Gui, X. and Cheng, W. (2017) 'Special Digital Monies: The design of Alipay and WeChat Wallet for mobile payment practices in China', *Human-Computer Interaction – INTERACT 2017*, pp. 136–155. doi:10.1007/978-3-319-68059-0_9.
- Kristeva, J. (1977) *About Chinese women*. London: Marin Boyars.
- Kroeber, A.R. (2016) *China's economy: What everyone needs to know*. New York, NY, USA: Oxford University Press. pp73-75
- Kuaishou Technology (2024) 'Kuaishou Technology Announces Third Quarter 2024 Unaudited Financial Results'. Available at: <https://ir.kuaishou.com/news-releases/news-release-details/kuaishou-technology-announces-third-quarter-2024-unaudited> (Accessed: December 5, 2024).

- Lagakos, D. (2020) 'Urban-Rural Gaps in the Developing World: Does Internal Migration Offer Opportunities?', *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 34(3), pp. 174–192. doi:10.1257/jep.34.3.174.
- Lampton, D.M. (2010) 'Breaking Through: The Birth of China's Opening-Up Policy. Li Lanqing. Hong Kong: Oxford University Press and Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, 2009. xviii + 453 pp. £25.00. ISBN 978-0-19-801692-2', *The China Quarterly*, 204, pp. 1013–1015. doi:10.1017/S0305741010001220.
- Leary, M.R. and Kowalski, R.M. (1995) *Social anxiety*. New York, USA: Guilford Press.
- Leavy, P. (2020) *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research*. New York, NY, USA: Oxford University Press.
- Lee, C.K. (1999) 'From organized dependence to disorganized despotism: changing labour regimes in Chinese factories', *The China Quarterly*, 157, pp. 44–71. doi: 10.1017/S0305741000040200.
- Lee, C.K. (2007) *Against the Law: Labor Protest in China's Rustbelts and Sunbelt*. Berkeley, USA: University of California.
- Lee, C.K., (2023) *Gender and the South China miracle: Two worlds of factory women*. Univ of California Press.
- Lee, E. (2005) 'Marital conflict and social support of Korean immigrants in the United States', *International Social Work*, 48(3). doi:10.1177/0020872805051734.
- Lee, H.Y. (2000) 'Xiagang, the Chinese Style of Laying Off Workers', *Asian Survey*, 40(6), pp. 914–937. doi:10.2307/3021195.
- Lee, T., Jarupreechachan, W. and Tseng, Y.-C. (2022) 'Exploring low-income migrant workers' health information-seeking behavior during COVID-19 in Taiwan: A qualitative study', *DIGITAL HEALTH*, 8, p. 205520762211337. doi:10.1177/20552076221133764.
- Lee, Y.J. (2017) 'Multiple dimensions of gender-role attitudes: diverse patterns among four East-Asian societies', in Chan, C.G. and Takeda, N. (eds.) *Family, work and wellbeing in Asia*. Singapore: Springer Singapore, pp. 67–87.
- Leung, F., Lam, S. and Sze, S. (2001) 'Cultural expectations of thinness in Chinese women', *Eating Disorders*, 9(4), pp. 339–350. doi:10.1080/106402601753454903.
- Levitt, P. (2001) 'Transnational migration: Taking stock and future directions', *Global Networks*, 1(3), pp. 195–216. doi:10.1111/1471-0374.00013.
- Levitt, P. and Jaworsky, B.N. (2007) 'Transnational migration studies: Past developments and future trends', *Annual Review of Sociology*, 33(1), pp. 129–156. doi:10.1146/annurev.soc.33.040406.131816.

Levitt, P. and Schiller, N.G. (2004) 'Conceptualizing simultaneity: A transnational social field perspective on society', *International Migration Review*, 38(3), pp. 1002–1039. doi:10.1111/j.1747-7379.2004.tb00227.x.

Li, B. (2006) 'Floating population or urban citizens? Status, social provision and circumstances of rural-urban migrants in China', *Social Policy and Administration*, 40(2), pp. 174–195. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9515.2006.00483.x.

Li, B. and Zhang, Y. (2011) 'Housing provision for rural-urban migrant workers in Chinese cities: The roles of the state, employers and the market', *Social Policy & Administration*, 45(6), pp. 694–713. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9515.2011.00803.x.

Li, H. (2023) *The master in bondage factory workers in China, 1949-2019*. Stanford, CA, USA: Stanford University Press.

Li, H. (2020) 'Transnational togetherness through RELA: Chinese queer women's practices for maintaining ties with the homeland', *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 23(5), pp. 692–708. doi:10.1177/1367877920923357.

Li, H. (2020) 'From disenchantment to reenchancement: rural microcelebrities, short video, and the spectacleisation of the rural lifescape on Chinese social media.', *International Journal of Communication*, 12, pp. 3769–3787.

Li, L. (2020) *The product philosophy of Kuaishou, The product philosophy of Kuaishou*. Available at: <https://lillianli.substack.com/p/the-product-philosophy-of-kuaishou> (Accessed: 07 July 2023).

Li, L., Li, S. and Chen, Y. (2010) 'Better city, Better Life, but for whom?: The Hukou and resident card system and the Consequential Citizenship Stratification in Shanghai', *City, Culture and Society*, 1(3), pp. 145–154. doi:10.1016/j.ccs.2010.09.003.

Li, M. (2014) 'Ritual and social change: Chinese rural-urban migrant workers' Spring Festival homecoming as secular pilgrimage', *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research*, 43(2), pp. 113–133. doi:10.1080/17475759.2014.892896.

Li, M. (2015) "'Brighter the moon over my home village": Some patterned ways of speaking about home among rural-urban migrant workers in China', *Journal of International and Intercultural Communication*, 9(1), pp. 35–51. doi:10.1080/17513057.2016.1120848.

Li, M. (2022) "'Only mother is the best in the world": Maternal guilt, migrant motherhood, and changing ideologies of childrearing in China', *Journal of Family Communication*, 22(2), pp. 87–103. doi:10.1080/15267431.2021.2019742.

Li, M. and Chan, K.W. (2022) 'The collective hukou in urban China', *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, 63(2), pp. 259–270. doi:10.1080/15387216.2021.1925571.

Li, M.Z. and Stodolska, M. (2018) ‘Dramaturgical performances and work-leisure dynamics in rural-to-urban domestic migrations’, *Leisure Studies*, 37(5), pp. 603–614. doi:10.1080/02614367.2018.1512645.

Li, M.Z. and Stodolska, M. (2022) ‘Leisure as a constraint and a manifesto for empowerment: The life story of a Chinese female migrant worker’, *Leisure Sciences*, 44(1), pp. 121–137. doi:10.1080/01490400.2018.1483854.

Li, P. (2025) ‘The development and changes of migrant workers in China and related research trends’, *China Rural Economy 40th Anniversary Special Issue* [Preprint]. Available at: <https://www.crrchina.org> (Accessed: 10 April 2025).

Li, T. and Seaton, B. (2015) ‘Emerging consumer orientation, ethical perceptions, and purchase intention in the counterfeit smartphone market in China’, *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, 27(1), pp. 27–53. doi:10.1080/08961530.2014.967903.

Li, Q. 李强. (2004) *Urban migrant workers and social stratification in China: Nongmingong yu Zhongguo shehui fenceng* 农民工与中国社会分层. Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe.

Li, X. (2020) ‘Fathers’ involvement in Chinese societies: Increasing presence, uneven progress’, *Child Development Perspectives*, 14(3), pp. 150–156. doi:10.1111/cdep.12375.

Li, X. and Lamb, M.E. (2015) ‘Fathering in Chinese culture: Traditions and transitions’, in *Fathers across Cultures*. New York, NY: Praeger, pp. 273–306. doi:10.5040/9798400650178.ch-013.

Li, Y. (2019) *Sha Ma Te, Wo Ai Ni (We Were Smart)*. China.

Li, Y. and Li, S. 李艳, 李树茁. (2008) Stress and coping among never-married older men in rural China: An exploratory study in YC District, Henan Province. *Zhongguo nongcun daling weihun nan qingnian de yali yu yingdui – Henan YC qu de tansuo xing yanjiu* 中国农村大龄未婚男青年的压力与应对——河南 YC 区的探索性研究. *Qingnian Yanjiu* 青年研究, (11).

Li, Y., Wang, X., Zhao, C., Ni, J. and Liu, Y. (2023) ‘How to identify a “love rat”’: Development, validation, and invariance of the self-rating Zhanan evaluation scale’, *Current Psychology*, 42(17), pp. 14484–14497. doi:10.1007/s12144-021-02659-7.

Li, Z. 栗志强. (2024) ‘Reversal” and “stripping”’: The transformation and reconstruction of filial piety among rural daughters-in-law – Based on a field study in village S, northern Henan’. ‘Fanzhuan” yu “boli”’: nongcun xifu xiaodao de shanbian yu chongjian – jiyu

- Yubei S cun de tianye diaocha “反转”与“剥离”：农村媳妇孝道的嬗变与重建——基于豫北 S 村的田野调查. *Zhonghua Nüzi Xueyuan Xuebao* 中华女子学院学报, 36(04), pp. 114–120. DOI: 10.13277/j.cnki.jcwu.2024.04.015.
- Liang, J. 良警宇. (2003) ‘From closed to open: changes in an urban Hui enclave 从封闭到开放：城市回族聚居区的变迁模式’, *Zhongyang Minzu Daxue Xuebao* 中央民族大学学报, 30(1), pp. 74–78. doi:10.15970/j.cnki.1005-8575.2003.01.013.
- Liang, X., Lin, Y., Liu, P. and Ding, S. 梁雄军, 林云, 刘平青, 丁守海. (2010) ‘Empirical study on the formation mechanism of “shortage of migrant workers” in the process of industrialisation: Evidence from the secondary migration of 1,550 migrant workers in Zhejiang, Fujian and Tianjin’. *Gongyehua jincheng zhong de “mingong huang” xingcheng jili shizheng yanjiu – yi Zhe Min Jin 1550 wei nongmingong “er ci liudong” wei li* 工业化进程中的“民工荒”形成机理实证研究——以浙闽津 1550 位农民工“二次流动”为例. *Chanjing Pinglun* 产经评论, (03), pp. 101–118. DOI: 10.14007/j.cnki.cjpl.2010.03.012.
- Liang, Z. and Chunyu, M.D. (2013) ‘Migration within China and from China to the USA: The effects of migration networks, selectivity, and the rural political economy in Fujian Province’, *Population Studies*, 67(2), pp. 209–223. doi:10.1080/00324728.2012.756116.
- Liang, Z. and Qi, G. 梁振华, 齐顾波. (2013) An analysis of the multiple roles of left-behind women under village hollowing: A case study of Fanzhuang, Henan. *Cunzhuang xukonghua Beijing Xia Nongcun Liushou Funü Duoyuan Juese Fenxi – Jiyu Henan Fanzhuang de Ge'an Yanjiu* 村庄虚空化背景下农村留守妇女多元角色分析——基于河南范庄的个案研究. *Xibei Renkou* 西北人口, 34(05), pp. 103–107. DOI: 10.15884/j.cnki.issn.1007-0672.2013.05.014.
- Liang, Z., Mao, D.C., Zhuang, G. and Ye, W. (2008) ‘Cumulative causation, market transition, and emigration from China’, *American Journal of Sociology*, 114(3), pp. 706–737. doi:10.1086/592860.
- Lianos, T.P. (2005) *Beyond Small Change: Making Migrant Remittances Count*. Inter-American Development Bank. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.18235/0012547>.
- Liao, Z. (2021) ‘Fan culture under the influence of Media Development’, *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 09(12), pp. 88–93. doi:10.4236/jss.2021.912007.
- Lieder, M. and Rashid, A. (2016) ‘Towards circular economy implementation: a comprehensive review in context of manufacturing industry’, *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 115, pp. 36–51.
- Lin, A.M. and Tong, A.H. (2012) ‘Mobile cultures of migrant workers in southern China: Informal literacies in the negotiation of (new) social relations of the New Working Women’, *New Connectivities in China*, pp. 81–93. doi:10.1007/978-94-007-3910-9_7.

- Lin, C., Yang, Z., Hu, Q. and Zeng, B. (2024) 'The perception and response of daily wage workers to labor precarity'.
- Lin, J. and Waley, P. (2022) 'Taste and place of Nanxiong cuisine in South China: a regional analytical framework', *Food, Culture and Society*, 25(5), pp. 814–830. DOI: 10.1080/15528014.2021.1930736.
- Lin, J. and de Kloet, J. (2019) 'Platformization of the unlikely creative class: Kuaishou and Chinese digital cultural production', *Social Media and Society*, 5(4). DOI: 10.1177/2056305119883430.
- Lin, J. and de Kloet, J. (2022) 'Platformization of the Unlikely Creative Class: Kuaishou and Chinese Digital Cultural Production', *Critiquing Communication Innovation*, pp. 115–140. doi:10.14321/j.ctv2cmr97c.9.
- Lin, S. and Gaubatz, P. (2015) 'New Wenzhou: Migration, metropolitan spatial development and modernity in a third-tier Chinese model city', *Habitat International*, 50, pp. 214–225. DOI: 10.1016/j.habitatint.2015.08.040.
- Lin, S. and Gaubatz, P. (2017) 'Socio-spatial segregation in China and migrants' everyday life experiences: The case of Wenzhou', *Urban Geography*, 38(7), pp. 1019–1038. doi:10.1080/02723638.2016.1182287.
- Lin, Y. (1935) *My country and my people*. New York: John Day Company.
- Lin, Y., Zhang, X. and Geertman, S. (2015) 'Toward smart governance and social sustainability for Chinese migrant communities', *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 107, pp. 389–399. doi:10.1016/j.jclepro.2014.12.074.
- Lincoln, N.D., Travers, C., Ackers, P. and Wilkinson, A. (2002) 'The meaning of empowerment: The interdisciplinary etymology of a new management concept', *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 4(3), pp. 271–290.
- Liu, C. and Hu, H. 刘成, 胡海珍. (2013) The maternal uncle as a rights defender for women: The transmission and development of maternal-uncle power in northern Shanxi. Nüxing qunti de weiquanzhe "ren zhu" – jiuquan zai Jinbei diqu de chuanbo yu fazhan 女性群体的维权者“人主”——舅权在晋北地区的传播与发展. *Changzhi Xueyuan Xuebao* 长治学院学报, 30(06), pp. 21–23.
- Liu, D. and Wu, X. (2018) 'Research on group social function and user differentiation – a case study of WeChat and QQ', in *2018 IEEE 20th International Conference on High Performance Computing and Communications; IEEE 16th International Conference on Smart City; IEEE 4th International Conference on Data Science and Systems (HPCC/SmartCity/DSS)*. IEEE, pp. 1147–1150. DOI: 10.1109/HPCC/SmartCity/DSS.2018.00192.

- Liu, F. (2014) 'From degendering to (re)gendering the self: Chinese youth negotiating modern womanhood', *Gender and Education*, 26(1), pp. 18–34. DOI: 10.1080/09540253.2013.860432.
- Liu, F., Burton-Jones, A. and Xu, D. (2014) 'PACIS 2014 Proceedings'
- Liu, J. (2011) *Chinese Food*. Cambridge University Press.
- Liu, J. 刘佳. (2013) 'The indicative reversal of "Guizhou mirror image" in mass media'. *Dazhong chuanmei zhong "Guizhou jingxiang" de biao chu xing fan zhuan 大众传媒中“贵州镜像”的标出性翻转*. *Minzu xinwen tanxi 民族新闻探析*, (1), pp. 72–74.
- Liu, K. 刘昊坤. (2024) . Content e-commerce: Douyin, Kuaishou, and Xiaohongshu go their separate ways. *Neirong dianshang, Douyin, Kuaishou, Xiaohongshu "fen dao yang biao" 内容电商, 抖音、快手、小红书“分道扬镳”*. *163.com*, 6 February. Available at: <https://www.163.com/dy/article/IQ8JUDOC051181NA.html> (Accessed: 24 July 2025).
- Liu, K.Z. (2019) 'From invisible to visible: Kwai and the Hierarchical Cultural Order of China's cyberspace', *Global Media and China*, 5(1), pp. 69–85. doi:10.1177/2059436419871194.
- Liu, L. and Cui, F. 刘林平, 崔凤国. (2012) Labour-capital relations in a transitional society: Characteristics and trends. *Zhuanxing shehui de laozi guanxi: tezheng yu zouxiang 转型社会的劳资关系: 特征与走向*. *Zhongshan Daxue Xuebao (Shehui Kexue Ban) 中山大学学报(社会科学版)*, 52(03), pp. 151–161.
- Liu, L., Jin, X., Brown, M.J. and Feldman, M.W. (2014) 'Male marriage squeeze and inter-provincial marriage in central China: Evidence from Anhui', *Journal of Contemporary China*, 23(86), pp. 351–371.
- Liu, L., Wu, F., Tong, H., Hao, C. and Xie, T. (2021) 'The digital divide and active aging in China', *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(23), p. 12675. DOI: 10.3390/ijerph182312675.
- Liu, L., Wan, X. and Zhang, Y. 刘林平, 万向东, 张永宏. (2006) Institutional shortage and labour shortage: A study on the "migrant worker shortage" problem. *Zhidu duanque yu laogong duanque – "mingong huang" wenti yanjiu 制度短缺与劳工短缺——“民工荒”问题研究*. *Zhongguo Gongye Jingji 中国工业经济*, (08), pp. 45–53. DOI: 10.19581/j.cnki.ciejournal.2006.08.006.
- Liu, L., Wu, F., Tong, H., Hao, C. and Xie, T. (2021) 'The digital divide and active aging in China', *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(23), p. 12675. doi:10.3390/ijerph182312675.

- Liu, R. (2022) 'Incomplete urbanization and the Trans-local rural-urban gradient in China: From a perspective of new economics of Labor Migration', *Land*, 11(2), p. 282. doi:10.3390/land11020282.
- Liu, T. and Sun, L. (2016) 'Pension reform in China', *Journal of Aging and Social Policy*, 28(1), pp. 15–28. DOI: 10.1080/08959420.2016.1111725.
- Liu, T. and ten Brink, T. (2022) 'Social protection for migrant workers in China', in Nullmeier, F., Reufels, D. and Obinger, H. (eds) *International impacts on social policy: Short histories in global perspective*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 489–500. DOI: 10.1007/978-3-030-86645-7_38.
- Liu, T., Xu, M. and Chen, X. (2021) 'Social Media, gendered anxiety and disease-related misinformation: Discourses in contemporary China's online anti-African sentiments', *Asian Journal of Communication*, 31(6), pp. 485–501. doi:10.1080/01292986.2021.1941150.
- Liu, Y. (2018) *Social media marketing in China mit WeChat*. Wiesbaden, Germany: Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden.
- Liu, Y., Su, L. and Peng, L. (2021) 'The hollowing process of rural communities in China: Considering the regional characteristic', *Land*, 10(9). DOI: 10.3390/land10090911.
- Liu, Y., Liu, Y., Chen, Y. and Long, H. (2010) 'The process and driving forces of rural hollowing in China under rapid urbanization', *Journal of Geographical Sciences*, 20(6), pp. 876–888. DOI: 10.1007/s11442-010-0817-2.
- Lowell, B.L. and de la Garza, R.O. (2002) *Sending Money Home. Hispanic Remittances and Community Development*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- Lu, Z. and Song, S. (2006) 'Rural–urban migration and wage determination: The case of Tianjin, China', *China Economic Review*, 17(3), pp. 337–345. DOI: 10.1016/j.chieco.2006.04.007.
- Lu, H. and Pun, N. (2014) 'Self-identity, emotion, and collective action among the second generation of peasant-workers in China', *Society*, 3(34), pp. 1–24.
- Lu, X. and Lu, Z. (2019) 'Fifteen seconds of fame: A qualitative study of Douyin, a short video sharing mobile application in China', in *Lecture Notes in Computer Science (including subseries Lecture Notes in Artificial Intelligence and Lecture Notes in Bioinformatics)*. Cham: Springer Verlag, pp. 233–244. DOI: 10.1007/978-3-030-21902-4_17.
- Lu, Y., Zhang, R. and Du, H. (2021) 'Family structure, family instability, and child psychological well-being in the context of migration: Evidence from sequence analysis in China', *Child Development*, 92(4), pp. e416–e438. DOI: 10.1111/cdev.13496.

- Lu, Z. and Song, S. (2006) 'Rural–urban migration and wage determination: The case of tianjin, China', *China Economic Review*, 17(3), pp. 337–345. doi:10.1016/j.chieco.2006.04.007.
- Luan, H. and Wan, G. (2018) 'Job embeddedness and turnover intention: Future pathways for employment stability policies for migrant workers in China', *Population and Society*, 34(1), pp. 74–85.
- Luo, B. and Zhan, H. (2012) 'Filial piety and functional support: Understanding intergenerational solidarity among families with migrated children in rural China', *Ageing International*, 37(1), pp. 69–92. DOI: 10.1007/s12126-011-9132-1.
- Luo, C., Yang, X., Li, S. and Feldman, M.W. (2017) 'Love or bread? What determines subjective wellbeing among left-behind women in rural China?', *Gender Issues*, 34(1), pp. 23–43. DOI: 10.1007/s12147-016-9171-8.
- Luo, J., Wang, W. and Gao, W.-B. (2009) 'Review of the Studies on Rural Left-Behind Children in China', *Advances in Psychological Science*, 17(5), pp. 990–995.
- Ma, D. and von Glahn, R. (eds.) (2022) *The Cambridge economic history of China: Volume 2, 1800 to the present*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Madianou, M. (2012) 'Migration and the accentuated ambivalence of motherhood: The role of icts in Filipino transnational families', *Global Networks*, 12(3), pp. 277–295. doi:10.1111/j.1471-0374.2012.00352.x.
- Madianou, M. (2016) 'Ambient co-presence: Transnational family practices in Polymedia Environments', *Global Networks*, 16(2), pp. 183–201. doi:10.1111/glob.12105.
- Magnani, E. and Zhu, R. (2012) 'Gender wage differentials among rural–urban migrants in China', *Regional Science and Urban Economics*, 42(5), pp. 779–793. DOI: 10.1016/j.regsciurbeco.2011.08.001.
- Mao, C. (2020) 'Feminist activism via social media in China', *Asian Journal of Women's Studies*, 26(2), pp. 245–258. DOI: 10.1080/12259276.2020.1767844.
- Mao, Z., Liu, F. and Zhao, Y. (2023) 'Happy city for everyone: Generational differences in rural migrant workers' leisure in urban China', *Urban Studies*, 60(16), pp. 3252–3271. DOI: 10.1177/00420980231168294.
- Marcelli, E.A. and Lowell, B.L. (2005) 'Transnational twist: Pecuniary remittances and the socioeconomic integration of authorized and unauthorized Mexican immigrants in Los Angeles County', *International Migration Review*, 39(1), pp. 69–102. DOI: 10.1111/j.1747-7379.2005.tb00256.x.
- Massey, D.S. (1987) 'Understanding Mexican migration to the United States', *American Journal of Sociology*, 92(6), pp. 1372–1403.

Massey, D.S., Alarcón, R., Durand, J. and González, H. (1990) *Return to Aztlan: The social process of international migration from western Mexico*. Vol. 1. Berkeley: University of California Press. DOI: 10.1525/9780520910058-014.

Massey, D.S. (1990) 'Social structure, household strategies, and the cumulative causation of migration', *Population Index*, 56(1), pp. 3–26.

Massey, D.S., Arango, J., Hugo, G., Kouaouci, A., Pellegrino, A. and Taylor, E.J. (1998) *Worlds in motion: Understanding international migration at the end of the Millennium*. Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press.

Massey, D.S., Arango, J., Hugo, G., Kouaouci, A., Pellegrino, A. and Taylor, E.J. (1993) 'Theories of international migration: A review and appraisal', *Population and Development Review*, 19(3), p. 431. doi:10.2307/2938462.

Mata-Codezal, D., Peperkamp, E. and Tiesler, N.C. (2015) 'Migration, migrants and leisure: Meaningful leisure?', *Leisure Studies*, pp. 1–4. DOI: 10.1080/02614367.2015.992620.

Mazzucato, V. (2011) 'Reverse remittances in the migration-development nexus: Two-way flows between Ghana and the Netherlands', *Population, Space and Place*, 17(5), pp. 454–468. doi:10.1002/psp.646.

McCartney, G. and Osti, L. (2007) 'From cultural events to sport events: A case study of cultural authenticity in the dragon boat races', *Journal of Sport and Tourism*, 12(1), pp. 25–40. DOI: 10.1080/14775080701496750.

McDonald, T. (2016) *Social Media in rural China* [Preprint]. doi:10.2307/j.ctt1g69xx3.

McVeigh-Schultz, J. and Baym, N.K. (2015) 'Thinking of you: Vernacular affordance in the context of the microsocial relationship app, couple', *Social Media + Society*, 1(2), p. 205630511560464. doi:10.1177/2056305115604649.

McDonald, T. (2016) *Social Media In Rural China*. Available at: www.ucl.ac.uk/ucl-press.

Meng, J. and Li, Y. 孟捷, 李怡乐. (2013) The development of labour commodification and employment relations since the reform: Perspectives from Polanyi and Marx. Gaige yilai laodongli shangpinhua he guyong guanxi de fazhan – Bolani he Makesi de shijiao 改革以来劳动力商品化和雇佣关系的发展——波兰尼和马克思的视角. *Kaifang Shidai* 开放时代, 2013, pp. 74–106.

Meng, X. (2012) 'Labor market outcomes and reforms in China', *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 26(4), pp. 75–102. DOI: 10.1257/jep.26.4.75.

Meng, X. (2014) 'China's Labour Market Tensions and Future Urbanisation Challenges', in R. Garnaut, C. Fang, and L. Song (eds.) *Deepening reform for China's long-term growth and development*. Australian National University, Acton, A.C.T., Australia: ANU Press, pp. 379–407.

Meng, X. and Xue, S. (2020) ‘Social networks and mental health outcomes: Chinese rural–urban migrant experience’, *Journal of Population Economics*, 33(1), pp. 155–195. DOI: 10.1007/s00148-019-00748-3.

Meyer, M. and Mayrhofer, W. (2022) ‘Selecting a sample’, in *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research Design*, pp. 273–289. doi:10.4135/9781529770278.n18.

Micheal Page (2023) *2023 Chinese Mainland Remuneration Report*. Available at: <https://www.michaelpage.com.cn/salary-report> (Accessed: 2023).

Miller, T. (2012) *China’s Urban Billion: The Story behind the Biggest Migration in Human History* (Asian Arguments) . Zed Books.

Min, Q., Zhuang, Y. and Liu, H. (2015a) ‘Old age insurance participation among rural-urban migrants in China’, *Demographic Research*, 33, pp. 1047–1066. doi:10.4054/demres.2015.33.37.

Ministry of Natural Resources of the People’s Republic of China (n.d.) *Standard Map Service System* [Biaozhun Ditu Fuwu Xitong / 标准地图服务系统]. Available at: <https://bzdt.ch.mnr.gov.cn> (Accessed: 6 June 2025). [In Chinese]

Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China . (1986) *Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo yiwu jiaoyu fa (中华人民共和国义务教育法) [Compulsory Education Law of the People’s Republic of China (Order No. 52 of the President)]*. Beijing: The Central People’s Government of the People’s Republic of China. Available at: <https://www.gov.cn/> (Accessed: 3 April 2023). [in Chinese]

Minu, T.L. and Sun, S. (2011) ‘ICT uses and female migrant workers in Singapore’, in J.E. Katz (ed.) *Mobile communication: Dimensions of social policy*. New Brunswick N.J., USA: Transaction Publishers.

Mo, P.K.H., Cheng, Y. and Lau, J.T.F. (2022) ‘Work-related factors on mental health among migrant factory workers in China: Application of the Demand-Control and Effort-Reward Imbalance Model’, *Health & Social Care in the Community*, 30(2), pp. 656–667. DOI: 10.1111/hsc.13176.

Mohabir, N., Jiang, Y. and Ma, R. (2017) ‘Chinese floating migrants: Rural-urban migrant labourers’ intentions to stay or return’, *Habitat International*, 60, pp. 101–110. DOI: 10.1016/j.habitatint.2016.12.008.

Moloney, M.E. and Love, T.P. (2018) ‘Assessing online misogyny: Perspectives from sociology and feminist media studies’, *Sociology Compass*, 12(5). DOI: 10.1111/soc4.12577.

Montag, C., Becker, B. and Gan, C. (2018) ‘The multipurpose application WeChat: A review on recent research’, *Frontiers in Psychology*. DOI: 10.3389/fpsyg.2018.02247.

Morris, L. (2003) 'Managing contradiction: Civic stratification and migrants' rights', *International Migration Review*, 37(1), pp. 74–100. DOI: 10.1111/j.1747-7379.2003.tb00130.x.

Mou, Y. and Lin, C.A. (2014) 'Communicating food safety via the social media', *Science Communication*, 36(5), pp. 593–616. doi:10.1177/1075547014549480.

Mu, H.L. and Lee, Y.-C. (2017) 'Examining the Influencing Factors of Third-Party Mobile Payment Adoption: A Comparative Study of Alipay and WeChat Pay', *Journal of Information Systems*, 26(4), pp. 257–294. doi:10.5859/KAIS.2017.26.4.247.

Muanamoha, R.C., Maharaj, B. and Preston-Whyte, E. (2010) 'Social networks and undocumented Mozambican migration to South Africa', *Geoforum*, 41(6), pp. 885–896. doi:10.1016/j.geoforum.2010.06.001.

Mullaney, T. (2011) 'Introduction', in *Coming to terms with the nation: Ethnic classification in modern China*. Berkeley: University of California Press, pp. 1–17.

Murphy, R. and Wu, G. (2025) 'Why do rural migrant mothers in urban China digitally monitor their children?', *Gender & Society*, 39(1), pp. 91–119. DOI: 10.1177/08912432241305605.

Müller, A. (2016) "Hukou and Health Insurance Coverage for Migrant Workers," *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs*, 45(2), pp. 53–82. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/186810261604500203>.

Müller, C. and Mildenerger, T. (2021) 'Facilitating flexible learning by replacing classroom time with an online learning environment: a systematic review of blended learning in higher education', *Educational Research Review*, 34, pp. 1–16.

NBS (2025) 2024 Investigation Report on Rural-Urban Migrant Workers, 2024 *Monitoring and Survey Report on Migrant Workers - National Bureau of Statistics*. Available at: https://www.stats.gov.cn/sj/zxfb/202504/t20250430_1959523.html (Accessed: 04 July 2025).

NHSA National Healthcare Security Administration 国家医疗保障局 (2021) *2020 Statistical Bulletin on the Development of Medical Security Work / 2020 年医疗保障事业发展统计快报*. Available at: https://www.nhsa.gov.cn/art/2021/3/8/art_7_4590.html (Accessed: 7 June 2025).

Nagy, P. and Neff, G. (2015) 'Imagined affordance: Reconstructing a keyword for communication theory', *Social Media + Society*, 1(2), pp. 1–9. doi:10.1177/2056305115603385.

National Bureau of Statistics of China (2024) *2023 National Rural Migrant Worker Monitoring Survey Report*, https://www.gov.cn/lianbo/bumen/202405/content_6948813.htm.

State Information Center 国家信息中心. (2020) *2019 China Internet Media Social Value White Paper / 2019 Zhongguo wangluo meiti shehui jiazhi baipishu* 2019 中国网络媒体社会价值白皮书.

Nduhura, D., Kim, S.D. and Mumporeze, N. (2019) “when Social Media Are Your Sole Life jacket”: A capability analysis of foreign brides’ empowerment by social media in South Korea’, *OMNES: The Journal of Multicultural Society*, 9(1), pp. 148–184. doi:10.14431/omnes.2019.01.9.1.148.

Nedelcu, M. (2012) ‘Migrants’ New Transnational Habitus: Rethinking migration through a cosmopolitan lens in the Digital age’, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 38(9), pp. 1339–1356. doi:10.1080/1369183x.2012.698203.

Nedelcu, M. and Wyss, M. (2016) “doing family” through ICT-mediated ordinary co-presence: Transnational communication practices of Romanian migrants in Switzerland’, *Global Networks*, 16(2), pp. 202–218. doi:10.1111/glob.12110.

Neil, M. (2017) ‘Affective migration: Using a visceral approach to access emotion and affect of Egyptian migrant women settling in the Region of Waterloo, Ontario, Canada’, *Emotion, Space and Society*, 25, pp. 37–43. DOI: 10.1016/j.emospa.2017.10.005.

Newell, B.C., Gomez, R. and Guajardo, V.E. (2016) ‘Information seeking, technology use, and vulnerability among migrants at the United States–Mexico border’, *The Information Society*, 32(3), pp. 176–191. doi:10.1080/01972243.2016.1153013.

Newzoo (2020) Newzoo Global Games Market Report 2022 | free version, newzoo.com. Available at: <https://newzoo.com/resources/trend-reports/newzoo-global-games-market-report-2022-free-version> (Accessed: 07 July 2023).

Newzoo (2021) “*The Destination for Games Market Insights.*”

Ng, M. (2014) ‘Social media and luxury fashion brands in China: The case of coach’, *Journal of Global Fashion Marketing*, 5(3), pp. 251–265. doi:10.1080/20932685.2014.907607.

Ng, W. (2012) ‘Can we teach digital natives digital literacy?’, *Computers and Education*, 59(3), pp. 1065–1078. DOI: 10.1016/j.compedu.2012.04.016.

Nguyen, M.T.N. and Locke, C. (2014) ‘Rural-urban migration in Vietnam and China: Gendered householding, production of space and the state’, *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 41(5), pp. 855–876. DOI: 10.1080/03066150.2014.925884.

Niu, G. and Zhao, G. (2018) ‘Living condition among China’s rural–urban migrants: Recent dynamics and the inland–coastal differential’, *Housing Studies*, 33(3), pp. 476–493. DOI: 10.1080/02673037.2017.1351924.

Norman, D. (2013) *The design of everyday things: Revised and expanded edition*. New York, USA: Basic Books.

- Norman, D. (1988) *The psychology of everyday things*. (Basic Books).
- Norman, D.A. (1999) 'Affordance, conventions, and design', *Interactions*, 6(3), pp. 38–43. doi:10.1145/301153.301168.
- Novikova, I. (2012) 'Fatherhood and masculinity in postsocialist contexts – lost in translations', in Hess, S., Oechsle, M. and Müller, U. (eds) *Fatherhood in late modernity: Cultural images, social practices, structural frames*. Opladen: Verlag Barbara Budrich, pp. 95–112. DOI: 10.2307/j.ctvddzvgg.
- Rodolfo, O. and Lowell, B.L. (eds) (2002) *Sending money home: Hispanic remittances and community development*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing PLC. pp3-27
- Oakes, T. (2000) 'China's provincial identities: Reviving regionalism and reinventing "Chineseness"', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 59(3), pp. 667–692. DOI: 10.2307/2658947.
- Obendiek, H. (2013) 'When siblings determine your "fate": Sibling support and educational mobility in rural Northwest China', in Alber, E., Coe, C. and Thelen, T. (eds) *The anthropology of sibling relations: Shared parentage, experience, and exchange*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 97–121.
- Oiarzabal, P.J. and Reips, U.-D. (2012) 'Migration and diaspora in the age of information and communication technologies', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 38(9), pp. 1333–1338. doi:10.1080/1369183x.2012.698202.
- Osaki, K. (2003) 'Migrant remittances in Thailand: Economic necessity or social norm?', *Journal of Population Research*, 20(2), pp. 203–222. doi:10.1007/bf03031852.
- Ottonelli, V. and Torresi, T. (2013) 'When is migration voluntary?', *International Migration Review*, 47(4), pp. 783–813. doi:10.1111/imre.12048.
- Ou, D. and Kondo, A. (2013) 'In search of a better life: The occupational attainment of rural and urban migrants in China', *Chinese Sociological Review*, 46(1), pp. 25–59. DOI: 10.2753/CSA2162-0555460102.
- Pan, L. and Jingzhong, Y. (2011) 'Differentiated childhoods: Impacts of rural labor migration on left-behind children in China', *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 38(2), pp. 355–377. DOI: 10.1080/03066150.2011.559012.
- Park, A. and Wang, D. (2010) 'Migration and urban poverty and inequality in China', *China Economic Journal*, 3(1), pp. 49–67. DOI: 10.1080/17538963.2010.487351.
- Park, S. and Gerrits, L. (2021) 'How migrants manifest their transnational identity through online social networks: Comparative findings from a case of Koreans in Germany', *Comparative Migration Studies*, 9(1). doi:10.1186/s40878-020-00218-w.
- Parreira, S.L. (no date) 'Quantificação da Força muscular E habilidades motoras de pacientes com distrofia muscular de Duchenne, *Em Tratamento com corticoterapia*' [Preprint]. doi:10.11606/d.5.2005.tde-04042006-153416.

- Payette, A. (2016) “‘Countryside Confucianism’: Organizing the Confucian revival, saving the villages, and cultural authority”, *East Asia*, 33(2), pp. 73–90. DOI: 10.1007/s12140-015-9251-5.
- Peck, J. (2013a) ‘Disembedding Polanyi: Exploring Polanyian economic geographies’, *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, 45(7), pp. 1536–1544. DOI: 10.1068/a46253.
- Peck, J. (2013b) ‘For Polanyian economic geographies’, *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, 45(7), pp. 1545–1568. DOI: 10.1068/a45236.
- Peng, A.Y. (2019) ‘Neoliberal feminism, gender relations, and a feminized male ideal in China: A critical discourse analysis of mimeng’s WeChat posts’, *Feminist Media Studies*, 21(1), pp. 115–131. doi:10.1080/14680777.2019.1653350.
- Peng, B. (2021) ‘Chinese migrant parents’ educational involvement: Shadow education for left-behind children’, *Hungarian Educational Research Journal*, 11(2), pp. 101–123. DOI: 10.1556/063.2020.00030.
- Peng, Y. (2017) ‘Migrant mothering in transition: A qualitative study of the maternal narratives and practices of two generations of rural-urban migrant mothers in Southern China’, *Sex Roles*, 79(1–2), pp. 16–35. doi:10.1007/s11199-017-0855-7.
- Peng, Y. and Choi, S.Y. (2013) ‘Mobile phone use among migrant factory workers in South China: Technologies of power and resistance’, *The China Quarterly*, 215, pp. 553–571. doi:10.1017/s0305741013000738.
- Peng, Z. 彭兆荣. (1989) On the constraining role of “maternal uncle power” in marriage practices among ethnic minorities in southwest China. Lun “jiuquan” zai Xinan shaoshu minzu hunyin zhong de zhiyue zuoyong 论“舅权”在西南少数民族婚姻中的制约作用. *Guizhou Minzu Yanjiu* 贵州民族研究, (02), pp. 92–98.
- People’s Daily (2014) *Difficulties with Paid Vacation: Without Mandatory Regulations, Companies Will Not Voluntarily Concede*, China News Service. Available at: <https://www.chinanews.com/sh/2014/08-08/6473340.shtml> (Accessed: August 29, 2024).
- Philipsen, G. and Mody, B. (2002) ‘Cultural communication’, in W.B. Gudykunst (ed.) *Handbook of international and intercultural communication*. California, USA: Thousand Oaks, pp. 51–67.
- Plüss, C. (2018) ‘(Dis)embeddedness in transnational contexts’, in *Transnational lives in global cities*. Cham: Springer International Publishing, pp. 31–61. DOI: 10.1007/978-3-319-96331-0_2.
- Polanyi, K. (1944) *The great transformation: the political and economic origins of our time*. Boston: Beacon.

Portes, A. (2003) 'Conclusion: theoretical convergencies and empirical evidence in the study of immigrant transnationalism', *International Migration Review*, 37(3), pp. 874–892.

Portes, A., Escobar, C. and Radford, A.W. (2007) 'Immigrant transnational organizations and development: a comparative study', *International Migration Review*, 41(1), pp. 242–281.

Portes, A. (1998) 'Social Capital: Its origins and applications in modern sociology', *Annual Review of Sociology*, 24(1), pp. 1–24. doi:10.1146/annurev.soc.24.1.1.

Portes, A. (1999) 'Conclusion: Towards a new world – the origins and effects of transnational activities', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 22(2), pp. 463–477. DOI: 10.1080/014198799329567.

Portes, A., Guarnizo, L.E. and Landolt, P. (1999) 'The study of Transnationalism: Pitfalls and promise of an emergent research field', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 22(2), pp. 217–237. doi:10.1080/014198799329468.

Pun, N. (2003) 'Subsumption or consumption? the phantom of consumer revolution in "globalizing" China', *Cultural Anthropology*, 18(4), pp. 469–492. doi:10.1525/can.2003.18.4.469.

Pun, N. (2005) *Made in China: Women factory workers in a global workplace*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Pun, N. and Anita, K. (2015) 'A "world-class" (labor) camp/us: Foxconn and China's new generation of labor migrants', *Positions*, 23(3), pp. 411–435. DOI: 10.1215/10679847-3125811.

Pun, N. and Smith, C. (2007) 'Putting transnational labour process in its place: The dormitory labour regime in post-socialist China', *Work, Employment and Society*, 21(1), pp. 27–45. DOI: 10.1177/0950017007073611.

Pun, N., Lu, H., Guo, Y. and Shen, Y. 潘毅, 卢晖临, 郭于华, 沈原. (2011) *The successive suicides behind Foxconn's glory*. Fushikang huihuang beihou de lianhuan tiao 富士康辉煌背后的连环跳. Xianggang: Shangwu yinshuguan.

Pun, N., Lu, H. and Zhang, H. 潘毅, 卢晖临, 张慧鹏. (2012) *The big construction site: The survival picture of migrant workers in the construction industry*. Da gongdi: jianzhuye nongmingong de shengcun tujing 大工地: 建筑业农民工的生存图景. Beijing: Beijing Daxue Chubanshe.

Pun, N. and Chan, J. (2012) 'Global capital, the state, and Chinese workers'. *Modern China*, 38(4), pp. 383–410. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0097700412447164>.

Pun, N. (1999) 'Becoming Dagongmei (Working Girls): The politics of identity and difference in reform China'. *The China Journal*, 42, pp. 1–18. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.2307/2667638>.

Qin, L., Chen, C., Wang, W. and Chen, H. (2021) ‘How migrants get integrated in urban China – the impact of health insurance’, *Social Science & Medicine*, 272, p. 113700. doi:10.1016/j.socscimed.2021.113700.

Qin, M., Zhuang, Y. and Liu, H. (2015) ‘Old age insurance participation among rural-urban migrants in China’, *Demographic Research*, 33, pp. 1047–1066. DOI: 10.4054/DemRes.2015.33.37.

Qiong, X. (2023) ‘On the spatial formation mechanism and inclusive development of Tibetan commodity streets in Chengdu City’, in *The city in an era of cascading risks: City development – issues and best practices*, pp. 231–241.

Qiu, L.J. (2014) ‘Goodbye iSlave: Foxconn, Digital Capitalism, and Networked Labor Resistance’, *Chinese Journal of Sociology*, 4(34), pp. 119–137. doi:10.5406/illinois/9780252040627.001.0001.

Qiu, P., Caine, E.D., Hou, F., Cerulli, C. and Wittink, M.N. (2018) ‘Depression as seen through the eyes of rural Chinese women: Implications for help-seeking and the future of mental health care in China’, *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 227, pp. 38–47. DOI: 10.1016/j.jad.2017.10.016.

Qiu, S. and He, S. 邱诗杰, 何山. (2024) ‘The new generation of migrant workers: From “dual de-embedding” to “dual re-embedding”’. Nongmingong: Cong “shuangchong tuoqian” dao “shuangchong huiqian” 农民工: 从“双重脱嵌”到“双重回嵌”. *Shanxi Nongye Jingji* 山西农业经济, (11), pp. 16–18.

Quisumbing, A. and McNiven, S. (2020) ‘Moving forward, looking back: The impact of migration and remittances on assets, consumption, and credit constraints in the rural Philippines’, in *Migration, transfers and economic decision making among agricultural households*. Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 91–113. DOI: 10.4324/9781003061229-5.

Ragnedda, M. and Ruiu, M.L. (2017) ‘Social Capital and the three levels of digital divide’, *Theorizing Digital Divides*, pp. 21–34. doi:10.4324/9781315455334-3.

Ragnedda, M. and Muschert, G.W. (eds.) (2013) *The Digital Divide*. London: Routledge. DOI: 10.4324/9780203069769. ISBN: 978-0-203-06976-9.

Rao, N. and Hossain, M.I. (2012) “‘I want to be respected’”: migration, mobility, and the construction of alternate educational discourses in rural Bangladesh’, *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 43(4), pp. 415–428. Rao, N. and Hossain, M.I. (2012) “‘I want to be respected’”: migration, mobility, and the construction of alternate educational discourses in rural Bangladesh’, *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 43(4), pp. 415–428.

Ren, N. and Liu, H. (2015) ‘Traversing between transnationalism and integration: Dual embeddedness of new Chinese immigrant entrepreneurs in Singapore’, *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal*, 24(3), pp. 298–326. DOI: 10.1177/0117196815594719.

- Risler, M. and Zhao, Z. (no date) *Apprenticeship and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises-The China Case*. Available at: www.tvet-online.asia.
- Ritchie, J. and Ormston, R. (2014) 'The applications of qualitative methods to social research', in Ritchie, J., Lewis, J., McNaughton Nicholls, C. and Ormston, R. (eds) *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers*. London: Sage Publications, pp. 32–36.
- Rofel, L. (2007) *Desiring china: Experiments in neoliberalism, sexuality, and public culture*. Durham etc., UK: Duke University Press.
- Ryan, L. (2011) 'Migrants' social networks and weak ties: Accessing resources and constructing relationships post-migration', *The Sociological Review*, 59(4), pp. 707–724. doi:10.1111/j.1467-954x.2011.02030.x.
- Ryan, L. (2015) *'Another year and another year': Polish migrants in London extending the stay over time*. London: Social Policy Research Centre.
- Ryan, L. (2018) 'Differentiated embedding: Polish migrants in London negotiating belonging over time', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 44(2), pp. 233–251. doi:10.1080/1369183x.2017.1341710.
- Ryan, L., Sales, R., Tilki, M. and Siara, B. (2008) 'Social networks, social support and social capital: The experiences of recent Polish migrants in London', *Sociology*, 42(4), pp. 672–690. DOI: 10.1177/0038038508091622.
- Rysavy, M.D.T. and Michalak, R. (2020) "Working from Home: How We Managed Our Team Remotely with Technology," *Journal of Library Administration*, 60(5), pp. 532–542. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/01930826.2020.1760569>.
- Saldaña, J. (2009) *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. London, UK: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Sandel, T.L. and Wang, Y. (2021) 'Selling intimacy online: The multi-modal discursive techniques of China's wanghong', *Discourse, Context & Media*, 47, p. 100606. doi:10.1016/j.dcm.2022.100606.
- Scarles, C. (2004) 'Mediating landscapes: The processes and practices of image construction in tourist brochures of Scotland', *Tourist Studies*, 4(1), pp. 43–67. DOI: 10.1177/1468797604053078.
- Scheffel, J. and Zhang, Y. (2019) 'How does internal migration affect the emotional health of elderly parents left-behind?', *Journal of Population Economics*, 32(3), pp. 953–980. DOI: 10.1007/s00148-018-0715-y.
- Schein, L. (2007) "Ethnoconsumerism As Cultural Production? Making Space For Miao Style," in *Locating China*. Routledge, pp. 17–21.

- Schiller, G., Basch, L.N. and Blanc-Szanton, C. (1992) 'Toward a transnational perspective on migration: Race, class, ethnicity and nationalism reconsidered', *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 645, pp. 1–24.
- Schiller, N.G. and Faist, T. (2009) 'Introduction migration, development, and Social Transformation', *Migration, Development, and Transnationalization*, pp. 1–21. doi:10.1515/9780857458704-001.
- Schiller, N.G. and Fouron, G.E. (1999) 'Terrains of Blood and nation: Haitian Transnational Social Fields', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 22(2), pp. 340–366. doi:10.1080/014198799329512.
- Schiller, N.G. and Fouron, G.E. (2001) *Georges woke up laughing: long-distance nationalism and the search for home*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Schiller, N.G. and Fouron, G.E. (2004) 'Georges woke up laughing: Long-distance nationalism and the search for home'. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Schneider, F. (2018) 'Conclusion: The Future of Nationalism in the Digital Age', in *China's Digital Nationalism*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp. 211–236.
- Schrock, A. (2015) 'Communicative affordances of mobile media: Portability, availability, locatability, and multimediality', *International Journal of Communication*, 9, pp. 1229–1246.
- Seeberg, V. and Luo, S. (2018) 'Migrating to the city in North West China: Young rural women's empowerment', *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities*, 19(3), pp. 289–307. DOI: 10.1080/19452829.2018.1430752.
- Selod, H. and Shilpi, F. (2021) 'Rural-urban migration in developing countries: Lessons from the literature', *Regional Science and Urban Economics*, 91, Article 103713. DOI: 10.1016/j.regsciurbeco.2021.103713.
- Sha, H. (2021) 'Migrant networks as social capital: The social infrastructure of migration', *MIDEQ: Migration for Development & Equality*, pp. 1–23.
- Shan, J., Ma, L. and Xiang, Y. (2023) 'Kinship support differentially predicts problematic smartphone use in left-behind children compared to non-left-behind children: A longitudinal study', *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction* [Preprint]. DOI: 10.1007/s11469-023-01180-1.
- Shao, H., Li, X. and Wang, G. (2022) 'Are you tired? I am: Trying to understand privacy fatigue of social media users', *CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems Extended Abstracts* [Preprint]. DOI: 10.1145/3491101.3519778.
- Shen, H., Faklaris, C., Jin, H., Dabbish, L. and Hong, I.J. (2020) "'I can't even buy apples if I don't use mobile pay?'"', *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction*, 4(CSCW2), pp. 1–26. DOI: 10.1145/3415241.

Shen, M. (1997) 'The dual economic system and dual social system in China', *Hong Kong Journal of Social & Science*, 9, pp. 85–113.

Shen, Y. 沈原. (2006) 'Social transformation and the reformation of the working class'. *Shehui zhuanxing yu gongren jieji de zai xingcheng 社会转型与工人阶级的再形成. Shehuixue Yanjiu 社会学研究*, (02), pp. 13–36, 243. DOI: 10.19934/j.cnki.shxyj.2006.02.002.

Shen, Y. 沈原. (2007) *The production of society. Shehui de shengchan 社会的生产. Shehui 社会*, 27(2), pp. 170–191.

Shen, Y. and Li, B. (2022) 'Policy coordination in the talent war to achieve economic upgrading: The case of four Chinese cities', *Policy Studies*, 43(3), pp. 443–463. DOI: 10.1080/01442872.2020.1738368.

Shu-Huah, W.J., Jing, L. and Pun, N. (2023) 'Enjoying the fruit of development? Working conditions and the earnings of low-skilled internal migrants in China across two decades (1993–2015)', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 49(19), pp. 5052–5080.

Shu, Y. 叔翼健. (2018) 'Social media and social integration of new urban migrants'. *Shejiao meiti yu chengshi xin yimin de shehui ronghe 社交媒体与城市新移民的社会融合. Xinwen yanjiu daokan 新闻研究导刊*, (15), pp. 1–3. DOI: 10.3969/j.issn.1674-8883.2018.15.002.

Sibal, H.T. and Foo, S. (2016) 'A study on the information seeking behaviour of Singapore-based Filipino domestic workers', *Information Development*, 32(5), pp. 1570–1584. doi:10.1177/0266666915615929.

Sivin, N. (2011) 'Mathematical astronomy and the Chinese calendar', in Steele, J.M. (ed.) *Calendars and years II: Astronomy and time in the ancient and medieval world*. Oxford: Oxbow Books, pp. 39–51.

Slotta, D. (2022) *Number of smartphone users in China from 2018 to 2022 with a forecast until 2027* (in millions). Available at: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/467160/forecast-of-smartphone-users-in-china/#:~:text=In%202022%2C%20the%20number%20of,15%20percent%20of%20total%20users.> (Accessed: January 17, 2025).

Slotta, D. (2025) *Number of mobile cell phone subscriptions in China from November 2020 to November 2024*, statista. Available at: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/278204/china-mobile-users-by-month/#:~:text=China:%20mobile%20phone%20subscriptions%20by%20month%2020%2D2024&text=As%20of%20November%202024%2C%20there,a%20high%20degree%20of%20digitalization.> (Accessed: March 13, 2025).

- Smales, P. (2011) 'The power to organize and engage: The use of ICT by women migrant domestic workers' organization', in *Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development*. [Place of publication unknown]: [Publisher unknown].
- Smith, C. and Chan, J. (2015) 'Working for two bosses: Student interns as constrained labour in China', *Human Relations*, 68(2), pp. 305–326. DOI: 10.1177/0018726714557013.
- Smith, R.C. (2006) *'Mexican New York: Transnational lives of new immigrants'*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Smith, R.C. (2006) "'Dual Contexts for Transnational Life,'" in *Mexican New York: Transnational Lives of New Immigrants'*. University of California Press, pp. 18–52.
- Solomon, B.B. (1976) *'Black Empowerment: Social Work in oppressed communities'*. New York, USA: Columbia University Press.
- Somerville, K. (2011) 'Strategic migrant network building and information sharing: Understanding "migrant pioneers" in Canada', *International Migration*, 53(4), pp. 135–154. DOI: 10.1111/j.1468-2435.2010.00671.x.
- Song, Q. and Smith, J.P. (2019) 'Hukou system, mechanisms, and health stratification across the life course in rural and urban China', *Health & Place*, 58, pp. 102–150. DOI: 10.1016/j.healthplace.2019.102150.
- Song, Y. and Zhang, C. (2020) 'City size and housing purchase intention: Evidence from rural–urban migrants in China', *Urban Studies*, 57(9), pp. 1866–1886. DOI: 10.1177/0042098019856822.
- Spencer, L., Ritchie, J., Ormston, R., O'Connor, W. and Barnard, M. (2014) 'Analysis: Principles and Processes', in Ritchie, J., Lewis, J., Nicholls, M.C. and Ormston, R. (eds.) *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers*. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE, pp. 271–292.
- Sprague, R. (2007) 'From Taylorism to the Omnipicon: Expanding employee surveillance beyond the workplace', *John Marshall Journal of Computer and Information Law*, 25, p. 1.
- State Council of the People's Republic of China (2013) *Notice on the Issuance of the "Broadband China" Strategy and Implementation Plan*. Available at: https://www.gov.cn/gongbao/content/2013/content_2473876.htm (Accessed: April 10, 2025).
- Stiles, W.B. (1999) 'Evaluating qualitative research', *Evidence-Based Mental Health*, 2(4), pp. 99–101. doi:10.1136/ebmh.2.4.99.
- Stodolska, Monika. (2013) *Race, Ethnicity, and Leisure*. Human Kinetics.
- Su, C., 2023. *Douyin, TikTok and China's online screen industry: The rise of short-video platforms*. Routledge.

- Su, M. 苏美妮. (2024) 'The digital reconstruction of traditional family relationships: An empirical analysis based on WeChat family groups'. *Chuantong jiating guanxi de shuzihua chonggou: Jiyu Weixin jiatingqun de shizheng fenxi 传统家族关系的数字化重构——基于微信家族群的实证分析*. *Xiandai Chuanbo: Zhongguo Meiti Daxue Xuebao 现代传播: 中国传媒大学学报*, 46(2), pp. 66–75.
- Sun, J., Zhang, N., Vanhoutte, B., Wang, J. and Chandola, T. (2021) 'Subjective wellbeing in rural China: how social environments influence the diurnal rhythms of affect', *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(8), p. 4132. doi: 10.3390/ijerph18084132.
- Sun, L. (2018) *Rural Urban Migration and policy intervention in China: Migrant workers' coping strategies*. Singapore, Singapore: Springer Singapore.
- Sun, L. and Liu, T. (2014) 'Injured but not entitled to legal insurance compensation – Ornamental institutions and migrant workers' informal channels in China', *Social Policy & Administration*, 48(7), pp. 905–922. doi: 10.1111/spol.12077.
- Pan, S., Zhou, L., Ge, D., Lu, X., Sun, D., Lu, M. and Qiao, W. (2021) 'How does spatial governance drive rural development in China's farming areas?', *Habitat International*, 109, 102320. doi: 10.1016/j.habitatint.2021.102320.
- Suro, R. (2005) 'A survey of remittance senders and receivers', *Beyond Small Change Making Migrant Remittances*, pp. 21–40.
- Svensson, M. (2012) *Mapping media in China : region, province, locality*. Edited by W. Sun and J. Chio. London: Routledge.
- Svensson, M. (2012) 'Struggle and place makings in Zhejiang', in W. Sun and J. Chio (eds.) *Mapping media in China: Region, province, locality*. London, UK: Routledge, pp. 193–212.
- Svensson, M. (2014) 'Voice, power and connectivity in China's microblogosphere: Digital divides on Sinaweibo', *China Information*, 28(2), pp. 168–188. doi:10.1177/0920203x14540082.
- Sznajder, K.K., , S.D., Wang, J., Tso, L., , Y. and Han, C. (2022) 'Factors associated with symptoms of poor mental health among women factory workers in China's supply chain', *International Archives of Occupational and Environmental Health*, 95(6), pp. 1209–1219. doi:10.1007/s00420-021-01820-w.
- Sánchez-Domínguez, M. and Fahlén, S. (2018) 'Changing sector? Social mobility among female migrants in care and cleaning sector in Spain and Sweden', *Migration Studies*, 6(3), pp. 367–399. doi: 10.1093/migration/mnx052.
- Szonyi, M. (2002) *Practicing kinship: Lineage and descent in late imperial China*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

- Sánchez-Domínguez, M. and Fahlén, S. (2018) 'Changing sector? Social mobility among female migrants in care and cleaning sector in Spain and Sweden', *Migration Studies*, 6(3), pp. 367–399.
- Oakes, T. (1997) 'Ethnic Tourism in Rural Guizhou: Sense of Place and the Commerce of Authenticity', in Picard, M. and Wood, R. (eds) *Tourism, Ethnicity and the State in Asian and Pacific Societies*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, pp. 35–70.
- Tan, C.K., Wang, J., Shen, Y., Wang, Zhu., Xu, J. and Zhu, C. (2020) 'The real digital housewives of China's kuaishou video-sharing and live-streaming app', *Media, Culture & Society*, 42(7–8), pp. 1243–1259. doi:10.1177/0163443719899802.
- Tanan, A. (2012). Distance Entrepreneurship Education as an Essential Strategy to Empower Indonesian Migrant Workers. . 1(1), September 2012.
- Taneja, H. and Wu, A.X. (2014) 'Does the Great Firewall really isolate the Chinese? Integrating access blockage with cultural factors to explain web user behavior', *The Information Society*, 30(5), pp. 297–309. doi: 10.1080/01972243.2014.944728.
- Tang, K. (2023) 'The effect of left-behind women on fertilizer use: Evidence from China's rural households engaging in rural-urban migration', *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 20(1). doi: 10.3390/ijerph20010488.
- Tang, S., Feng, J. and Li, M. (2016) 'Housing tenure choices of rural migrants in urban destinations: a case study of Jiangsu Province, China', *Housing Studies*, 32, pp. 1–18. doi: 10.1080/02673037.2016.1210096.
- Tang, S., Zhou, J., Lin, S. and Li, X. (2022) 'Where is my home? Sense of home among rural migrant women in contemporary China', *Geoforum*, 129, pp. 131–140. doi: 10.1016/j.geoforum.2022.01.014.
- Tang, S., Zhou, J., Druta, O. and Li, X. (2023) 'Settlement in Nanjing among Chinese rural migrant families: The role of changing and persistent family norms', *Urban Studies*, 60(6), pp. 1083–1101. doi: 10.1177/00420980221130761.
- Tang, S., Hao, P. and Feng, J. (2020) 'Consumer behavior of rural migrant workers in urban China', *Cities*, 106, 102856. doi: 10.1016/j.cities.2020.102856.
- Tanu, D. and Dales, L. (2015) 'Language in fieldwork: Making visible the ethnographic impact of the researcher's linguistic fluency', *The Australian Journal of Anthropology*, 27(3), pp. 353–369. doi:10.1111/taja.12150.
- Tao, L. and Donald, S. (2015) 'Migrant youth and new media in Asia', in Hjorth, L. and Khoo, O. (eds) *Routledge Handbook of New Media in Asia*. London: Routledge, pp. 11–14.
- Team WeChat (2024) *WeChat official posts*, LinkedIn. Available at: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/teamwechat/posts/?feedView=all> (Accessed: December 5, 2024).

Teamlewis (2021) *Love save pneumoconiosis: Team LEWIS*. Available at: <https://www.teamlewis.com/our-work/love-save-pneumoconiosis/> (Accessed: 8 July 2023).

Thomala, L. (2024) *Number of monthly active WeChat users from 1st quarter 2014 to 1st quarter 2024(in millions)*, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/255778/number-of-active-wechat-messenger-accounts/#:~:text=As%20at%20the%20end%20of,1.35%20billion%20monthly%20active%20users.&text=First%20released%20in%202011%2C%20WeChat,by%20the%20Chinese%20company%20Tencent.>

Thomala, L.L. (2023) *WeChat: Active users worldwide 2023*, *Statista*. Available at: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/255778/number-of-active-wechat-messenger-accounts/> (Accessed: June 2, 2025).

Thompson, H. (2011) 'The Great Migration: Rural-urban migration in China and Indonesia', *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 41(4), pp. 691–692. doi:10.1080/00472336.2011.610625.

Thulin, E. and Vilhelmson, B. (2014) 'Virtual practices and migration plans: A qualitative study of urban young adults', *Population, Space and Place*, 20(5), pp. 389–401. doi:10.1002/psp.1766.

Tien, H.T.P. and Ha, Q.N. (2001) *Female labour migration: Rural-urban*. Hanoi: Women's Publishing House.

Tinmaz, H., Lee, Y.H., Hsieh, S.W. and Smith, A. (2022) 'A systematic review on digital literacy', *Smart Learning Environments*, 9(1), p. 21. doi:10.1186/s40561-022-00204-y.

Turner, S.G. and Maschi, T.M. (2015) 'Feminist and empowerment theory and social work practice', *Journal of Social Work Practice*, 29(2), pp. 151–162.

UN. 2010. *World Population Policies 2009*. New York. http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/wpp2009/Publication_complete.pdf.

UNICEF (2012) *Top cinema artist Chen Kun appointed as UNICEF Ambassador*. Available at: <https://www.unicef.cn/press-releases/top-cinema-artist-chen-kun-appointed-unicef-ambassador> (Accessed: 8 July 2023).

Treem, J. and Leonardi, P. (2012) 'Social media use in organizations: Exploring the affordances of visibility, editability, persistence, and Association', *Communication Yearbook* 36, pp. 143–189. doi:10.4324/9780203113653-11.

Tsering Samdrup (2023) *Kuaishou, a new lifeline for Tibetan oral cultures in China?*, *The Tibetan Sustainable Heritage Initiative*. Available at: <https://tashi.leeds.ac.uk/kuaishou-a-new-lifeline-for-tibetan-oral-cultures-in-china/> (Accessed: September 3, 2024).

Tsuda, T. (2012) 'Whatever happened to simultaneity? Transnational migration theory and dual engagement in sending and receiving countries', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 38(4), pp. 631–649. doi:10.1080/1369183X.2012.659126.

Tsuda, T. and Pasura, D. (2018) *Routledge Handbook of Diaspora Studies*. In: R. Cohen and C. Fischer (eds.) London: Routledge. doi:10.4324/9781315209050.

Twinn, D.S. (1998) 'An analysis of the effectiveness of focus groups as a method of qualitative data collection with Chinese populations in nursing research', *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 28(3), pp. 654–661. doi:10.1046/j.1365-2648.1998.00708.x.

United Nations (2010) *World population policies 2009*. Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, pp. 170–172. Available at: <https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/policy/wpp.pdf> (Accessed: [insert access date]).

United Nations – International Organization for Migration (UN Migration) (2024) *Internal migration*. Migration Data Portal. Available at: <https://www.migrationdataportal.org/themes/internal-migration> (Accessed: 11 June 2025).

Velasco, B. (2019) 'Rights at work and workers' resistance in a Luzon export zone', *Philippine Journal of Social Development*, 11, pp. 82–98.

Vidal, M. (2007) 'Manufacturing empowerment? "Employee involvement" in the labour process after Fordism', *Socio-Economic Review*, 5(2), pp. 197–232. doi:10.1093/ser/mwl005.

Vidal-Coso, E. and Miret-Gamundi, P. (2014) 'The labour trajectories of immigrant women in Spain: Are there signs of upward social mobility?', *Demographic Research*, 31, pp. 337–380. doi:10.4054/DemRes.2014.31.13.

Walder, A.G. (2014) 'China's bureaucratic capitalism: Creating the corporate steel sector', in Brødsgaard, K.E. (ed.) *Globalization and public sector reform in China*. 1st edn. Routledge, pp. 18. doi: 10.4324/9781315857626.

Wallis, C. (2011) 'New Media Practices in China: Youth Patterns, Processes, and Politics', *International Journal of Communication*, 5, pp. 406–436.

Min'an, W. and Xie, S. (2017) *Domestic spaces in post-Mao China: On electronic household appliances*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Wang, B. and Driscoll, C. (2018) 'Chinese feminists on social media: Articulating different voices, building strategic alliances', *Continuum*, 33(1), pp. 1–15. doi:10.1080/10304312.2018.1532492.

Wang, B., Li, X., B., Fang, X., Yang, H., Zhao, R. and Hong, Y. (2007) 'Sexual coercion, HIV-related risk, and mental health among female sex workers in China', *Health Care for Women International*, 28(8), pp. 745–762. doi:10.1080/07399330701465226.

- Wang, C. 王春光. (2001) The semi-urbanisation of rural migrant populations in China. Nongcun liudong renkou de “ban chengshihua” wenti yanjiu 农村流动人口的“半城市化”问题研究. *Shehuixue Yanjiu* 社会学研究, (5), pp. 107–122.
- Wang, C., Lao, H. and Zhou, X. (2014) ‘The impact mechanism of social networks on Chinese rural–urban migrant workers’ behaviour and wages’, *The Economic and Labour Relations Review*, 25(2), pp. 353–371.
- Wang, C., Zhang, C. and Ni, J. (2015) ‘Social network, intra-network education spillover effect and rural–urban migrants’ wages: Evidence from China’, *China Economic Review*, 35, pp. 156–168.
- Wang, F.-L. (2005) *Organizing Through Division and Exclusion China’s Hukou System*. Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press.
- Wang, J. (2011) ‘Internet mobilization and collective struggle of factory workers’, *Economic Society*, pp. 114–128.
- Wang, J. (2016) ‘The urban life of new generation migrant workers’, *Beijing Cultural Review*, 3, pp. 78–85.
- Wang, J. and Gu, L. (2017) ‘Why is WECHAT pay so popular?’, *Issues In Information Systems*, 18(4), pp. 1–8. doi:10.48009/4_iis_2017_1-8.
- Wang, J. and Wang, Z. 王军, 王卓. (no date) *Availability of blood products: A modelling study*. Woguo wuchang xianxue gongzuo qude xin jinzhan – wuchang xianxue duiwu bude duandazhang 我国无偿献血工作取得新进展——无偿献血队伍不断壮大. Available at: <http://www.nhc.gov.cn/yzygj/ptpxw/201812/4eba6d13cdaf40528d6315ecf80b9c5e.shtml> (Accessed: 7 June 2025).
- Wang, J. and Wu, L. (2020) ‘A comparison of health communication effectiveness and the improvement of management strategies: Taking Two Chinese traditional medicine hospitals’ WeChat public accounts as examples’, *BMC Health Services Research*, 20(1). doi:10.1186/s12913-020-05901-3.
- Wang, M. and Liu, L. (2014) ‘Parental harsh discipline in mainland China: Prevalence, frequency, and coexistence’, *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 38(6), pp. 1128–1137.
- Wang, O. 王欧. (2022) ‘Familialisation and the lifestyle transformation of the new generation of migrant workers’. Jiatinghua yu xinshengdai nongmingong shenghuo fangshi zhuanxing 家庭化与新生代农民工生活方式转型. *Shehuixue Yanjiu* 社会学研究, 37(01), pp. 68–89, 227–228.
- Wang, R., Huang, S. and Pérez-Ríos, N.G. (2020) ‘Multinational Luxury Brands’ communication strategies on International and local social media: Comparing Twitter and

weibo', *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, 32(4), pp. 313–323. doi:10.1080/08961530.2019.1710736.

Wang, S. (2023) “‘Loitering’ with unconcerned clicks: Class nature and social exclusion of Sina Weibo users in representing Chinese migrant workers’. Dissertation. Ottawa.

Wang, W. and Wu, J. (2021) ‘Short Video Platforms and Local Community Building in China’, *International Journal of Communication*, 15, pp. 3269–3291.

Wang, W.W. and Fan, C.C. (2012) ‘Migrant Workers’ Integration in Urban China: Experiences in Employment, Social Adaptation, and Self-Identity’, *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, 53(6), pp. 731–749. doi: 10.2747/1539-7216.53.6.731.

Wang, W.Y. (2015) ‘Remaking Guangzhou: geo-identity and place-making on Sina Weibo’, *Media International Australia*, 156(1), pp. 29–38. doi: 10.1177/1329878X1515600105.

Wang, W.Y. (2017) ‘Re-imagining Guangzhou on Sina Weibo’, in *Chinese social media*. London: Routledge, pp. 209–220. doi: 10.4324/9781315160214-20.

Wang, X. (2016) *Social media in industrial China*. London: UCL Press. doi: 10.14324/111.9781910634646.

Wang, Y. 王言炉. (2009) ‘The positive impact of migrant labour and foreign investment on Wenzhou’s economic development’. Wailai laodongli yu waizi dui Wenzhou jingji fazhan de youli yingxiang 外来劳动力与外资对温州经济发展的有利影响. *Xiangzhen Jingji* 乡镇经济, 25(10), pp. 76–80.

Wang, Z. (2016) ‘D8 Goes to Battle, Nothing Will Grow’’: Cyber-nationalism as Online Emotional Games’, *Chinese Journal of Journalism & Communication*, 38(11), pp. 75–90.

Wang, Y. and Zuo, T. 王宇, 左停. (2016) ‘A study on rural women’s household power from the perspective of everyday life’. Richang shenghuo shijiao xia de nongcun nüxing jiating quanli yanjiu 日常生活视角下的农村女性家庭权力研究. *Renkou yu Shehui* 人口与社会, 32(02), pp. 85–92. DOI: 10.14132/j.2095-7963.2016.02.010.

Wang, W. and Hu, K. 王维, 胡可馨. (2020) ‘Life histories of rural left-behind women from a gender perspective’. Shehuai xingbie shijiao xia de nongcun liushou nüxing shengmingshi 社会性别视角下的农村留守女性生命史. *Zhongguo Nongye Daxue Xuebao (Shehui Kexue Ban)* 中国农业大学学报(社会科学版), 37(02), pp. 114–123. DOI: 10.13240/j.cnki.caujsse.2020.02.012.

Warner, M. (2000) *Changing Workplace Relations in the Chinese Economy* / edited by Malcolm Warner, 1937-. Basingstoke, UK: Macmillan Press.

Wei, J. (2014) 'Queer/tongzhi China: New perspectives on research, activism, and media cultures ed. by Elisabeth L. Engebretsen and William F. Schroeder', *China Review International*, 21(2), pp. 133–136. doi: 10.1353/cri.2014.0009.

Wei, L. and Gao, F. (2017) 'Social media, social integration and subjective well-being among new urban migrants in China', *Telematics and Informatics*, 34(3), pp. 786–796. doi: 10.1016/j.tele.2016.05.017.

Wei, S. and Yan, P. (2023) 'Measuring users' awareness of content recommendation algorithm: A survey on Douyin users in rural China', *Lecture Notes in Computer Science*, pp. 197–220. doi:10.1007/978-3-031-28035-1_15.

Wei, X. (2009) 'The feminist concept of self and modernity', *Diogenes*, 56(1), pp. 117–127. doi: 10.1177/0392192109102161.

Wei, Z., Xie, Y., Xiao, D., Zhang, S., Hui, P. and Zhou, M. (2024) 'Social media discourses on interracial intimacy: Tracking racism and sexism through Chinese geo-located social media data', *Proceedings of the ACM Web Conference 2024*. New York, NY, USA: ACM, pp. 2337–2346. doi: 10.1145/3589334.3645334.

Wenchuan Earthquake Relief Chronicle Compilation Committee of Sichuan Province 汶川特大地震四川抗震救灾志编纂委员会. (2018) *General overview and chronology of the Wenchuan Earthquake relief efforts in Sichuan*. Wenchuan tedada dizhen Sichuan kangzhen jiuzai zhi · zongshu dashiji 《汶川特大地震四川抗震救灾志·总述大事记》. Chengdu: Sichuan People's Publishing House 四川人民出版社.

Wen, Y. and Hanley, J. (2015) 'Rural-to-urban migration, family resilience, and policy framework for social support in China', *Asian Social Work and Policy Review*, 9(1), pp. 18–28. doi: 10.1111/aswp.12042.

Wenzhou Bendibao 温州本地宝. (2023) *Wenzhou subsidy application guide: application conditions, portals, and required materials*. *Wenzhou gellei butie shenqing gonglüe (fu shenqing tiaojian + rukou + cailiao liucheng)* 温州各类补贴申请攻略 (附申请条件+入口+材料流程) .

Wenzhou Municipal Bureau of Statistics 温州市统计局. (2024) *Wenzhou Statistical Yearbook 2024*. *Wenzhou tongji nianjian 2024* 温州统计年鉴 2024. Beijing: Renmin chubanshe 人民出版社.

Wenzhou Municipal Bureau of Statistics 温州市统计局. (2013) 2012 Wenzhou Statistical Bulletin on National Economic and Social Development 2012 nian Wenzhou shi guomin jingji he shehui fazhan tongji gongbao 2012 年温州市国民经济和社会发展统计公报. Wenzhou Municipal Bureau of Statistics 温州市统计局 . Available at: <https://wztjj.wenzhou.gov.cn> (Accessed: 4 August 2025).

- Whyte, M.K. (2010) *‘One country, two societies rural-urban inequality in contemporary China’*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Wijaya, S.W., Watson, J. and Bruce, C. (2018) ‘Understanding empowerment in social media context: Lessons from Indonesian migrant domestic workers’, *International Journal of Web Based Communities*, 14(2), p. 172. doi:10.1504/ijwbc.2018.092392.
- Wilding, R. (2006) ‘“virtual” intimacies? families communicating across transnational contexts’, *Global Networks*, 6(2), pp. 125–142. doi:10.1111/j.1471-0374.2006.00137.x.
- Wilkinson, A. (1998) ‘Empowerment: Theory and practice’, *Personnel Review*, 27(1), pp. 40–56. doi: 10.1108/00483489810368549.
- Wilson, G.A., Hu, Z. and Rahman, S. (2018) ‘Community resilience in rural China: the case of Hu Village, Sichuan Province’, *Journal of Rural Studies*, 60, pp. 130–140. doi: 10.1016/j.jrurstud.2018.03.016.
- Winick, S.D. and Bartis, P. (2016) *Folklife and fieldwork: an introduction to cultural documentation*. Washington, DC: American Folklife Center, The Library of Congress.
- Wong, J. and Zheng, Y. (2001) *‘The nanxun legacy and China’s development in the post-deng era’*. Singapore: Singapore University Press, National University of Singapore.
- Wong, O.M.H. (2016) ‘The changing relationship of women with their natal families’, *Journal of Sociology*, 52(1), pp. 53–67. doi: 10.1177/1440783315587797.
- Wu, C. (2010) ‘Education level, job changes, and migrant workers’ wages: An empirical analysis based on migrant workers in Guangzhou in 2008’, *Statistics Education*, 10, pp. 39–45.
- Wu, D., Liu, M., Li, D. and Yin, H. (2024) ‘The longitudinal relationship between loneliness and both social anxiety and mobile phone addiction among rural left-behind children: A cross-lagged panel analysis’, *Journal of Adolescence*, 96(5), pp. 969–982. doi: 10.1002/jad.12309.
- Wu, H. and Ye, J. (2016) ‘Hollow lives: Women left behind in rural China’, *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 16(1), pp. 50–69. doi: 10.1111/joac.12089.
- Wu, J. and Ingram, C. (2019) ‘Six decades of ethnic minority population change in China’, *Asian Population Studies*, 15(2), pp. 228–238. doi: 10.1080/17441730.2019.1594657.
- Wu, W., Frazier, M.W. and Yueh, L. (2018) ‘Evolution of market reform’, in *The SAGE handbook of contemporary China*. London, UK: SAGE, pp. 101–121.
- Wu, X. (2007) *Chinese cyber nationalism: Evolution, characteristics, and implications*. Lanham, USA: Lexington Books.

- Wu, X., Liu, H., Huang, X. and Zhou, T. (2011) 'Human driving forces: analysis of rocky desertification in karst region in Guanling County, Guizhou Province', *Chinese Geographical Science*, 21(5), pp. 600–608. doi: 10.1007/s11769-011-0496-7.
- Wu, X., Zhang, Y., Zhang, J. and Cui, R. (2018) 'Design and implementation of college online learning system based on WeChat Mini Program', *2018 9th International Conference on Information Technology in Medicine and Education (ITME)* [Preprint]. doi:10.1109/itme.2018.00106.
- Wu, Y. and Guo, Z. (2020) 'An analysis of the nutritional status of left-behind children in rural China and the impact mechanisms of child malnutrition', *Children and Youth Services Review*, 119, p. 105598. doi: 10.1016/j.chilyouth.2020.105598.
- Vo, H., 2021. Rural–Urban Migration and Demographic Transition in Viet Nam. *Demographic Transition and Its Impacts in Asia and Europe*, 313.
- Xi, R. (2024) 'Rural Chinese youth on Kuaishou: performing gender, labor, and rurality', *Journal of Youth Studies* [Preprint]. doi: 10.1080/13676261.2024.2391934.
- Xiang, B. (2021) '10 Pocketed proletarianization: why there is no labor politics in the “world’s factory”', in *Precarity and Belonging*. Rutgers University Press, pp. 161–175. doi: 10.36019/9781978815667-011.
- Xiao, F. 肖方. (2015) 'The elderly: a vulnerable group in fires'. Laoren: huozai zhong de ruoshi qunti 老人: 火灾中的弱势群体. *Zhongguo Xiaofang* 中国消防, (12), pp. 14–15.
- Xie, Y. and Jiang, Q. (2016) 'Land arrangements for rural–urban migrant workers in China: Findings from Jiangsu Province', *Land Use Policy*, 50, pp. 262–267. doi:10.1016/j.landusepol.2015.10.010.
- Xie, Y. and Jiang, Q. (2016) 'Land arrangements for rural–urban migrant workers in China: findings from Jiangsu Province', *Land Use Policy*, 50, pp. 262–267. doi: 10.1016/j.landusepol.2015.10.010.
- Xie, Z. 谢泽杭. (2020) 'Departure’ interaction: narration, sharing, and self-realisation – A media anthropological study on migrant workers’ short videos’. “Lichang” de hudong: sushuo, fenxiang yu ziwo shixian——dui nongmingong duanshipin de meijie renleixue kaocha “离场”的互动：诉说、分享与自我实现——对农民工短视频的媒介人类学考察. *Xinwen Luntan* 新闻论坛, (02), pp. 88–90. DOI: 10.19425/j.cnki.cn15-1019/g2.2020.02.024.
- Xin, Z. and Lv, Q. (2023) *Rural-urban migration in China*. London: Routledge. doi: 10.4324/9781003365785.
- Xinhuanet 新华网. (2022) 'NPC deputy Yan Zhi proposes ensuring health, safety, and cultural services for rural left-behind elderly'. Quanguo renda daibiao Yan Zhi jianyi: Wei nongcun liushou laoren zuohao jiankang anquan, wenhua shenghuo baozhang 全国

人大代表阎志建议：为农村留守老人做好健康安全、文化生活保障. *NPC & CPPCC Annual Sessions* 2022. Available at: <https://www.news.cn/politics/2022lh/20220306/9deef2641f3b4dd49b674ebb1da298dc/c.html> (Accessed: 4 July 2025).

Xiong, H., Bairner, A. and Tang, Z. (2020) 'Embracing city life: physical activities and the social integration of the new generation of female migrant workers in urban China', *Leisure Studies*, 39(6), pp. 782–796. doi: 10.1080/02614367.2020.1800802.

Xiong, Y. (2024) 'Returning to and continuing the traditional Chinese family system via WeChat: digitally mediated families in liquid China', *Mobile Media and Communication* [Preprint]. doi: 10.1177/20501579241246722.

Xu, F. (2016) 'Citizenship institutions in Chinese peasant-workers' everyday life: toward a theory of citizenship practice', *Journal of Chinese Political Science*, 21(4), pp. 453–468. doi: 10.1007/s11366-016-9437-8.

Xu, J. (2011) 'GIS spatial analysis of floating population in Wenzhou, China: Implications for industrial restructuring', *2011 19th International Conference on Geoinformatics* [Preprint]. doi:10.1109/geoinformatics.2011.5980930.

Xu, L. and Chi, I. (2018) 'Determinants of support exchange between grandparents and grandchildren in rural China: The roles of grandparent caregiving, patrilineal heritage, and emotional bonds', *Journal of Family Issues*, 39(3), pp. 579–601.

Xu, W. (2017) 'The study of WeChat payment users willingness factor', *Journal of Service Science and Management*, 10(03), pp. 251–259. doi:10.4236/jssm.2017.103021.

Xu, W. and Wang, X. (2015) '*A child's life of fear, insecurity and misery, A child's life of fear, insecurity and misery*', Chinadaily.com.cn. Available at: https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2015-06/18/content_21042801.htm (Accessed: March 14, 2025).

Xu, Y. and Yao, Y. (2015) 'Informal institutions, collective action, and public investment in rural China', *American Political Science Review*, 109(2), pp. 371–391.

Yalom, M. and Brown, D.T. (2015) *The social sex: A history of female friendship*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers Inc.

Yan, H. (2008) *New masters, new servants: Migration, development, and women workers in China*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Yan, L., Duarte, F., Wang, D., Zheng, S. and Ratti, C. (2019) 'Exploring the effect of air pollution on social activity in China using geotagged social media check-in Data', *Cities*, 91, pp. 116–125. doi:10.1016/j.cities.2018.11.011.

Yan, P. and Schroeder, R. (2019) 'Variations in the adoption and use of mobile social apps in everyday lives in urban and rural China', *Mobile Media & Communication*, 8(3), pp. 318–341. doi:10.1177/2050157919884718.

Yan, P. and Schroeder, R. (2020) 'Variations in the adoption and use of mobile social apps in everyday lives in urban and rural China', *Mobile Media & Communication*, 8(3), pp. 318–341. doi: 10.1177/2050157919884718.

Yan, Q. 严奇岩. (2008) 'Ethnic prejudice and regional discrimination: A historical-geographical study of Guizhou imagery'. *Zuqun pianjian he diyudi shi: Guizhou yixiang de lishi dili kaocha 族群偏见和地域歧视: 贵州意象的历史地理考察. Lilun yu Dangdai 理论与当代*, (11), pp. 28–31.

Yan, Y. and Lv, Z. (2020) *Chinese ethnic demography*. Singapore: Springer Singapore. doi: 10.1007/978-981-15-6153-5.

Yan, Z., Wei, F., Deng, X., Li, C., He, Q. and Qi, Y. (2022) 'Feminization of agriculture: do female farmers have higher expectations for the value of their farmland?—Empirical evidence from China', *Agriculture*, 12(1), p. 60. doi: 10.3390/agriculture12010060.

Yang, B., Feldman, M.W. and Li, S. (2021) 'The status of family resilience: effects of sustainable livelihoods in rural China', *Social Indicators Research*, 153(3), pp. 1041–1064. doi: 10.1007/s11205-020-02518-1.

Yang, F. and Gu, D. (2020) 'Predictors of loneliness incidence in Chinese older adults from a life course perspective: a national longitudinal study', *Aging & Mental Health*, 24(6), pp. 879–888. doi: 10.1080/13607863.2018.1558174.

Yang, H. (Chris) and Liu, H. (2013) 'Prior negative experience of online disclosure, privacy concerns, and regulatory support in Chinese social media', *Chinese Journal of Communication*, 7(1), pp. 40–59. doi:10.1080/17544750.2013.816756.

Yang, J. (2011) 'Nennu and Shunu: Gender, body politics, and the beauty economy in China', *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 36(2), pp. 333–357. doi: 10.1086/655913.

Yang, K., Peng, H. and Chen, J. (2022) 'Social citizenship rights and responsibilities', *China Review*, 22(2), pp. 171–199. doi: 10.2307/48671503.

Yang, L. and Wall, G. (2009) 'Minorities and tourism: community perspectives from Yunnan, China', *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change*, 7(2), pp. 77–98. doi: 10.1080/14766820902849971.

Yang, X. and Wang, D. (2015) 'The exploration of social media marketing strategies of destination marketing organizations in China', *Journal of China Tourism Research*, 11(2), pp. 166–185. doi:10.1080/19388160.2015.1017071.

- Yang, X., Li, S., Attané, I. and Feldman, M.W. (2017) 'On the relationship between the marriage squeeze and the quality of life of rural men in China', *American Journal of Men's Health*, 11(3), pp. 702–710. doi: 10.1177/1557988316681220.
- Yang, X.Y., Kelly, B.C. and Yang, T. (2016) 'Together we have fun: Native-place networks and sexual risk behaviours among Chinese male rural-urban migrants', *Sociology of Health and Illness*, 38(4), pp. 559–575. doi: 10.1111/1467-9566.12380.
- Yang, Y. (2019) 'Bargaining with the state: The empowerment of Chinese sexual minorities/LGBT in the social media era', *Journal of Contemporary China*, 28(118), pp. 662–677. doi: 10.1080/10670564.2018.1557943.
- Yang, Y. and Ha, L. (2021) 'Why people use TikTok (Douyin) and how their purchase intentions are affected by social media influencers in China: A uses and gratifications and Parasocial Relationship Perspective', *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 21(3), pp. 297–305. doi:10.1080/15252019.2021.1995544.
- Yang, Z. 杨逐原. (2023) 'A study on digital labour in rural sports events in ethnic regions from the perspective of traffic monetisation: A case study of the "Village Super League" in Rongjiang County, Qiandongnan Prefecture, Guizhou Province'. *Liuliang bianxian shiyu xia minzu diqu xiangcun tiyu saishi zhong de shuzihua laodong yanjiu——yi Guizhou sheng Qiandongnan zhou Rongjiang xian de "Cunchao" wei li 流量变现视域下民族地区乡村体育赛事中的数字化劳动研究——以贵州省黔东南州榕江县的“村超”为例. Guizhou Minzu Yanjiu 贵州民族研究*, 44(06), pp. 103–109. DOI: 10.13965/j.cnki.gzmzyj10026959.2023.06.014.
- Yang, H. and Wang, H. 杨华, 王会. (2017) 'From belonging to love: Changes in marriage logic among young rural women – Based on an investigation in a southern water village'. *Cong guishu dao aiqing: Nongcun nianqing nüxing hunyin luoji de bianqian – jiyu nanfang shuicun de diaocha 从归属到爱情: 农村年轻女性婚姻逻辑的变迁——基于南方水村的调查. Zhongguo Qingnian Yanjiu 中国青年研究*, (10), pp. 64–72. DOI: 10.19633/j.cnki.11-2579/d.2017.0009.
- Yau, A., Marder, B. and O'Donohoe, S. (2019) 'The role of social media in negotiating identity during the process of acculturation', *Information Technology & People*, 33(2), pp. 554–575. doi:10.1108/itp-09-2017-0305.
- Ye, J. (2018) 'Stayers in China's "hollowed-out" villages: A counter narrative on massive rural–urban migration', *Population, Space and Place*, 24(4). doi: 10.1002/psp.2128.
- Ye, J., Wu, H., Rao, J., Ding, B. and Zhang, K. (2016) 'Left-behind women: Gender exclusion and inequality in rural-urban migration in China', *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 43(4), pp. 910–941. doi: 10.1080/03066150.2016.1157584.
- Ye, J., Pan, L. and He, C. (2014) *Double Constraint: Gender Exclusion and Inequality Among Left-Behind Rural Populations*. Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press.

- Ye, J., Wang, Y. and Zhang, K. (2006) 'The impact of parental migration on the lives of left-behind children', *China Rural Economy*, 01, pp. 57–65.
- Yeh, E.T. (2013) *Taming tibet: Landscape transformation and the gift of Chinese development*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. pp97-126
- Yelland, J. and Gifford, S.M. (1995) 'Problems of focus group methods in cross-cultural research: A case study of beliefs about sudden infant death syndrome', *Australian Journal of Public Health*, 19(3), pp. 257–263. doi:10.1111/j.1753-6405.1995.tb00440.x.
- Ye, J. and Wu, H. (2014) *Women left behind in rural China: Dancing solo*. Beijing: Social Sciences Literature Press.
- Yin, S. and Sun, Y. (2020) 'Intersectional digital feminism: Assessing the participation politics and impact of the MeToo movement in China', *Feminist Media Studies*, 21(7), pp. 1176–1192. doi:10.1080/14680777.2020.1837908.
- Young, J. (2013) *China's Hukou System Markets, migrants and institutional change*. Basingstoke, , UK: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Young, J. (2013) 'The hukou system', in *China's hukou system*. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, pp. 27–64. doi: 10.1057/9781137277312_3.
- Yu, J. (2019) '*Serving the elderly in rural areas a crucial task*', China Daily Global. Available at: http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/global/2019-12/03/content_37527224.htm (Accessed: August 23, 2024).
- Yu, J. and Xie, Z. 于金华, 谢志鹏. (2021) 'Where is the hometown: The construction of migrant worker community and rural memories on the short video platform—Inspection of TikTok "Fujian Village"'. *Guxiang hechu shi: Duanshipin pingtai shang de nongmingong shequn jiangou yu xiangtu jiyi 故乡何处是: 短视频平台上的农民工社群建构与乡土记忆——对抖音“福建村”的考察*. *Chuanbo yu Shehui 传播与社会*, 9, pp. 44–57. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.15897/j.cnki.cn51-1046/g2.20210610.003>.
- Yu, X. and Pun, N. 余晓敏, 潘毅. (2008) 'Consume society and the "new generation of working girls": Subjectivity reconstruction'. *Xiaofei shehui yu "xinshengdai dagongmei" zhuti xing zaizao 消费社会与“新生代打工妹”主体性再造*. *Shehuixue Yanjiu 社会学研究*, (03), pp. 143–171, 245. DOI: 10.19934/j.cnki.shxyj.2008.03.007.
- Yuan, E.J., Feng, M. and Danowski, J.A. (2013) '“privacy” in Semantic Networks on Chinese social media: The case of sina weibo', *Journal of Communication*, 63(6), pp. 1011–1031. doi:10.1111/jcom.12058.
- Yuan, R. (2021) 'Incorporating life skills education in vocational training: Toward empowerment-based skills advancement for Young Women Migrant Workers in China',

Journal of Social Service Research, 47(6), pp. 860–871.
doi:10.1080/01488376.2021.1941502.

Yue, Z., Li, S., Jin, X. and Feldman, M.W. (2013) ‘The role of social networks in the integration of Chinese rural–urban migrants: A migrant–resident tie perspective’, *Urban Studies*, 50(9), pp. 1704–1723. doi: 10.1177/0042098012470394.

Yue, Z., Li, S. and Feldman, M.W. (2015) Social Integration of Rural-Urban Migrants in China. WORLD SCIENTIFIC. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1142/9428>.

Yue, Z., Li, S., Jin, X. and , W.M. (2012) ‘The role of social networks in the integration of Chinese rural–urban migrants: A migrant–resident tie perspective’, *Urban Studies*, 50(9), pp. 1704–1723. doi:10.1177/0042098012470394.

Yueh, L., 2018. Evolution of market reforms. In *The SAGE Handbook of Contemporary China* (pp. 101-120). SAGE Publications Ltd.

Zani, B. (2018) ‘Gendered transnational ties and multipolar economies: Chinese migrant women’s WeChat Commerce in Taiwan’, *International Migration*, 57(4), pp. 232–246. doi:10.1111/imig.12526.

Zavoretti, R. (2020) ‘Rural-urban migration and social inequality in urban China’, in *Routledge Handbook of Chinese Culture and Society*. Abingdon, Oxon; New York, NY: Routledge, pp. 142–158. doi: 10.4324/9781315180243-12.

Ze, L. (2024) Monthly Active Users of Short Video Apps Reach 989 Million, news.cn. Available at: <http://www.news.cn/tech/20240802/254641b9f6e2462bb799481ae9ccd29e/c.html> (Accessed: January 19, 2025).

Zell, S. and Skop, E. (2010) ‘Social networks and selectivity in Brazilian migration to Japan and the United States’, *Population, Space and Place*, 17(5), pp. 469–488. doi:10.1002/psp.615.

Zeng, W. and Li, C. 曾维希, 李春霖. (2018) Urban embeddedness and psychological assessment of urbanisation status. Chengshi qianru yu shiminhua zhuangtai de xinli ceping yanjiu 城市嵌入与市民化状态的心理测评研究. *Dianzi Keji Daxue Xuebao (Shehui Kexue Ban)* 电子科技大学学报(社科版), 20(1), pp. 38–44. DOI: 10.14071/j.1008-8105(2017)-0044.

Zhan, S. (2011) ‘What determines migrant workers’ life chances in contemporary China? hukou, social exclusion, and the market’, *Modern China*, 37(3), pp. 243–285. doi:10.1177/0097700410379482.

Zhang, B., Wang, L., Yu, H. and Sun, Q. (2022) ‘Go out to work or start your own business? Social network embeddedness and income differentiation of migrants in

China', *Proceedings of the 2022 8th International Conference on Humanities and Social Science Research (ICHSSR 2022)*, January. doi: 10.2991/assehr.k.220504.503.

Zhang, C. 张春泥. (2011) 'Why do migrant workers frequently change jobs? A study on job mobility under the household registration system'. *Nongmingong weihe pinfan bianhuan gongzuo: Hujizhi xia nongmingong de gongzuo liudong yanjiu* 农民工为何频繁变换工作——户籍制度下农民工的工作流动研究. *Shehui* 社会, 31(6), pp. 153–177.

Zhang, C. (2022). *Gender and intra-household distribution of resources, labour and capital among Chinese internal migrant couples*. PhD thesis. University of Leeds, School of Sociology and Social Policy.

Zhang, D. and Yang, Y. (2022) 'Internal migrants' charitable giving to hometowns in China: The effect of community embeddedness', *Population, Space and Place*, 28(2). doi: 10.1002/psp.2491.

Zhang, F., Xu, W. and Khurshid, A. (2023) 'The interplay of migrant workers' working hours, income, and well-being in China', *Sustainability*, 15(14), p. 11409. doi: 10.3390/su151411409.

Zhang, J. and Dai, G. (2023) 'Unveiling emotional dissemination in hotspot events: "Village Super League" case study', in *Atlantis Highlights in Social Sciences, Education and Humanities*. Atlantis Press, pp. 386–397. doi: 10.2991/978-94-6463-276-7_42.

Zhang, J. and Zhang, C. 张进宝, 张春兰. (2021) 'Family instructions and rural community governance from the perspective of clan capital: A case study on the re-establishment of the Zhang family's instructions in Village L, Shandong'. *Zongzu ziben shijiao xia de jiaxun yu nongcun shequ zhili: Yi Shandong L cun Zhangshi jiazou jiaxun chongli wei li* 宗族资本视角下的家训与农村社区治理——以山东L村张氏家族家训重立为例. *Journal of Hebei Agricultural University (Social Science Edition)* 河北农业大学学报(社会科学版), (4)

Zhang, J., Yan, L., Qiu, H. and Dai, B. (2018) 'Social adaptation of Chinese left-behind children: Systematic review and meta-analysis', *Children and Youth Services Review*, 95, pp. 308–315. doi: 10.1016/j.childyouth.2018.11.012.

Zhang, K. and Bélanger, D. (2018) "Who said I was a forced bachelor?" Single men's voices and strategies in rural China', in Srinivasan, S. and Li, S. (eds) *Scarce Women and Surplus Men in China and India*. Cham: Springer International Publishing, pp. 67–83. doi: 10.1007/978-3-319-63275-9_4.

Zhang, K.H. (2006) *China as the World Factory*. New York: Routledge.

Zhang, L. (2012) 'Economic migration and urban citizenship in China: The role of points systems', *Population and Development Review*, 38(3), pp. 503–533. doi: 10.1111/j.1728-4457.2012.00514.x.

Zhang, L. (2015) "Estimating the Value of Migration: Floating Population's Contributions to Urban Revenue," *Population Research*, 39(04), pp. 57–65.

- Zhang, L. and Pentina, I. (2012) 'Motivations and usage patterns of weibo', *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, 15(6), pp. 312–317. doi:10.1089/cyber.2011.0615.
- Zhang, L. and Pentina, I. (2012) 'Motivations and usage patterns of Weibo', *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, 15(6), pp. 312–317. doi: 10.1089/cyber.2011.0615.
- Zhang, L. and Wang, G. (2010) 'Urban citizenship of rural migrants in reform-era China', *Citizenship Studies*, 14(2), pp. 145–166. doi: 10.1080/13621021003594809.
- Zhang, L., Kleiman-Weiner, M., Luo, R., Shi, Y., Martorell, R., Medina, A. and Rozelle, S., 2013. 'Multiple micronutrient supplementation reduces anemia and anxiety in rural China's elementary school children'. *The Journal of Nutrition*, 143(5), pp.640–647.
- Zhang, L., Sharpe, R.V., Li, S. and Darity Jr, W.A., 2016. 'Wage differentials between urban and rural-urban migrant workers in China'. *China Economic Review*, 41, pp.222–233.
- Zhang, L., Sharpe, V.R., Li, S. and Darity, A.W. (2016) 'Wage differentials between urban and rural-urban migrant workers in China', *China Economic Review*, 41, pp. 222–233. doi:10.1016/j.chieco.2016.10.004.
- Zhang, L., Zhou, T., Wang, Z., Chen, H., Zeng, F., Lei, Y. and Huang, C. (2019) *Oral History of Wenzhou's Reform and Opening up*. Beijing, China: History of Chinese Communist Party Publishing House.
- Zhang, N., Chandola, T., Becares, L. and Callery, P. (2016) 'Parental migration, intergenerational obligations and the paradox for left-behind boys in rural China', *Asian Population Studies*, 12(1), pp. 68–87. doi: 10.1080/17441730.2015.1128230.
- Zhang, N., Nazroo, J. and Vanhoutte, B. (2021) 'The relationship between rural to urban migration in China and risk of depression in later life: An investigation of life course effects', *SSRN Electronic Journal* [Preprint]. doi:10.2139/ssrn.3514770.
- Zhang, P. (2013) 'Social inclusion or exclusion?: When Weibo (microblogging) meets the 'new generation' of rural migrant workers', *Library Trends*, 62(1), pp. 63–80. doi: 10.1353/lib.2013.0026.
- Zhang, Q. and Hoekstra, J. (2020) 'Policies towards migrants in the Yangtze River Delta urban region, China: Does local hukou still matter after the hukou reform?', *Sustainability*, 12(24), p. 10448. doi: 10.3390/su122410448.
- Zhang, Q. and Negus, K. (2020) 'East Asian pop music idol production and the emergence of data fandom in China', *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 23(4), pp. 493–511. doi: 10.1177/1367877920904064.
- Zhang, Q., Fuang, A., Jin, D. and Yoon, T. (2017) 'Fan economy and consumption fandom of Korean music bands in China', in *The Korean Wave: Evolution, Fandom, and Transnationality*. Pennsylvania, USA: Lexington Limited, pp. 129–143.

Zhang, W. (2009) “‘A married out daughter is like spilt water’?: Women’s increasing contacts and enhanced ties with their natal families in post-reform rural north China’, *Modern China*, 35(3), pp. 256–283. doi: 10.1177/0097700408329613.

Zhang, Y. (2017) ‘Ministry of Public Security: China and Vietnam strengthen law enforcement cooperation to combat cross-border trafficking crimes’, *China Daily*.

Zhang, Y. 章玉萍. (2018) ‘The drifting life in the mobile phone: A life course perspective on mobile media use among migrant women’. *Shouji li de piaobo rensheng: Shengming licheng shijiao xia de liudong nüxing shuzi meijie shiyong 手机里的漂泊人生: 生命历程视角下的流动女性数字媒介使用. Xinwen yu Chuanbo Yanjiu 新闻与传播研究*, 25(7), pp. 49–65.

Zhang, Z. and Huang, J. 张志安, 黄桔琳. (2020) ‘Affordance research on internet platforms from the perspective of communication studies: A review and implications’. *Chuanboxue shijiao xia hulianwang pingtai kefuxing yanjiu ji qishi 传播学视角下互联网平台可供性研究及启示. Xinwen yu Xiezuowen 新闻与写作*, (10), pp. 87–95.

Zhang, Y. and Tan, X. 张悦, 谭晓鸥. (2020) ‘Performing the self: New media practices of migrant workers' urban integration’. *Yanyi ziwo: Nongmingong chengshi rongru de xin meiti shijian 演绎自我: 农民工城市融入的新媒体实践. Journal of Southwest University for Nationalities (Humanities and Social Science Edition) 西南民族大学学报 (人文社会科学版)*, (7), pp. 153–158.

Zhang, Z. and Wu, X. (2017) ‘Occupational segregation and earnings inequality: Rural migrants and local workers in urban China’, *Social Science Research*, 61, pp. 57–74. DOI: 10.1016/j.ssresearch.2016.06.020.

Zhang, Z., Gu, D. and Luo, Y. (2014) ‘Coresidence with elderly parents in contemporary China: The role of filial piety, reciprocity, socioeconomic resources, and parental needs’, *Journal of Cross-Cultural Gerontology*, 29(3), pp. 259–276. doi: 10.1007/s10823-014-9239-4.

Zhao, C., Zhou, X., Wang, F., Jiang, M. and Hesketh, T. (2017) ‘Care for left-behind children in rural China: a realist evaluation of a community-based intervention’, *Children and Youth Services Review*, 82, pp. 239–245. doi: 10.1016/j.childyouth.2017.09.034.

Zhao, K.F., Su, H., He, L., Wu, J., Chen, M. and Ye, D. (2009) ‘Self-concept and mental health status of “stay-at-home” children in rural China’, *Acta Paediatrica*, 98(9), pp. 1483–1486. doi:10.1111/j.1651-2227.2009.01346.x.

Zhao, L., Liu, S. and Zhang, W. (2018) ‘New trends in internal migration in China: Profiles of the new-generation migrants’, *China & World Economy*, 26(1), pp. 18–41. doi: 10.1111/cwe.12227.

Zhao, L.S. (2013) 'Ethnic networks and illegal immigration', *Sociological Focus*, 46(3), pp. 178–192. doi:10.1080/00380237.2013.798226.

Zhao, M. 赵明华 (2012) *The Enterprise Reform in China and Its Impact on Labour: A Case Study of a State-Owned Manufacturing Enterprise* 国有企业改革中的工人：一个制造业企业个案研究. Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press 社会科学文献出版社. (Research on Labour Issues in China 中国劳动问题研究丛书)

Zhao, W., Zhang, X. and Teng, J. (2006) "Rural Left-behind Children Spend Summer in Cities, Facing Another Form of 'Left-behind,'" *Xinhua Daily Telegraph*, p. 4.

Zhao, X. 晓赵. (2016) *Qingzhou hosts Persimmon Cultural and Arts Festival: Tens of thousands of acres of persimmons turn the mountains red*. Qingzhou juban shizi wenhua yishujie: Wanmu shizi hongbian shan 青州举办柿子文化艺术节：万亩柿子红遍山. *Zouxiang Shijie 走向世界*, (S2), pp. 88–89.

Zhao, Y. and Liu, F. (2024) 'Unlocking the power of leisure: Associations between leisure activity and social integration of family and individual migrants', *Journal of Leisure Research*, 55(3), pp. 381–397. doi: 10.1080/00222216.2023.2214557.

Zheng, X. (2023) *Rural-urban migration in China the impact of new media*. New York, NY, USA: Routledge.

Zheng, X. and Zhao, C. 郑欣, 赵呈晨. (2015) 'Nostalgia and hope: A study of collective memory and urban adaptation among the new generation of migrant workers'. *Shehui changjing zhong de jiyi yu wenhua chonggou zhuanti yanjiu—xiangchou de shouwang: Xinshengdai nongmingong jiti jiyi yu chengshi shiying yanjiu 社会场景中的记忆与文化重构专题研究——乡愁的守望: 新生代农民工集体记忆与城市适应研究*. *Henan Shehui Kexue 河南社会科学*, (9), pp. 12–19.

Zhong, H. and Zhao, J. (2020) 'The impact of adult child migration on the health of elderly parents left behind in China', *Canadian Studies in Population*, 47(3), pp. 151–168. doi: 10.1007/s42650-020-00034-8.

Zhou, C., Li, M., Zhang, G., Chen, J., Zhang, R. and Cao, Y. (2021) 'Spatiotemporal characteristics and determinants of internal migrant population distribution in China from the perspective of urban agglomerations', *PLOS ONE*, 16(2). doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0246960.

Zhou, D. (2002) 'The lineage system of Fenghuang village', *Chinese Sociology and Anthropology*. M.E. Sharpe Inc., pp. 6–27. doi: 10.2753/csa0009-462534036.

Zhang, H. (2017) 'Opportunity or new poverty trap: Rural-urban education disparity and internal migration in China', *China Economic Review*, 44, pp. 112–124. doi: 10.1016/j.chieco.2017.03.011.PT

Zhou, J., Lin, L., Tang, S. and Zhang, S. (2022) ‘To settle but not convert hukou among rural migrants in urban China: How does family-level eligibility for citizenship benefits matter?’, *Habitat International*, 120, p. 102511. doi: 10.1016/j.habitatint.2022.102511.

Zhou, L., Wang, G., Jia, C. and Ma, Z. (2019) ‘Being left-behind, mental disorder, and elderly suicide in rural China: a case–control psychological autopsy study’, *Psychological Medicine*, 49(3), pp. 458–464. doi: 10.1017/s003329171800106x.

Zhou, M. and Liu, S.-D. (2022) ‘Be my boss: Migrant youth and the contradiction of hope labour on Kuaishou’, *New Media & Society*, 26(10), pp. 5858–5876. doi: 10.1177/14614448221141828.

Zhou, M. and Liu, S.D. (2024) ‘Regulating tuwei culture and migrant youth through Kuaishou's platform governance’, *Policy & Internet*, 16(1), pp. 104–120. DOI: 10.1002/poi3.366

Zhou, S. (2014) *Reimagining masculinities: Beyond masculinist epistemology*. In: Karioris, F.G. and Loeser, C. (eds.) Oxford: BRILL. doi: 10.1163/9789004374232.

Zhou, T., Huang, B., Liu, X., He, G., Gou, Q., Huang, Z. and Xie, C. (2020) ‘Spatiotemporal exploration of Chinese spring festival population flow patterns and their determinants based on spatial interaction model’, *ISPRS International Journal of Geo-Information*, 9(11), p. 670. doi: 10.3390/ijgi9110670.

Zhou, W. (2023) *The significance of the popularity of Guizhou’s “Village Super League” and “Village Basketball Association”*. Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the People’s Republic of China. Available at: https://www.mct.gov.cn/whzx/qgwhxxlb/gz/202308/t20230816_946668.htm (Accessed: 11 September 2024).

Zhou, Y., He, T. and Lin, F. (2022) ‘The digital divide is aging: An intergenerational investigation of social media engagement in China’, *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(19), p. 12965. doi:10.3390/ijerph191912965.

Zhou, Z., Yang, Q. and Kim, D.-J. (2020) ‘An empirical study on coupling coordination between the cultural industry and tourism industry in ethnic minority areas’, *Journal of Open Innovation: Technology, Market, and Complexity*, 6(3), p. 65. doi:10.3390/joitmc6030065.

Zhou, Z.B. (2024) ‘Patriarchal racism: the convergence of anti-blackness and gender tension on Chinese social media’, *Information Communication and Society*, 27(2), pp. 223–239. doi:10.1080/1369118X.2023.2193252.

Lu, Z. (2023) *The Routledge handbook of nationalism in East and Southeast Asia*. New York: Routledge. doi:10.4324/9781003111450.

Zajak, S. (2017) *Transnational activism, global labor governance, and China*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. Zajak, S. (2017) *Transnational activism, global labor governance, and China*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Zhu, H., Chen, Y., Zhang, H. and Liu, Z. (2023) 'What drives migrants back to set up firms? Return-home entrepreneurial intention of rural migrant workers in China', *Chinese Geographical Science*, 33(2), pp. 205–220. doi:10.1007/s11769-023-1336-2.

Zhu, S. and Zhao, Y. 朱松, 赵媛. (2024) 'Research on the application of WeChat public accounts in home-school collaborative education in rural schools under the "Double Reduction" policy'. "Shuangjian" beijing xia Weixin gongzhonghao zai nongcun xuexiao jiaoxiao xietong yuren moshi zhong de yingyong yanjiu '双减' 背景下微信公众号在农村学校家校协同育人模式中的应用研究". *Shiti yu Yanjiu 试题与研究*, (20), pp. 102–104.

Zhu, X. 朱熙勇. (2011) Little migratory birds enter the city: Summer time of left-behind children. "Xiao hou niao" jin cheng: Liushou ertong de shuqi shiguang [小候鸟] 进城——留守儿童的暑期时光. *Chutian City News 楚天都市报*, (6).

Zhu, X., Zheng, X., Xu, H. and Xu, Y. 朱秀梅, 郑雪娇, 许海, 徐艳梅. (2022) Within-country regional cultural differences and their organizational implications. Guojia neibu diyuxing wenhua chayi ji qi dui zuzhi de yingxiang 国家内部地域文化差异及其对组织的影响. *Xinli Kexue Jinzhan 心理科学进展*, 30(7), pp. 1651–1666. doi: 10.3724/SP.J.1042.2022.01651.

Zhu, Xi. and P.Buckley. (1991) *Chu Hsi's family rituals : a twelfth-century Chinese manual for the performance of cappings, weddings, funerals, and ancestral rites*. Princeton University Press.

Zhu, Y., Wang, W.W., Lin, L., Shen, J. and Ren, Q. (2021) 'Return migration and in situ urbanization of migrant sending areas: Insights from a survey of seven provinces in China', *Cities*, 115, p. 103242.

Zhuang, X.Y., Wong, D.F.K. and Ng, T.K. (2014) 'Cultural values of traditionality/modernity: Their differential impacts on marital conflict and marital satisfaction among female and male migrant workers in China', *Review of Research and Social Intervention*, no volume/issue provided.

Zhuoma, C. and Kong, X. 卓玛草, 孔祥利. (2016) *Migrant workers' income and social networks: A causal analysis based on tie strength and resource access*. Nongmingong shouru yu shehui guanxi wangluo——jiyu guanxi qiangdu yu ziyuan de yinguo xiaoying fenxi 农民工收入与社会关系网络——基于关系强度与资源的因果效应分析. *Jingji Jingwei 经济经纬*, 33(6), pp. 48–53. doi: 10.15931/j.cnki.1006-1096.2016.06.009.

Zou, S. (2023) 'Curating a scopic contact zone: short video, rural performativity, and the mediatization of socio-spatial order in China', *Television and New Media*, 24(4), pp. 452–470. doi:10.1177/15274764221128925.

cnnic (2021) *2020 National Report on Internet Usage Among Minors in China*, Central Committee of the Communist Youth League, Department for the Protection of the Rights and Interests of Youth.

cnr (2008) *Millions of Migrant Workers Stay Warm and Celebrate the New Year with Care in Wenzhou*, www.cnr.cn. Available at: http://zj.cnr.cn/gdlb/200802/t20080201_504694989.shtml.

de Haas, H. (2010) 'The internal dynamics of Migration Processes: A theoretical inquiry', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 36(10), pp. 1587–1617. doi:10.1080/1369183x.2010.489361.

deLisle, J., Goldstein, A. and Yang, G.(2016) 'Chapter 6 Microbloggers' Battle for Legal Justice in China', in *The Internet, social media, and a changing China*. Philadelphia, USA: University of Pennsylvania Press, pp. 129–149.

gov.cn (2021) 'Notice from the General Office of the Ministry of Education on Strengthening the Management of Mobile Phones for Primary and Secondary School Students 'Document No. [2021] 3 of the General Office of Basic Education, General Office of the Ministry of Education. Available at: https://www.gov.cn/zhengce/zhengceku/2021-02/01/content_5584120.htm (Accessed: August 21, 2024).

kf.qq.com (2024) <https://kf.qq.com/product/weixinmp.html>, Tencent holdings ltd.

stats.gov (2023) 2022 'Investigation Report on Rural-Urban Migrant Workers, National Bureau of Statistics'. Available at: http://www.stats.gov.cn/sj/zxfb/202304/t20230427_1939124.html (Accessed: 15 July 2023).

van Deursen, A. and van Dijk, J. (2011) 'Internet skills and the digital divide', *New Media & Society*, 13(6), pp. 893–911. doi: 10.1177/1461444810386774.

van Deursen, A.J.A.M. and van Dijk, J.A.G.M. (2009) 'Using the internet: Skill related problems in users' online behavior', *Interacting with Computers*, 21(5–6), pp. 393–402. doi: 10.1016/j.intcom.2009.06.005.

Østergaard-Nielsen, E. (2003) 'The Politics of Migrants' transnational political practices', *International Migration Review*, 37(3), pp. 760–786. doi:10.1111/j.1747-7379.2003.tb00157.x.

Appendix 1:Participant Demographic Table

Participant	Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Hometown	Marriage Status	Educational Status
Participant 1	Qiu	Male	45	Guizhou	married	middle school
Participant 2	Xiu	Female	44	Guizhou	married	Illiterate/semi-literate
Participant 3	Ling	Female	33	Guizhou	divorced	middle school
Participant 4	Tao	Male	50	Anhui	single	primary school
Participant 5	Wei	Male	35	Fujian	married	middle school
Participant 6	Lan	Female	33	Hunan	married	middle school
Participant 7	Yan	Female	49	Guizhou	married	Illiterate/semi-literate
Participant 8	Chun	Female	35	Jiangxi	married	middle school
Participant 9	Yong	Male	29	Guizhou	married	middle school
Participant 10	Ming	Male	25	Xichuan	married	Junior College (Online Education)
Participant 11	Rou	Female	27	Jiangxi	married	middle school
Participant 12	Pei	Female	45	Guizhou	married	Illiterate/semi-literate
Participant 13	Xue	Female	26	Guizhou	married	middle school
Participant 14	Jian	Male	28	Guizhou	married	middle school
Participant 15	Mei	Female	59	Zhejiang	married	primary school
Participant 16	Yu	Female	34	Yunan	married	middle school
Participant 17	Cheng	Male	39	Guizhou	married	middle school
Participant 18	Bo	Male	40	Jiangxi	married	middle school
Participant 19	Kai	Male	52	Guizhou	married	primary school
Participant 20	Zhi	Male	41	Hunan	married	high school
Participant 21	Rui	Female	34	Guizhou	married	middle school
Participant 22	Xi	Female	41	Guizhou	married	middle school

Participant 23	Ning	Male	50	Guizhou	married	primary school
Participant 24	Fen	Female	39	Guizhou	married	middle school
Participant 25	Na	Female	48	Zhejiang	married	middle school
Participant 26	Rong	Female	32	Guizhou	married	high school
Participant 27	Ru	Female	37	Guizhou	married	middle school
Participant 28	Hong	Male	39	Hubei	married	middle school
Participant 29	Yue	Male	24	Shandong	single	middle school
Participant 30	Le	Female	30	Guizhou	married	middle school
Participant 31	Qi	Female	36	Yunnan	married	middle school
Participant 32	Shu	Female	34	Guizhou	married	middle school
Participant 33	Ping	Female	35	Guizhou	married	middle school
Participant 34	Hui	Female	32	Yunnan	married	middle school
Participant 35	Xian	Female	38	Fujian	married	middle school
Participant 36	An	Male	46	Jiangxi	married	middle school
Participant 37	Lian	Female	29	Chongqing	married	middle school
Participant 38	Jun	Male	33	Jiangxi	married	middle school
Participant 39	Gao	Male	42	Guizhou	married	middle school
Participant 40	Yi	Male	48	Jiangxi	married	middle school
Participant 41	Ze	Male	37	Guizhou	married	middle school

Appendix 2: Ethics Letter

Dear Bingchun Hu

Your research ethics application reference: 0799

Your research project: The role of social media in factory workers' rural-urban migration trajectories in China.

I am pleased to inform you that the above research ethics application has been reviewed by the Faculty Research Ethics Committee (FREC) for Business, Environment, Social Sciences which has issued a favourable ethical opinion based on the application submitted. **Please retain this email in your project file as it is evidence of the Committee's approval.**

Matters you should note:

- Ethics approval does not infer you have the right of access to any member of staff or student or documents and the premises of the University of Leeds. Nor does it imply any right of access to the premises of any other organisation, including clinical areas. The Committee takes no responsibility for you gaining access to staff, students and/or premises prior to, during or following your research activities.
- It is your responsibility to comply with all relevant Health and Safety, Data Protection and other legal and professional requirements and guidelines.
- You are expected to keep a record of all your approved documentation, as well as documents such as sample consent forms, risk assessments and other documents relating to the research project. This should be kept in your project file.
- Audits are undertaken on approved ethics applications. Your project could be chosen for such an audit. You should therefore ensure your project files are kept up to date and readily available for audit purposes. You will be given a two week notice period if your project is selected.
- Please always include the above research ethics application reference in any correspondence with the Research Ethics team.

If you need to make **amendments** to the original research project as submitted you are expected to seek approval from the Committee before taking any further action. Changes could include (but are not limited to) the project end date, project design or recruitment methodology, or study documentation. Please go to <https://secretariat.leeds.ac.uk/research-ethics/how-to-apply-for-research-ethics-amendment/> or contact the Research Ethics team for further information at [Research Ethics](#)

I hope your research project goes well.

Best wishes,

Ms Taylor Haworth, Research Ethics Administrator, Secretariat

On behalf of Dr Judith Hanks, Chair, BESS+ FREC

Appendix 3 :Participant Consent Form

Consent to take part in *The role of social media in factory workers' rural-urban migration trajectories in China*

Add your initials next to the statement if you agree

<p>I confirm that I have read and understand the Participant Consent Form dated 4th September 2023 explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.</p>	
<p>I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the research until 1st May 2024 and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline.</p> <p>I understand that I can ask the researcher to delete all or part of the interview materials I provide at any time before the data results are written up and published (the deadline for withdrawal is 1st, May 2024) .</p> <p>I have been informed that the contact information for the researcher is as follows: email: ssbhu@leeds.ac.uk and telephone number: 15858768485. I can contact the researcher directly to make any requests, including for refusal and withdrawal. The researcher will not disclose information surrounding refusal or withdrawal to others.</p>	
<p>I understand that members of the research team may have access to my responses. research team will have access to responses. We appreciate that you will use pseudonyms when the data is transcribed</p> <p>I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and I will not be identified or identifiable in the report or reports that result from the research.</p>	
<p>I understand that the data collected from me may be stored and used in relevant future research in an anonymised form , and I understand that the data I provide may be archived</p>	
<p>I understand that relevant sections of the data collected during the study, may be looked at by individuals from the University of Leeds or from regulatory authorities where it is relevant to my taking part in this research.</p>	
<p>I agree to take part in the above research project and will inform the lead researcher should my contact details change.</p>	
<p>I understand that the research data will be used for academic purposes, including dissertation writing and journal publication.</p>	

--	--

Name of participant	
Participant's signature	
Date	
Name of researcher	
Signature	
Date*	

*To be signed and dated in the presence of the participant.

Once this has been signed by all parties the participant should receive a copy of the signed and dated participant consent form, the letter/ pre-written script/ information sheet and any other written information provided to the participants. A copy of the signed and dated consent form should be kept with the project's main documents which must be kept in a secure location.

Appendix 4: Participant Information Sheet

The [Privacy Notice for Research](#) should be provided alongside the Participant Information Sheet. Further guidance is available at <http://ris.leeds.ac.uk/involvingresearchparticipants> and at <https://dataprotection.leeds.ac.uk/information-for-researchers>.

The researcher invites you to take part in the research project *The role of social media in factory workers' rural-urban migration trajectories in China*. You can obtain detailed information about the research from this Information Sheet. Please read it carefully before considering whether to take part in the study. If anything is unclear after reading the information sheet, please feel free to contact the researcher at any time.

What is the purpose of the project?

The research investigates the experiences of factory workers using social media in rural-urban migration trajectories and tries to analyse the underlying mechanisms of how rural-urban migrant workers engage in sending places and receiving places at the same time .

Why have I been chosen?

You are a factory worker from a rural hometown who moved to a city who may have experience of using social media.

How did the researcher find me?

-The researcher will place the information sheet on the bulletin board of the research site factory one month in advance. There is contact information for the researcher in the information sheet, potential participants who are interested in participating can contact the researcher after seeing the information sheet. When potential participants contact the researcher, the researcher will know the contact information of potential participants through channels such as phone call records and email addresses.

Do I have to take part in the research project?

No. The study follows the principle of voluntary participation, and you can refuse the study or withdraw at any time. The researcher will not inform others of your decision not to participate in the study.

What do I have to do?/ What will happen to me if I take part?

Participants: You will be interviewed for approximately one hour. The interview time and location will be determined based on your convenience. You will be asked about basic information, experiences using social media, and your thoughts on social media.

Gatekeepers: You will be requested to provide the provide permission to collect data at the factory (research site).

What are the potential benefits and risks?

You have will have the opportunity to think about labour rights and understand labour rights deeper. The main potential risk is that discussing unpleasant experiences may give rise to uncomfortable emotions. Besides, there may be awkward emotions when discussing some social media usage activities. However, you can skip the relevant interview if you wish.

Use, dissemination and storage of research data

The researcher will use –software to analyse the interview materials you provide. The analysis results will be used for dissertation, academic journals, and academic conferences.

Data will be stored for ten years. Interview materials will be protected according to the data storage policy of the University of Leeds. The researcher will use the university's cloud storage (OneDrive) to store data.

What will happen to my personal information?

The researcher will remove any information that may identify you from the interview materials before publishing the data analysis results. You will be anonymous.

What will happen to the results of the research project?

The analysis results will be used to write a doctoral dissertation at the University of Leeds , publish journal articles and attend conferences. You can obtain a copy of the published results. All the contact information that I collect about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential and will stored separately from the research data. I will take steps wherever possible to anonymise the research data so that you will not be identified in any reports or publications’.

Can I request the researcher delete all or part of the data?

Data analysis is expected to commence on May 1, 2024. Data cannot be deleted once the analysis begins. If there is any information that needs to be withdrawn or clarified, please inform the researcher before May 1, 2024.

What type of information will be sought from me and why is the collection of this information relevant for achieving the research project’s objectives?

Please explain here.

The interview outline for you will cover the interview section of demographic information, as well as interview sections of "Social media, migration drivers and aspects", "Social media, social interaction and social integration", "Social media, empowerment in employment care" and "Social media and family left behind." The

interview materials you provide can be used as data for research analysis, which is very important for answering research questions

Who is organising/ funding the research?

University of Leeds provides a funding of £ 666 per year

Will I be recorded, and how will the recorded media be used?

You will be recorded during the interview. Before recording, the researcher will inform you of the start of the recording. No other use will be made of them without your written permission, and no one outside the project will be allowed access to the original recordings.

How do I contact the researcher?

Researcher's name: Hu Bingchun

Email address: ssbhu@leeds.ac.uk

Phone number: 15858768485

Address: University of Leeds, Woodhouse Lane, Leeds, LS2 9JT

Project title	Document type	Version #	Date
The role of social media in factory workers' rural-urban migration trajectories in China.	consent form	3	

Appendix 5: Gatekeeper Consent Form

Consent to take part in *The role of social media in factory workers' rural-urban migration trajectories in China*

Add your initials next to the statement if you agree

I confirm that I have read and understand the Gatekeeper Consent Form dated 4 th September 2023 explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.	
I have learnt about this study through written information sheets or oral explanation. I am willing to provide assistance.	
I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw 1st May___2024 and without there being any negative consequences. I have been informed that the contact information for the researcher is as follows: email: ssbhu@leeds.ac.uk and telephone number: 15858768485. I can contact the researcher directly to make any requests, including for refusal and withdrawal. The researcher will not disclose information surrounding refusal or withdrawal to others.	
I understand that the research data will be used for academic purposes, including dissertation writing and journal publication.	
I understand that I will be anonymous, and personal information will be protected.	
I understand that when the research is completed, the data will be uploaded to the Research Data Leeds Repository for data sharing.	
I understand that if I assist in interviews, I need to respect the participants' right to anonymity and privacy.	

Name of gatekeeper	
Gatekeeper's signature	
Date	
Name of researcher	
Signature	
Date*	

*To be signed and dated in the presence of the gatekeeper.

Once this has been signed by all parties the gatekeeper should receive a copy of the signed and dated gatekeeper consent form, the letter/ pre-written script/ information sheet and any other written information provided to the gatekeeper . A copy of the signed and dated consent form should be kept with the project's main documents which must be kept in a secure location.

Appendix 6: Semi-structured interview outline for rural-urban migrant participants

“I” represents the researcher, and “You” represents the participant.

The following questions are mainly intended to open up discussions on the research project. The researcher will adjust interview questions in real time during the interview based on the focus of each participant's responses, in order to better know their expressions and viewpoints. The following interview questions will not necessarily all be covered in every participant's interview.

The bold fonts are for helping the researcher quickly understand what needs to be asked during interviews. It does not mean bold fonts will be stressed when interviewing.

Introductory speech:

Hello, I am a doctoral student at the University of Leeds, and I am researching Chinese rural-urban migrant workers using social media. I am interested in your experience and views on social media usage. The interview outline I have brought is not complete and does not require answers one by one. I look forward to hearing from you about the social media usage topics that you think are important. Our interview will be recorded.

Part A: Demographic Information

-May I ask how old you are?

--Where are you from? (Accurate to the county level?)

--What is your marital status?

--What is your education level?

--What technical and professional skills do you possess

--Who in your family has accompanied you to Wenzhou and who still lives in your hometown?

Part B: Social media, migration drivers and aspirations

--What is your **motivation for migrating** to Wenzhou to work?

--How did you find this job in Wenzhou?

-Has your **motivation** to work in Wenzhou been **influenced by social media**, Such as wechat, Douyin?(If the participant provides a positive answer, further ask what social media has had an impact and what content has had the greatest impact on the participant)

-What **career aspirations** did you have for the migration ? For example, high income, opportunities to manage people?

-What were your **life aspirations** for the upcoming immigration? For example, building a house in your hometown, finding romantic love, enjoying modern life, and so on?

--Were your **aspirations** for life in Wenzhou **influenced by social media** ? (If the participant provides a positive answer, further ask about what social media has had an impact and what content has had the greatest impact on the participant)

Part C : Social media, social interaction and social integration

-Did you **contact fellow villagers** in Wenzhou through social media ? (further probe as to how contacted and what social media platforms the participant used)

Part D: Social media and empowerment in employment

--Have you ever followed any social accounts that have paid **attention to labour rights protection** (if so, what platform, specific account information, and have you interacted with them)?

-Have you ever **posted or discussed** any social content about **labour rights**, such as concerning long working hours, or work being too tiring?(If the participant provides a positive answer, let participants to give a few examples)

--Have you ever requested the factory improve **factory workers' conditions**, such as salary increases, through social media? Why you do so?(If the participant provides a positive answer, further ask if this was an individual behaviour or a collective behaviour, and what was the detailed experience)

-Have you **obtained knowledge** about **labour rights** through social media? Why you do so? (If the participant provides a positive answer, ask for details of the experience)

-What is your insurance status such as medical insurance, pension, unemployment insurance, and work injury insurance? (If the participant is insured, ask for more detailed information, such as the type of insurance, insurance premiums, insurance participation location, insurance period etc.)

-What is your main motivation for not participating/participating in insurance coverage?

-Has the insurance status changed during the migration trajectory? (inspire the participant to see if changing the residence and work has had an impact on the insurance status)

-Do you have insurance reimbursement experience? (If yes, ask for more detailed information, such as insurance reimbursement ratio and reimbursement location).

-Does social media have an impact on insurance awareness and practice?(For example, learning insurance knowledge through social media)

Part E: Social media and family left behind

-Who in your family came to work with you, and who stayed in your hometown? (Ask for the reasons behind these decisions)

--**How often** do you **contact family members** in your hometown and do you use social media to contact them? (If the participant provides a positive answer, further ask what social media are commonly used)

--Which **social media communication methods** do you prefer when communicating with your family, such as voice contact, video contact, text contact, and comments on social media platforms? Why?