

ORGANIZATIONAL DISSENT AND WORKPLACE FREEDOM OF SPEECH: A  
qualitative study of young professional intra-urban migrant workers in Shanghai

Cheng Zeng

Master's Thesis

Intercultural Communication

Department of Communication

13 June 2014

University of Jyväskylä

## University of Jyväskylä

Faculty: Faculty of Humanities	Department: Department of Communication
Author: Cheng Zeng	
Title: Organizational dissent and workplace freedom of speech: A qualitative study of young professional intra-urban migrant workers in Shanghai.	
Subject: Intercultural Communication	Level: Master's Thesis
Month and year: May 2014	Number of pages: 79
<p>Abstract:</p> <p>Chinese economy reform triggered the largest domestic labor migration in human history. These 150 million migrant workers are treated as second-rate citizens in urban cities because of the discriminatory household registration system: Hukou. Previous studies have predominantly focused on blue-collar migrants while the professional workers, the potential permanent city dwellers, received little attention. This study attempts to fill this gap by exploring the perception of workplace freedom and preference of dissent strategy among professional migrant workers in Shanghai. Eight young and well-educated migrants participated in this study through semi-structured online interviews. This study not only tested organizational dissent and workplace freedom of speech in a new cultural setting but also employed a qualitative method with the aim to exploring the complexity of dissent event.</p> <p>The results of this study revealed the traditional Confucianism norms and values are significant in shaping migrant worker's organizational dissent expression and perception of workplace freedom of speech. Furthermore, this study uncovered both local dialect and hukou system are responsible for the social segregation between migrants and local citizens. The outcomes of this study suggest organizations should take the national culture into consideration in order to facilitate authentic democratic climate in workplaces. Moreover, further hukou reform is urged to improve migrant workers' living condition in urban cities in China.</p>	
Keywords: Organizational Dissent, Workplace Freedom of Speech, Intra-urban Migrants, China	
Depository: University of Jyväskylä Department of Communication	
Additional information	

## Table of Contents

1 INTRODUCTION .....	4
1.1 Background of the study .....	4
1.2 Structure of the study .....	7
2 ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIORS .....	8
2.1 Organizational dissent .....	8
2.2 Workplace freedom of speech .....	12
2.3 Relationship between organizational dissent and workplace freedom of speech .....	13
3 INTRA-URBAN MIGRATION IN CHINA .....	15
3.1 The overall situation of Intra-urban migrants in China .....	15
3.2 HuKou: Household registration system in China .....	16
3.3 Shanghai: The largest destination of intra-urban migration .....	19
3.4 Chinese organizational culture .....	20
4 METHODOLOGY .....	24
4.1 Nature of the study .....	24
4.2 Participants .....	25
4.3 Instrument of data collection and interview questions .....	28
4.4 Data analysis .....	29
5 RESULTS .....	32
5.1 Factors in perception of workplace freedom of speech .....	32
5.2 Factors determining dissent behaviors .....	38
5.3 Perceived differences from urban citizens .....	43
6. DICUSSION .....	49
7. CONCLUSION .....	57
8. EVALUATION OF THE STUDY .....	59
9. DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES .....	61
REFERENCES .....	62

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the study

The Chinese economy started to pick up rapidly since the open-door policy was adopted in 1978. The economic reform triggered the largest labor migration in history from agricultural rural areas to urban cities (Roberts, 2002). There are currently 150 million migrant workers among the total population of 1.34 billion in China (Ngok, 2012). Migrant workers are needed for economic growth, but they are not welcomed by the locals and normally are marginalized in urban cities (Li, 2002). Their rights to education, medical insurance, subsidized housing, and food are constrained by Hukou (household registration system in China) because they do not possess urban citizenship (Chris King-Chi, 2010; Tang, 2000). In addition, they are frequently victims in the workplace. For example, labor dispute cases increased almost 12 times from 1994 to 2003 in China (State Statistics Bureau, 2005). The arbitration procedure is time consuming and complicated, which discourages employees to carry on (Chris King-Chi, 2010).

An emerging body of research has shown academic interest towards Chinese intra-country migrant workers due to their enormous economic and social impact (Wong, Chang & He, 2007). Most of these studies focused on public policies and public administration (Ngok, 2012). The feminist tradition of labor studies in the West has an essential influence on China as well. Consequently, the target of the researches is usually young migrant female workers in foreign-invested factories (Lee 2007). These workers typically have demanding jobs, which locals reject with the intention to gain more money (Tan, 2000). They have been predominately chosen as the study group when researching on intra-urban migrants' issues. However, the young professional migrant workers who contribute greatly to the development of urban cities received little attention from scholars. They are typically young, skillful, well-

educated and more likely to stay in major cities for the long term. This study is attempting to fill this void.

Research has shown both organization dissent and workplace freedom of speech significantly predict employees' job satisfaction (Garner, 2009; Gorden & Infante, 1991). Thus, with the ultimate aim to explore migrant workers' job satisfaction in urban cities, this study attempts to employ the theories of organizational dissent and workplace freedom of speech to investigate how intra-urban migrants' disadvantaged social position affects the extent to which they perceive freedom of speech in workplaces and the way they voice dissent. Shanghai, the economic hub of China, was chosen for this study because it receives the largest number of intra immigrants in mainland China (Wong & Song, 2008).

Many studies have examined the relationship between organization dissent and the perception of workplace freedom of speech and a significant positive correlation was found between these two variables (Croucher, 2013; Garner, 2007; Kassing, 2000, 2006). In other words, employees are more likely to express dissent when they perceive a higher level of freedom of speech in workplaces. Predominantly these studies were conducted in the United States. Research completed in other culture settings has shown that US samples cannot be generalized to other countries (Croucher, Braziunaite, Homsey, Pillai, Saxena, Saldanha, ..., 2009; Gorden, Holmberg, & Heisey, 1994; Rothschild-Whitt, 1979). Scholars have called for more studies on organization dissent and workplace freedom of speech in non-US settings. Therefore, another aim of this paper to test these theories in China where local culture is considered vastly different from US culture.

Countries differ significantly culturally, which affects business operations (Hofstede 1980). Croucher, et al. (2009) reported Individualism/Collectivism and Power Distance, two of Hofstede's (2012) cultural dimensions, are associated with organizational dissent and workplace freedom of speech. Individualism/Collectivism indicates people from certain cultures are more self-oriented or in-group oriented. China has a score of 20 on the scale of

Individualism, which illustrates Chinese tend to act in the interests of the group rather than themselves. Power distance is defined as “the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally” (Hofstede, 1997 p. 28). China scores 80 on the Power Distance Index, which means Chinese society is more vertical. In organizations, the relationship between employees and supervisors is more likely to be polarized. Employees are expected to show more deference, respect, loyalty, and dutifulness to the management in a high power distance culture. Moreover, high power distance and collectivism predict weaker interpersonal relationships in organizations (Jing-Lih, Hackett & Jian, 2007). Thus, people tend to dissent less in collectivistic and hierarchical organizations. However, the organizational culture is different from national culture in many respects (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Thomas, 2008). In the context of China, the type of ownership has an enormous impact on organizational culture. Jianjub and Hean (2010) argued three organizational forms, which are stated-owned enterprises, foreign invested enterprises and privately-owned enterprises have fundamental differences on institutional advantages, governance culture, and organizational routines and competencies. In this study, the ownership form of the company is taken into consideration when analyzing employees’ organizational behaviors.

Another reason to conduct this study is because organizational dissent and workplace freedom of speech have not extensively been studied qualitatively. Given these opportunities, this paper employs interview research method and focuses on intra-urban migrants’ experiences and perceptions of their workplace freedom and job satisfaction in Shanghai. Specifically, this paper aims to examine how the intra-migrant identity influences their organizational behaviors.

## **1.2 Structure of the study**

This paper comprises five main parts: literature review, methodology, data analysis, discussion and conclusions. In the literature review part, the first two subchapters concern the theories of organizational dissent and workplace freedom of speech. The definitions are given and then the development of these two theories and their interrelationship are presented. In the third subchapter, the overall situation of intra-urban migrants in China is explained together with the Chinese household registration system: hukou. Furthermore, a subchapter is dedicated to Shanghai, the unique international city as well as the largest destination of intra-urban migration. In the end of the theoretical part, Chinese national culture is introduced, and then its impacts on business and organizational cultures are presented.

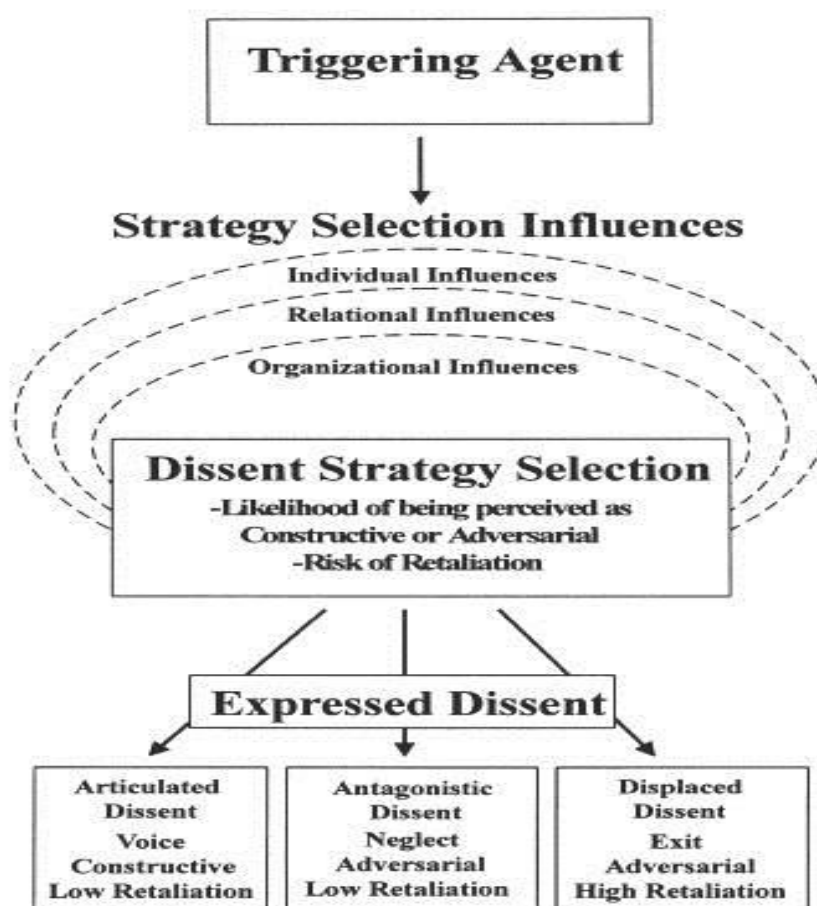
In the empirical part, the method employed in this study is presented and justified. Additionally, the research process and the profiles of participants are explained. Then, the research data is analyzed and interpreted, which leads to the discussion session. In addition to conclusions, the limitations of this paper are discussed and suggestions for future studies are proposed.

## 2 ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIORS

### 2.1 Organizational dissent

Organizational dissent is “expressing disagreement or contradictory opinions about organizational practices, policies, and operations” (Kassing, 1998, p. 183). The definition emphasizes three aspects: dissent must be expressed, dissent must involve the discussion of disagreement or contradictory opinions, and dissent must be about organizational practices, policies or operations. Expressing dissent is of great importance and consequences. Sprague and Ruud (1988) stated, “The expression of dissent in an organization can be conceptualized as a moral obligation, a political right, an enlightened management practice, a minor inconvenience, or a punishable violation of loyalty” (p. 190). Among all the organizational dissent studies, the employee dissent model developed by Kassing (1997, p.323) has received particularly large attention from scholars.

FIGURE 1: Kassing’s employee dissent model.





According to this model, as expressing dissent is often risky and complex, the dissent process only begins when employee's tolerance dissent has been exceeded by triggering agents. Triggering events, the catalysts for dissenting, can be caused by a variety of issues, such as: ethical issues, harm to self, organization or others, poor decision making and so forth. Dissenters usually voice their opinions with the hope to fulfill certain objectives (Garner, 2009a).

A certain strategy is needed when individuals decide to dissent. The selection process is influenced by individual, relational, and organizational factors. Individual influences refer to one's communication behaviors within the organizations and values and expectations adopted from outside of the workplaces. Relationship influence concerns the form and quality of relationship one has with others in the organization. At last, organizational influences are about individual's relationship with and perception of the respective organization. Sprague and Ruud (1988) reported employees are generally conscious of how dissent will be received in the organizations. Thus, employees tend to take the risk of retaliation into consideration when selecting dissent strategy.

According to the model, Kassing (1997) identified three types of dissent: articulated, antagonistic and displaced dissent were identified, which respectively refer to employees express dissent directly, aggressively and passively. Kassing replaced antagonistic dissent with latent dissent in his later work. In the new model, forms of dissent are classified based on the audience choices: articulated dissent expressed directly to the management, latent dissent expressed to other colleagues, and displaced dissent expressed to people who have no direct connection with the organization management (Kassing, 1997, 2000).

Numerous individual, relational, and organizational factors, which predict organizational dissent have been studied by scholars such as organizational culture and organizational climate (Kassing & McDowell, 2008), argumentativeness (Croucher et al.

2009; Kassing & Avtgis, 1999), employee burnout (Avtgis, Thomas-Maddox, Taylor, & Patterson, 2007), perceived workplace freedom (Garner, 2009, 2012; Graham, 1986; Kassing, 2006), and work engagement and intention to leave (Kassing, Piemonte, Goman, & Mitchell, 2012).

Scholars uncovered that the perception of organizational climate has a huge impact on how employees dissent (Graham, 1986; Hegstrom, 1990; Kassing, 1998, 2000a). Employees monitor the feedback of organizational responses to dissenters and understand within the organizations whether dissent is welcomed, neglected or retaliated (Graham, 1986; Kassing, 2000a). Kassing and McDowell (2008) suggested employees express less latent and displaced dissent when they perceive a higher level of fairness in organizations

Argumentativeness is defined as “a generally stable trait which predisposes the individual in communication situations to advocate positions on controversial issues and to attack verbally the positions, which other people take on these issues” (Infante & Rancer, 1982, p.72). Kassing and Avtgis (1999) tested the relationship between argumentativeness and organizational dissent and found a positive correlation between argumentativeness and upward dissent. Croucher et al. (2009) further confirmed this relationship in their study of organizational dissent and argumentativeness comparing Indians and Americans. They reported a significant positive correlation between argumentativeness and upward dissent. A positive however not statistically significant relationship was found between argumentativeness and latent and displaced dissent.

Avtgis et al. (2007) reported employees who experience three burnout syndromes: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and feelings of failure rarely express articulated dissent and avoid using latent dissent strategy as well. Additionally, employees who suffer from burnout syndromes are more likely to perceive organizations negatively. In the study of work engagement, which is the opposite of employee burnout, Kassing et al. (2012) found

upward dissent positively correlates with work engagement, whereas latent dissent negatively correlates with work engagement.

Employees are more likely to express articulated dissent when they are loyal and satisfied (Kassing, 1998), when they hold higher levels of organizational-based self-esteem (Payne, 2007), when they perceive higher workplace freedom of speech (Kassing, 2000), when they are in management positions (Kassing & Armstrong, 2001; Kassing & Avtgis, 1999), and when they perceive quality personal relationship with management and when they are more involved in decision makings in organizations (Kassing & McDowell, 2008). On the other hand, employees tend to address latent dissent when they hold poor quality relationships with their supervisors (Kassing, 2000b), and when they perceive a tightened workplace freedom of speech (Kassing, 2000a). Employees who express displaced dissent are typically young with little work experience and holding low positions in organizations (Kassing & DiCioccio, 2004). In general, employee satisfaction and commitment are negatively correlated with latent and displaced dissent. In addition, Kassing (2006, 2008) found a positive relationship between job tenure and frequency of dissent. This might be contributed to the fact that employees who have longer tenures are more stable in the organizations and understand better the organizational climate and culture.

Due to the importance dissent to the organization and individual's job satisfaction (Garner 2009), organization dissent has been considerably studied by numerous scholars over the last 20 years (Kassing, 2011). However, among these studies, few take place in non-US settings. (Croucher, 2013; Croucher et al., 2012; Kassing & Avtgs, 1999) Scholars have found out that US people, in US, are more likely to dissent and perceive higher workplace freedom of speech compared to non-US samples (Croucher, Braziunaite, Homsey, Pillai, Saxena, Saldanha, Joshi, Jafri, Choudhary, Bose, & Agarwal, 2009; Croucher et al., 2012; Gorden, Holmberg, & Heisey, 1994; Kang, Berger & Shin, 2012; Kassing & Avtgis, 1999). Croucher et al. (2009) revealed Americans choose to dissent more to their colleagues than

Indians. Kang et al. (2012) in their study found significant differences in dissent selections between Korean and American public relation practitioners; Koreans favor risky tactics such as sabotage and leaking information outside on unethical management issues. The study conducted in Sweden by Gorden et al. (1994) suggested unlike Americans, Swedes in organizations prefer to avoid conflict, which may alter their dissent behaviors. Thus, the results generated from studies outside the US cannot be applied to other cultural settings. In order to answer the call, this study takes place in a non-US setting, China.

## **2.2 Workplace freedom of speech**

Workplace freedom of speech refers to the degree of openness of an organization and the extent to which employees are free from retaliation for expressing critical opinions of organizational policies or practices (Gorden & Infante, 1991). The exclusion of retaliation part has been emphasized in this definition in order to differentiate from the word “openness”. Freedom of speech carries a societal constitutional guarantee: “Citizens should not suffer retaliation or disenfranchisement for speech” ( Gorden & Infante, 1991, p. 146).

Workplace freedom of speech is correlated positively with organizational commitment and job satisfaction (Gorden & Infante, 1991). A democratic work climate brings many benefits to the organizations. Employees tend to become more productive, satisfied and committed to work life when their freedom of speech is encouraged (Gorden & Infante, 1987). In addition to that, employees perceive a better work relationship with their supervisors and colleagues (Gorden & Infante, 1991). Kassing (2006) found the profitability of the organization correlates positively with workplace freedom of speech. A more democratic organizational climate encourages different voices, which helps avoid groupthink and thus make better decisions (Janus, 1982).

Kassing (2000b) argued democratic discourse is more important than democratic structures. In other words, a free climate creates more workplace freedom than simply having

official places or hours for expressing opinions in the organization. Scholars have discovered positive relationships between workplace freedom of speech and argumentativeness (Gorden & Infante, 1991) as well as organizational dissent (Kassing, 2000b). In the higher levels of workplace freedom of speech organizations, employees are likely to use more argumentative messages and express less aggression verbally (Gorden & Infante, 1991).

As organizational dissent and the perception of workplace freedom of speech have drawn interest from scholars for many years, the next sub-chapter aims to explore the relationship between organizational dissent and workplace freedom of speech.

### **2.3 Relationship between organizational dissent and workplace freedom of speech**

Employees' perceptions of workplace freedom of speech have a significant impact on their choices about expressing dissent (Kassing 2000b). Higher levels of workplace freedom of speech encourage individuals to express dissent upwards. On the other hand, more latent dissent is found in lower levels of workplace freedom of speech (Kassing 2006). Garner (2007) believed employees tend to use dissent message of humor, upward appeal, and coalitions when they feel more constrained in workplaces.

In addition to merely studying the relationship between organizational dissent and workplace freedom of speech, scholars have associated both elements with other constructs like, employee burnout (Avtgis, Thomas-Maddox, Taylor, & Patterson, 2007), argumentativeness (Kassing & Avtgis, 1999), organizational identification (Croucher, Braziunaite, & Oommen, 2012), and self-esteem (Payne, 2007). The relationship between dissent and workplace freedom of speech has been examined predominately in the US. It is essential to understand dissent and workplace freedom of speech in a global context by testing them elsewhere.

Organizational dissent and workplace freedom of speech can be affected by the economic situation (Pitt-Catsouphes Matz-Costa, & Besen, 2009). Workers who feel less

secure about their jobs may choose to express less dissent, thus perceive a lower level of workplace freedom of speech in organizations. In this sense, intra-urban immigrants in China may fall into this category. The major motivation for urban internal migration is economics (Shi et al., 2013). Intra-urban migrants, whose priority in big cities is financial and material gaining, are under higher financial pressure than the locals. Moreover, few of these employees are members of any work unions (Chris King-Chi, 2010), which further jeopardizes their job security. Consequently, intra-urban migrant workers in China may choose to dissent less and therefore perceive a more stifled environment of workplace freedom, which degrades their job satisfaction and commitment.

### 3 INTRA-URBAN MIGRATION IN CHINA

#### 3.1 The overall situation of Intra-urban migrants in China

After adopting economic reform policies in 1979, the Chinese economy has been growing rapidly. Cheap labor was one of the keys contributing to this economic miracle (Roberts 2002). More than 10 million rural migrants move to major urban cities every year to fill the labor shortages (Wong & Song 2008). Now China has a population of 150 million migrants working and living in urban cities (Ngok, 2012). These migrants are mainly from western and central inlands of China and their destinations are the capital area and eastern coastal cities, such as Shanghai, Hangzhou, and Guangdong (Zhang & Song 2003). Although migrant workers are needed for economic modernization in major cities, they are not welcomed by the locals and normally have a marginalized life (Li, 2002; Wong et al., 2007). They are more likely to become the victims of China's economic downturns. For example, the global financial crisis from 2008-2009, hindered China's export business severely, causing 23 million rural migrant workers to lose their jobs (Chan, 2010).

Xiaobo et al. (2012) defined "rural-urban migrants" as residents originally from rural areas moving to urban cities with the hope to obtain better employment and living standards. They are typically young people who are more skillful and educated than others from their hometowns (Wong et al., 2007). However compared to their urban counterparts, migrants are less educated, and have limited skills and lower safety consciousness (Li & Zhou, 2009).

Wong and Song (2008) found the most important motivations for migration are money making, fulfilling one's aspirations, and creating a better environment for family. However, they are in a very disadvantaged position in the job market because they are less

experienced and educated than their urban counterparts and also the victims of pre-market discrimination from employers (Démurger et al., 2009). In reality, they mostly have demanding jobs, which locals reject, receive low level wage, live in unsanitary shared dormitories and separate from families (Tan, 2000). Over the last two decades, there was barely any significant increase in their salaries despite their contribution to China's economic growth (Chan, 2010). Moreover, almost 44% of migrants do not have a binding contract, thus they frequently face delays in payment, receive lower wage than the minimum level which the state required and work in hazardous environment without proper protection (Wong et al., 2007). Migrant workers are generally confronting five issues from their workplaces, which are lack of consideration and understanding from supervisors, overtime work without payment, no chance or time to earn additional money, difficult to get promoted, and being treated unfairly (Wong & Lee, 2003). Even many foreign-invested organizations in China are not willing to make any major changes (Tan, 2000).

Discrimination against migrants is largely seen in urban cities. Migrants are perceived as poor, dirty, ignorant, violent, greedy, and irresponsible. On the other hand, migrants' mistrust towards locals has been constantly increasing over the years. Therefore, social division is rather evident in cities between migrant workers and local urban residents (Wen & Guixin, 2009). One factor that contributes significantly to the social segregation is Chinese household registration system which is discussed in the next chapter.

### **3.2 HuKou: Household registration system in China**

Unlike other countries, China has a household registration system called hukou, which creates internal segregation not only geographically but also socially, economically and politically (Bao, Bodvarsson, Hou & Zhao, 2011; Chan 2010). This internal passport system was launched first in 1958 and each Chinese citizen has to register in one and only one residence place (Bao et al. 2011). Citizens inherit their status from their mothers either as



agricultural (rural) or non-agricultural (urban) and it cannot be transferred between cities (Wang & Moffatt, 2008). Official permissions are needed from the public security bureau for any change in residences (Bao et al. 2011). Before 1978, Hukou system strictly controlled intra-urban migration (Zhang & Treiman, 2013). After adopting the open-door and free market economy policies, Hukou restriction was loosened; peasants were allowed to enter cities and purchase from free markets from the 1980s (Mackenzie, 2002). Over the last three decades, in order to meet the shortage for labor, a large number of people have moved to urban cities while retaining their rural Hukou status, which resulted in a huge increase of rural Hukou status holding children living in cities (Zhang & Treiman, 2013).

The locally registered citizens have the accesses to public school, medical services, subsidized housing and food, and unemployment and retirement benefits (Chris King-Chi, 2010; Tang, 2000; Zhang & Treiman, 2013). According to the Hukou system, children whose mothers are not urban citizens are denied free public education (Mackenzie, 2002). Migrant children have to pay higher school fees than the locals. Xinhua News Agency (2004) reported that in order to save money, many migrant parents have to send their kids to sub-standard schools that lack qualified teachers or standard teaching materials. Consequently, almost 10% of migrant children drop out school every year. In addition to that, there were approximately 7% of the total migrant parents who have never sent their kids to school (Wong et al., 2007). Migrants not only are banned from all the benefits but also not able to acquire property, construct houses or purchase land in cities (Lei & Li 2012; Mackenzie, 2002).

Given the enormous benefits with the local urban citizenship, rural residents are motivated to achieve Hukou conversion. Previously, there were mainly three means to change into urban status: achieving tertiary education, joining the Chinese Communist Party or army, and through connections to family members who are urban citizens (Xiaogang & Treiman,

2004). However, meeting all the requirements and obtaining urban citizenship has proven extremely difficult for rural-urban migrants (Zhang & Treiman, 2013). Therefore, the Hukou system was criticized extensively as an unfair system that facilitated social division and intensified discrimination (Lei & Li 2012). Various reforms to the Hukou system were launched by the Chinese government in order to answer the criticism and encourage educated and wealthy migrants to stay in big cities (Farrer, 2010; Lei & Li 2012). Since the mid -1990s, governments have been granted the power to make decisions on migrant issues locally. For instance, migrants possessing stable jobs and homes were allowed to apply for urban citizenship in 20,000 towns and smaller cities in October 2001 (Mackenzie, 2002). Moreover, the ability to contribute economically has been considered as the key to obtain urban citizenship instead of the previous qualification requirements (Farrer, 2010).

Despite the good intention of these reforms, the efforts were not sufficiently shown. Among large cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou, those who achieved Hukou conversion are typically extremely rich, highly educated or having immediate family members in the cities. All three conditions are clearly impossible for normal migrants to fulfill. In general, restrictions for urban Hukou were loosened, however achieving urban citizenship continues to be challenging for the majority of migrant workers (Chan & Will, 2008)

Many other suggestions on intensive reforms were proposed, but the official response from the government was not in favor of them. As China has been positioning itself as "the world's factory" in its economic development strategy, then maintaining Hukou system is essential in order to keep Chinese labor cost continuous low (Chan & Will, 2008). Thus, it is not likely for China to abolish the Hukou system completely in the near future (Chan, 2010).

### **3.3 Shanghai: The largest destination of intra-urban migration**

Shanghai is a megacity located on the East coast of China with an area of 6340.5 square kilometers and a population of about 23.0 million (Shanghai Municipal Statistics Bureau, 2011). A large number of flows and stocks over the last three decades produced in China needed to be absorbed and diverted by an international mega sized hub (Wang et al., 2013). Shanghai became the best candidate due to its favorable location: it is the capital city of the Yangtze River Basin region where more than half of the whole China industrial and agricultural sources are produced (Rose & Tang, 2002). During 2000-2010, massive constructions consisted of water, land, and air transportation were completed, which enabled Shanghai to become an international port hub in the Asia-Pacific region (Wang et al., 2013). Along with China's success in economics, the Shanghai metropolis became one of the largest business centers not only in China, but also in the world for its rapidly growing population and economics (Rose& Tang, 2002; Tseng, 2011;). The internationalization of Shanghai further intensified especially after Shanghai hosted the 2010 World Exposition (Wang 2007). In the future, Shanghai aims to become a financial center, trade and logistic center, innovation-based manufacturing, and creative metropolis in the global context (Wang et al., 2013).

A massive working force was attracted to Shanghai due to the emerging business and job opportunities (Wang 2007). A dramatic change in population and population density in Shanghai has been witnessed since the establishment of New China in 1949. According to Shanghai Municipal Statistics Bureau (2013), the registered residents in Shanghai exceeded 14.2 million, whereas the unregistered floating population was around 9 million. Nowadays, the rapid increase in population density was mainly caused by the floating working population (Cui & Shi, 2012).

Shanghai as the largest destination of migrant workers in China is the ideal place for this study because all issues concerning migrants are manifested there. The temporary migrants in Shanghai predominantly live in urban villages or factory dormitories situated in the urban fringe, whereas locals stay mostly in the central part of the city (Liu, Dijst & Geertman, 2014). In 2009, Shanghai and Guangdong were the pioneers which launched a new round of Hukou reform to increase chances for migrants to become urban citizens. (Zhao & Courtney, 2010) A residential permit system was introduced, which holders of residential permit have accesses to many public services (Fan, 2009). However, as an international city, discriminatory policies against migrant workers still remain in Shanghai (Wen & Guixin, 2009). For example, certain occupations cannot be accessed at all by migrants, such as public security or services, sales departments in government owned stores, and public transportation cleaning services (Rouilleau-Berger & Shi, 2005).

### **3.4 Chinese organizational culture**

The key values shaping Chinese culture can be traced back 2,500 years ago (Chatterjee, 2001). The values associated with Confucianism such as, harmony, face, interpersonal connections (guanxi), and compassion are seen as the typical characteristics of Chinese traditional culture. They are mainly manifested in Hofstede's (1980) two cultural dimensions: high collectivism and high power distance (Leung, 2008). The shift from a planned economy to a free market economy has brought essential changes in politics and culture, which has fundamentally reformed the Chinese value system (Lu & Alon, 2004). The traditional values cannot be used solely to explain Chinese cultural behaviors because the contemporary Chinese especially involved in business and economic life are more influenced by industrial capitalism and new social ethos (Chatterjee, 2001).

Culture has an impact on organizational effectiveness (Denison & Mishra, 1995). A large body of research has shown national culture determines organizational culture and

shapes employees' behaviors (Webster & White, 2010). Since the late 1970s, organizational culture has received considerable attention from researchers (Gorden, 1984; Ouchi, 1981; Peters & Waterman, 1982; Pettigrew, 1979).

Organizational culture is defined as 'a pattern of basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered solid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems' (Schein, 1992, p. 12). External adaptation means the firm should adapt to external environment changes in order to increase performance. Internal integration focuses on increasing employees' loyalty and commitment to the organizations. Cameron & Freeman (1991) identified four types of organizational culture by adapting to competing values framework which are: clan culture, adhocracy culture, hierarchy culture and market culture. Clan culture emphasizes predominately on human resources, which is the most productive culture type. Adhocracy culture refers to a creative and flexible structure which allows organization to react faster to external changes. Market culture organization is customer-driven and has its strength in gaining resources from environment. The hierarchy culture is proven to be the least effective among these four types.

Using forms of ownership is a meaningful way to classify organizations in China (Peng & Heath, 1996). While various organization forms emerged during the economy transition in China, three basic forms have been identified which are state-owned enterprises, private owned enterprises, and foreign-invested enterprises (Jianjun & Hean, 2010). The state-owned enterprises were born in a planned economy are neither innovative nor customer oriented because government provides favorable resources, bank loans and even writes off debt in particular cases (Tsui, Bian, & Cheng, 2006). They continue to exist after the economic reform and still enjoy advantages and protections from the government (Ding et al., 2000; Jianjun & Hean, 2010). The privately owned firms have emerged enormously in

nearly all industries over the last three decades due to the economic reform. They have contributed to Chinese economy growth more than state-owned enterprises, therefore gaining more weight in political and economic policy-making procedures (Tsui et al., 2006). Foreign investment started to flow into China after the open door policy was adopted. By now China receives the largest amount of foreign investment among developing countries. (Jianjun & Hean, 2010). Many of these western firms, which have powerful multinational backgrounds, are tough competitors for domestic firms (Peng & Heath, 1996).

While a hierarchical structure with large power distance is perceived as one crucial characteristic of organizations in China (Wu & Wang, 2012), state-owned firms have a more vertical structure than other two types of firms (Xin et al., 2002). Moreover, foreign invested firms in China are likely to adopt the western structures in the organizations, which are more democratic than the other two forms. One objective of this paper is to uncover whether there are differences in dissent and perceived workplace freedom of speech among employees from different types of organizations.

The work relationship in Chinese organizations is distinctive and it is often seen by Chinese as the most important determinant in working lives (Lu & Alon, 2004). Chen, Tsui and Farh (2002) found it is more important for Chinese subordinates to be loyal to supervisors (the person) rather than the organizations (the system). Many employees feel they are obliged to be dedicated and faithful to their supervisors. Additionally, the leadership in Chinese organizational context has a unique meaning. The hierarchical relationship is influenced by factors such as age, education, title, thrift, moderation and so on (Chatterjee, 2001). The leaders in work organizations are worshiped and have strong personal power. They have the father figure and are expected to take control not only on work-related issues but also on personal issues. Few of them would consult their subordinates and involve them in important decision-making process (Martinsons & Westwood, 1997).

In sum, China has undergone huge socioeconomic changes over the last three decades, and the traditional values have been utterly challenged by the emerging industrial capitalism. This paper attempts to take the unique Chinese organizational culture into consideration while studying individual's organizational behaviors.

Having presented the overall situation of Chinese intra-urban migrants and their disadvantaged positions in the society, the following research questions are posed to explore young intra-urban professional migrants' preference of organizational dissent strategy and perception of workplace freedom of speech.

RQ1: What organizational dissent strategy do young professional intra-urban migrant workers prefer?

RQ2: What are the young professional intra-urban migrant workers' perceptions of their workplace freedom of speech?

Considering the close relationship between organizational dissent and perceived workplace freedom of speech, the next research question is put forth to investigate this relationship in a new culture setting.

RQ3: What is the relationship between organizational dissent and perceived workplace freedom of speech among Chinese young professional intra-urban migrants?

Given the fact China has a unique household registration system regarding intra-urban migrant issues, the last research question is asked with the aim of discovering the connection between Hukou status and the organizational behaviors of young intra-urban migrant workers.

RQ4: What is the relationship between Hukou status and young professional intra-urban migrant workers organizational behaviors?

## 4 METHODOLOGY

### 4.1 Nature of the study

Qualitative research methods deal with the meaning of things (Cochran & Dolan, 1984). Trochim (2006) stated conducting qualitative research is to become more familiar with the phenomenon you're interested in. As the main intention of this study was to understand how intra-urban migrants think about and interpret their organizational lives, a qualitative method appeared to be the best alternative. There is no existing literature specifically looking at migrant workers in organizational dissent and workplace freedom of speech. This study aims to examine this specific group instead of generalizing or searching for regular patterns beyond this scope. Additionally as stated before, scholars found there are numerous factors associated with organizational dissent and workplace freedom of speech. Thus, this study relies on qualitative methods with the hope of exploring the full richness and complexity of these elements (Cochran & Dolan, 1984).

Interviewing could be the most challenging and rewarding research method for collecting qualitative data (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2005). A semi-structured interview was chosen in this study for its free directing nature (Bernard, 1988). Questions and topics are designed to help interviewers generate valid research data, however researchers are free to decide to leave out or add new aspects to the interview if necessary. According to Merrigan and Huston (2009), questions asked in a semi-structured interview help produce a wealth of detailed information and serve as a guide to stimulate discussion. With more flexibility, it is more likely for interviewers to obtain information of personal insight and inner feelings.

The research is completed via the internet instead of the traditional face-to-face interview. Madge and O'Connor (2002) described that online research methods are particularly appropriate when the target study group is difficult to reach or the researching



topics are sensitive. Moreover, Denscombe (2010) asserted online research generates the same quality data as traditional methods. In this study, given the fact that there is a great physical distance between the target study group( Shanghai, China) and the researcher (Jyväskylä, Finland), using online interviews is the most effective and economical method.

The role of the researcher is rather complex and extremely essential to the quality of the interview. It is important to build trust, establish rapport, and share mutual respect with interviewees (Doody& Noonan, 2013).The fact that the author is also not a Shanghai local citizen and has the experience of being an “outsider” in another country may help bond with the respondents. Moreover, as this research is conducted remotely, interviewees may feel less constraint to share negative experiences. Many interviewees have provided examples of critical incidents in the current organizations, which are presented and discussed in the data analysis chapter.

## **4.2 Participants**

This study is based on a total of eight respondents, which participated in semi-structured online interviews. Four interviewees were female, and four were male. A convenient snowball sampling was used in this research. The criterion for inclusion in this study was that respondents are well educated intra-urban workers who are 25-30 years old possessing a middle-income job without local citizenship in Shanghai. The eight interviewees are randomly coded from R1 to R8. Five respondents were working in foreign-invested firms while the rest were employed in private-owned companies. Even working in foreign-invested firms, the direct managers and colleagues of these five respondents were all Chinese. This is also taken into account in the analysis part.

The definition of intra-urban migrant often refers to people with rural origins working in cities. R4 in this study does not fit in this category perfectly for he is from Beijing and has Beijing local citizenship. Nonetheless, R4 is included in this study because he confronts the

same issues as other outsiders. Additionally, by comparing him with other interviewees and analyzing their similarities and differences provides more in-depth sight on the importance of urban citizenship.

It was the researcher's initial intention to interview all participants separately. In the end, six interviews were conducted individually with the exception of R5 and R6 who were interviewed together. Given the circumstance that R5 and R6 are close friends working in the same organization and required to join the interview together, the researcher agreed to conduct a group interview for them. Being flexible in order to better interact with participants is crucial in interviewing (Merrigan & Huston, 2009).

Unlike the other participants, the working life in Shanghai for R3 and R8 are much shorter. However, by no means is Shanghai alien to them. R3 has completed her bachelor degree in Shanghai and R8 has frequently visited her parents in Shanghai in her previous life. Therefore, all participants in this study are fairly acquainted with Shanghai and do not feel as newcomers to the city. The home origins of the participants are diverse. It appears in the table that R1, R5 and R6 are all from Hubei, however not the same cities. All interviewees have completed a higher education degree

TABLE 2: Description of the participants

	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8
Gender	Male	Male	Female	Male	Female	Female	Male	Female
Age	26	29	28	27	28	26	30	25
Tenure in the Current Company	3.5 years	3 years	6 months	3.5 years	3 years	3 years	4 years	1 year
Profession	Tendering Engineer	Mechanical Engineer	Designer	Process Engineer	Quality Assurer	Manufacturing Supervisor	Marketing Director	Financial Validator
Company Form	Foreign-invested	Foreign-invested	Foreign-invested	Foreign-invested	Private owned	Private owned	Private owned	Foreign-invested
Home Province	Hubei	Shanxi	Liaoning	Beijing	Hubei	Hubei	Zhejiang	Henan
Education	Bachelor	Master	Master	Bachelor	Bachelor	Bachelor	Bachelor	Master
Intention to Stay	Long term	Long term	Long term	No intention to stay	Short term yes, long term maybe	Short term yes, long term maybe	Long term	Long term

### **4.3 Instrument of data collection and interview questions**

The interviews questions were divided into four thematic sets: demographic, perception of workplace freedom of speech, dissent strategy preference, and perception of differences between migrant workers and urban citizens. The interview questions concerning organizational dissent and workplace freedom of speech were designed based on Kassing's (1998) Organizational Dissent Scale and Gorden and Infante (1991)'s Workplace Freedom of Speech Scale (with two additional items added by Kassing 2000b). All questions were first prepared in English, and then translated into Chinese.

The interviews started with an introduction briefly explaining the nature of the study, then followed by demographic questions, such as age, workplace and position, home town, tenure and time spent in Shanghai. Interviewees' intention to stay was also asked because it was considered as relevant to their organizational behaviors. Five participants expressed articulately their intention to stay in Shanghai for the long term while two had no long term plans yet, however, would stay in Shanghai for the near future. The outlier R4, in fact, was planning to leave Shanghai soon. The reason for leaving is discussed in the result chapter. The second part of the interview questions were mainly about participants' organizational behaviors. Kassing (1998)'s classification of dissent was explained beforehand, and then interviewees were encouraged to give examples and comments on each dissent strategy. In the end, interviewees were asked to describe how their statuses as migrant workers related to their professional and everyday lives in Shanghai.

The length of interviews varied from 20 to 50 minutes. All interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed, and translated by the researcher.

#### 4.4 Data analysis

Owen's (1984) thematic approach is used for identifying themes in this study. "Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting themes within data" (Braun & Clarke, 2006 p.79). Thematic analysis is regarded as the most fundamental method and has been widely used in qualitative studies (Boyatzis, 1998; Roulston, 2001).

Three criteria for uncovering themes identified by Owen (1984) are recurrence, repetition and forcefulness. Recurrence refers to the same theme emerging among different interviewees, even from the different wording. Repetition refers to key words and sentences frequently used by interviewees, which helps researchers understand the each individual's interpretation. Forcefulness refers to "vocal inflection, volume, or dramatic pauses" (p.275) in the speeches in order to stress certain points. Identifying recurrences allows researchers to discover the salient meanings from data, thus it is considered as the main criterion categorizing themes in this study. Nonetheless, several instances of repetition and forcefulness are noted and discussed as well.

This study followed six phases of conducting thematic analysis identified by Braun and Clarke (2006). In the first stage, the researcher is required to get acquainted with the entire data before engaging in analysis. At the same time, it is recommended to take notes and write down initial ideas. After familiarizing with the data, the second stage is to generate the initial codes in order to organize the data into meaningful groups. Afterwards, the researcher needs to collate all the codes and classify them into different themes. The next step is to examine the preliminary themes and refine them. The validity of each theme will be tested in this stage as well. Then in phase five, researcher needs to not only refine each individual theme further but also consider their interrelationship and how they are related to the whole

data set. After knowing what exactly the themes are and what they are not, then the final stage is to produce meaningful arguments in the final report.

Three major themes with subcategories are identified and presented in the table below:

Table 3: Identified thematic units

Theme 1 <b>Factors in perception of workplace freedom of speech</b>	Theme 2 <b>Factors determining dissent strategy</b>	Theme 3 <b>Perceived differences from urban citizens</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Leadership style of immediate leader</li> <li>❖ Official democratic channels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Quantity of interaction with constituencies</li> <li>❖ Job tenure</li> <li>❖ Perceived effectiveness of upward dissent</li> <li>❖ Pitfall: dissent bypassing the immediate leader</li> <li>❖ Filial piety: no dissent to family members</li> </ul>	<p>Professional life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Work competence</li> <li>❖ Local dialect</li> </ul> <hr/> <p>Everyday life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Benefits associated with Hukou</li> <li>❖ Social Division</li> </ul>

Theme 1 focuses on the factors affecting migrants' perception of their workplace freedom of speech. Theme 2 concerns the factors that influence participant's choice of dissent strategy. Moreover, some specific dissent behaviors, seen as inappropriate in the Chinese cultural context were identified by participants. The last theme deals with the migrants' perception of the differences from their local counterparts in terms of professional life and everyday life.

All the interviews are analyzed according to the themes above. The results are presented in the following chapter. Quotes are used when applicable.

## 5 RESULTS

### 5.1 Factors in perception of workplace freedom of speech

Participants in the study perceived different levels of workplace freedom of speech in their organizations. For example, R5 described a more democratic atmosphere while R6, working in the same company, felt more constrained to voice opinions. One major barrier is identified by the researcher in the analysis process, which is that participants may conceptualize workplace freedom of speech differently. For example, R3 expressed her interpretation of the term in the interview.

言论自由表现在地方呢，就是大家抱怨的比较多。就是，对公司的不满呢啊什么的，大家可能都会说嘛。然后，就因为，uh[pause]今天干活干的非常闹心也会在办公室里说，反正我也不管你怎样怎样的。就是这种感觉。

How is freedom of speech shown, it is that people complain more. That is, if people have something dissatisfied or so, they may talk about it. Then, because, uh [pause] I would speak out loud in the office if I had a bad working day, anyways, I don't care about how you ((the company)) will react. That's the feeling.

R3 linked workplace freedom of speech mostly to the degree of freedom to express opinions to other colleagues. She explained further her understanding by comparing the situations in the current organization and the previous company.

但到这家公司发现，每个人都很谨慎。就是说你想打听点儿什么事情，就会非常，非常难。因为我在原来那家公司，差不多我不问，我差不多一个月，两个月就知道差不多，摸清整个公司的薪资水平啊，然后什么，什么的[pause]公司给你的感觉就是你不能问，我是这样感觉的啊。

But when I came to this company and found out that everyone is behaving carefully. That is to say, if you want to inquire about something, it then becomes very, very difficult. Because in my previous company, I didn't have to ask, it took about one or two months for me to get almost all the information, like the whole salary level in the company and so on[pause] The feeling this company gives to you is that you cannot ask, that's how I feel.



Not all respondents expressed explicitly their definitions of workplace freedom of speech, however the researcher sensed from the interviews that they did not share the same understanding. This leads to another problem, which some responses seemed to be incoherent. For example, when asked about the workplace atmosphere in the current organization, R8 described it was fairly open. However, as the interview proceeded, she said she never expressed contradictory opinions to any audiences in the company and she had to be extremely careful when communicating with supervisors and colleagues. From an outsider's point of view, the researcher may think her workplace freedom of speech is much less than she perceived.

Although respondents had diverse interpretations of workplace freedom of speech which are different from the definition used in this study, their understandings were still largely related to the general working atmosphere. By analyzing each interview as a whole, the researcher was able to have a clear picture of the level of workplace freedom of speech in each respondent's organization.

With considering the barrier, two themes emerged with regards to the questions exploring workplace freedom of speech. The most recurrent theme is how the supervisor-subordinate relationship shapes respondents' perceptions of working climate. For example, R4 stated workplace freedom of speech depends largely on the direct supervisor. Similarly, R7 felt free in expressing opinions and he directly associated workplace freedom with his supervisor in his response:

我们公司很开放啊，好像没什么不能讲的吧。我们领导经常会来问我们的一些想法，都可以跟他说的。

Our company is very free, I guess there is nothing we cannot say. Our leader would very often ask our opinions, and we can all tell him.

Although the general organization atmosphere is free, employees could perceive a rather low level of workplace freedom of speech when their leaders have authoritarian leadership style.

An example can be seen that R1 perceived a lower level of workplace freedom of speech in the same organization when the leader was changed.

其中原因是因为领导过于强势. 这个东西完全要看人, 比如说之前的领导的话, 他在的话, 然后我们的言论自由就非常开放。现在换了一个, 不管是从技术角度, 还是从这个人安排啊, 都是以他为中心。

The reason is because ((our)) leader is way too strong. This thing ((workplace freedom of speech)) depends completely on individuals. For example, the previous leader, when he was here, our freedom of speech was very open. Now the leader has changed, no matter on the technical aspects or human resource aspects or other arrangements, he is always the center.

R6 and her leader are from the same province. She experienced a high level of workplace freedom of speech because her leader took good care of her in the workplace.

像我老板就是潜江的, 所以很照顾我。我们部门的话, 有三个湖北的, 都还挺照顾我的...

Like my boss is from QianJiang, so he takes good care of me. In my department, there are three people from Hubei, they all take care of me...

Some respondents mentioned workplace freedom of speech is linked to the type of ownership of the organization. R2 stated the foreign investment companies generally have liberal working climates.

像在外企的话, 你想说什么就说什么, 也没关系的

Like in foreign investment companies, you can say whatever you want. It does not matter.

R4, also working in a foreign investment company, agreed with the statement and asserted employees from state-owned firms have less freedom of speech.

也没有什么不敢讲的, 像外企跟国企比起来还是差很多。特别是在上海啊, 这种地方已经是很开放了。你就可以直接跟他/她说嘛。你跟他/她说, 如果他/她是个很开明的上司的话

There is nothing I don't dare to say, there is a big difference between foreign investment and state-owned companies. Especially in Shanghai, the place is already very open. You can directly take to him/her ((the leader)), just tell him/her, if he/she is a liberal leader.

Both R2 and R4 thought foreign investment companies are more liberal. However they did not further elaborate on this subject. Their statement is less convincing since both of them have only worked in the current organizations. They had no experiences working in other companies, let alone companies of other forms.

Another factor influencing workplace freedom of speech was the democratic structure of the organization. Companies with democratic structure have special departments or organize meetings in order to encourage employees to voice and share their opinions freely. Generally, employees tend to have higher levels of workplace freedom of speech in organizations with channels to express opinions. R3, experienced the least level of workplace freedom of speech among all participants, and was the only one working in a company that had no official channels to express opinions. Having a democratic structure in the organization is not sufficient. It is more important to create a free climate in workplaces because people may not express even in those meetings or venues when they feel constrained (Kassing 2000b). The other seven participants confirmed the existence of certain departments or meetings in their organizations handling employees' feedbacks or comments, however, none of them ever expressed their opinions through these channels. Many respondents remained suspicious about the function of these places or meetings. For example, R4 expressed his perception of the department dealing with feedback as follows:

其实设这个点，没设这个点，我觉得对于我们来说都差不多。因为你，相对来说，很少人去通过这个点去提意见。领导会开一些座谈会，让下边的员工去表达一下自己的意见，或是那些不满，或是那些需要改进的地方[*pause*]但其实这个作用没有你想象中的那么大，他只是想了解一下底下的人的心声。还有提供那个地点，有点像形象工程吧。

Actually there is a such place ((to voice opinions)), or not, I think it is more or less the same for us. Because you, relatively speaking, few people would voice opinions through this channel. The leader may organize some meetings which allow employees to express their opinions, or complains, or the things need to be improved [*pause*] but in fact the function is not as big

as u think, he only wants to know what these subordinates have in mind.  
And the available place ((to voice opinions)), is more of a show.

Similar to R4, R2 also did not favor the idea for speaking up at feedback meetings. His comments below however, attributed this to Chinese culture and education.

...我觉得言论自由也是有的。你可以随便说，但是对于中国人来说，私底下随便讨论。但正式开会的时候，也不是领导不让你说，而是说这个自我不敢表达，一直以来的教育让你不敢去说。

...I think there is workplace freedom of speech ((in my organization)). You can say whatever you want, but for Chinese, it is ok to talk in private. But in official meetings, it is not the leaders does not allow you to speak, it's just you, yourself do not dare to express, the education you have been receiving makes you not brave enough to speak.

As traditional Chinese collectivistic values are embedded in both school and family education, R2 most likely meant his organizational behaviors were shaped by the Chinese traditional culture. R2 thought the traditional Chinese values played an important role in expressing opinions in organizations. People from collectivistic cultures tend to act in the interests of the group, thus maintaining harmony and avoiding conflicts are of great importance (Hofstede, 1988). Furthermore, in Chinese organizations, it is crucial for employees to stay loyal to the company and supervisors (Chen et al., 2002). Therefore voicing opinions against the company in front of the crowd might be very provocative and inappropriate. R6 described a critical incident in her department of one employee sending letters to the top manager anonymously through the suggestion mailbox.

厂长信箱，还有人事部信箱，还有总经理信箱，但投的人很少，一投了之后就是大问题。总经理一定会很重视，但是自己本部门就一定会揪出这个人，然后做思想教育[pause] 然后叫他/她不要不再投。我们部门有人投，厂长在会上被骂的好惨。匿名的，后来没找出来。然后那个星期都在找那个人。厂长特别生气!

((We have separately)) suggestion mailboxes for factory director, and for human resource department, and for top manager. But few people used them, once you do, it is a big problem. The top manager will pay a lot of attention to it, then your own department will find this person out, then "educate" this person [pause] and ask him/her not do it again. Someone from our

department did it once; ((afterwards)) in the meeting our factory director was blamed so badly ((by the top manager)). It was done anonymously, and the person could not be identified. The following week was all about finding this person out. The factory director was furious!

The suggestion mailboxes in this case were supposed to serve as means for employees to voice their opinions freely and facilitate the communication between employees and the management. In reality, people remain suspicious and tend to be careful using these channels.

One interesting fact from R6's critical incident was that the factory director was blamed so badly by the top manager. R6 in the interview stressed the word "furious" to describe the extreme feeling factory director experienced at that point. This is probably because the top manager thought the factory director didn't do his job well, thus there were complaints coming directly from the bottom. In this sense, this troublemaker made the factory director lose face not only in front of his supervisor but also all other subordinates. Thus, he was "furious" and desperate to identify this dissenter. It is clearly of great consequence to bypass the direct supervisor and express opinions to a higher management. Many interviewees acknowledged their similar experiences when answering questions concerning organizational dissent. Thus it was considered as a subtheme and further discussed in the next section.

To address the first research question which aims to explore migrants' perceptions of workplace freedom of speech, respondents in this study acknowledged the leader-subordinate relationship plays an important role in their organizational lives. Moreover, respondents were greatly concerned about the effectiveness and safety issues of expressing opinions through the official channels in organizations.

## 5.2 Factors determining dissent behavior

Several individuals acknowledged the nature of work determined the amount of interaction with other constituencies in organizations, thus eventually influenced how they dissent. For example, when asked the preference of dissent strategy, R5 answered with latent dissent because her job as a quality assurer was to take care of customer complains, which involved little collaboration with the supervisor.

应该会是跟同事抱怨一下吧. 因为我们的工作性质的话, 就是跟客户打交道。然后 um[pause]很多事情的话其实不是跟主管有关的。就说, 大部分都是跟客户打交道, 经常有一些抱怨也是觉得这个客户很难搞啊, 然后会有一些抱怨.

I suppose I will complain to my co-workers. Because the nature of our work is to deal with customers, then, um [pause] many things actually do not concern the supervisor. That is to say, mostly we are working with customers, quite frequently we meet some tough customers, then we have some complains about them.

R8's main task was dealing with customers as well. However, she did not want to express opinions to either supervisors or colleagues.

一般我不会找同事去表达。因为我们是跟客户一起工作的, 所以跟同事或上司交流会比较小心一点。

Normally I will not express to my colleagues. Because we are working with customers, so I have to be careful when communicating with colleagues or supervisors.

R6 worked as the manufacturing supervisor which dealt mostly with blue collar workers in the company. One of her main tasks was to ensure job satisfaction of these workers in order to retain them for the long term. She also associated her preference of dissent strategy to her job. She stated:

我们是直接去找 boss. 像我们的工作, 就是关注离职率嘛。倾向于直接向上级表达.

We would go directly to our boss ((to dissent)). Like our job, is to take care of the demission rate, we tend to express directly to the management.

The effectiveness of expressing dissent has been taken into consideration when participants were making decisions. Gossett and Kilker (2006) asserted expressing articulated dissent is the most effective way for solving problems and creating changes. An example can be seen when R7 explained his dissent strategy:

也会对亲人和朋友说，也会跟同事之间交流类似的事情，比如一起去抽烟的时候，大家都会说一下。但是这都解决不了问题，找领导是最直接的办法。

I will talk to relatives or friends sometimes, I also will communicate with colleagues something like this ((contradictory opinions)), like we go smoking together, people all talk about it. But all these do not solve the problem, talking to your supervisor is the most direct way to solve the problem.

Similarly, R4 has the same idea that expressing opinions directly to the management is the most effective way to solve problems.

首先是先和同事先沟通，就是发牢骚嘛。然后你要想解决问题的话，你还是要去找领导...

Firstly I would talk to my colleagues, like complaining. Then if you want to solve problems, you still need to talk to your supervisor...

Employees are less likely to voice their opinions when they believe their efforts cannot bring any changes (Milliken, Morrison & Hewlin, 2003). R3 on the other hand, expressed she would only complain about work issues to the family or friends outside of the workplace. Comments below shows that she did not think it would make any difference to dissent upwards.

也不是不敢吧，就给我感觉是，说不说没有意思，那个[pause]改变不了那个情况吧。毕竟时间也短，真的是。说了也会是白说

It is not that I don't dare (to dissent), it just the feeling I have, it doesn't make sense to say it. That [pause] can't change the situation. After all I am new here, surely, It would be useless to say.

In addition to explaining her perception of the effectiveness of articulated dissent, R3 also mentioned her job tenure had an impact on her dissent strategy. Employees, spend longer time with organizations, tend to learn the specific organizational norms and thus know when and how to voice disagreement (Kassing & Armstrong, 2001). Kassing (2006) found both present job tenure and total work experiences correlate positively with upwards dissent. Among all interviewees, only R3 and R8 mentioned it explicitly. The reason could be that R3 and R8 had fairly short tenures in their organizations, therefore they were more sensitive in expressing dissent being newcomers. R8 explained as follows how she perceived upward dissent in her company:

他会经常不定期的来问问你对工作的看法，然后他也会 share 一些自己的一些想法。但你是如果要直接抱怨什么，你就只能，呵呵呵呵 (laugh)，坦白的讲，我还没那个胆子 (laugh)

He (the leader) will often, irregularly come to ask how you think about your work, and then he may share some of his own thoughts with you. But if you want to complain something directly, you can only, hehehehe (laugh).  
Frankly speaking, I don't have the guts yet (laugh).

In terms of expressing upward dissent, the term “dissent bypass the immediate leader” and the serious consequences associated have been repeated by many respondents. The behavior bypassing the immediate leader can be interpreted that the particular leader does not have the ability to solve the issue to be addressed. Moreover, in the eye of the higher manager, the immediate leader fails to manage his/her subordinates successfully. Thus, dissent bypassing the immediate leader is seen as a huge challenge to the leader’s authority and brings humiliation and face losing to the particular leader in the organization. In return, the vocalizing person is very likely to be punished, in explicit or implicit ways. In addition to the critical incident mentioned in the last section by R6, R1 shared his personal experience being retaliated after dissenting directly to the CEO:

我抱怨过一次，也不叫抱怨。我们对整个部门的发展，前景的话，不看好。我绕过了我们部门的部长，直接向我们公司的老总写了一封



邮件[pause]我还告诉这个老总应该怎么样，怎么样，怎样。当然他是非常好的。”这个问题我早就已经想到了，我会来跟你的部长来沟通这个事[pause]这个事之前他对我一直是笑脸，我就自我感觉这个事之后，他一老在找我的茬”

I complained once, actually it was not complaining. I just had a bad feeling about the whole development of our department. Then I bypassed the head of our department, directly wrote an email to the CEO [pause] I also told the CEO what should be done. Of course he was nice, “I have considered this already, and I will talk to the head of your department about it” [pause] before this, he ((the head of department)) was always smiling to me, after this happened, I feel that he has been picking on me.

R1 has obviously learnt his lesson from it. When asked how this incident has impacted on his behavior, he explained:

如果我以后有比较好的想法或意见的话，我会先跟我的那个内部的这个沟通一下，看他是个么想法，而不是直接去找他的上级领导。

If I have good thoughts or suggestions in the future, I will communicate this internally ((within the department)), to find out his ((the directly leader's)) opinions, but not directly to his supervisors.

R3 agreed that expressing opinions directly to higher hierarchies can be risky, however he suggested the function of the direct leader matters as well. He discussed his experience talking directly to a higher manager about his salary issues without consulting his direct leader:

我们领导跟别的领导不太一样，他不太管这个行政方面的事，他只管技术。然后，你越不越级他，他都不会在意。就说，他知道自己解决不了这个问题。

Our leader is different from others. He does not care about the administration stuff, he cares about the technology. Then, whether you bypass him or not, he would not care. That is to say, he knows he cannot solve such problems.

All participants mentioned that they had experience expressing displaced dissent. According to Kassing (1997), displaced dissent audiences are family members and friends outside of the workplace. However, the interviewees tended to make a clear distinction

between these two groups when choosing a dissent strategy, friends outside of workplace were preferred over family members.

跟家里人说的比较少，因为家里人不太懂你的工作性质。毕竟你人在外地嘛，总是报喜不报忧...

I rarely talk ((dissent)) to family members, because they do not much about your work. After all you are in a foreign place, you would always tell them good things and hide the unpleasant things...(R4)

我们都是报喜不报忧嘛[pause]就说很好啊，很好啊。对朋友，就会聊一下，今天工作上碰到什么不开心的事。

We only tell them good things and hide the unpleasant things, we will say [pause] it ((the job)) is good, it is good. To friends, you can always talk about the unpleasant things happened in work today. (R5)

From the above comments, the repetition of the term “报喜不报忧” meaning reporting only good things and hiding unpleasant things emerged as another theme in this study. The reason is that they did not want their family members worry about them. R2 did not use the same term, however expressed the same idea as follows:

跟朋友讲的比跟家人讲的比较多。因为，像我们这种，受过教育的，不愿意把这种坏情绪带给家里人

I would talk more to friends than family members. Because, people like us, who are educated, are not willing to bring the negative emotions to family members.

The majority of respondents were less willing to discuss about work issues with their family members. Due to the financial reasons, migrants in cities typically are separated from their families (Wong et al., 2007). Thus, most family members back home can hardly comprehend the urban working lives. As a result, R6 in this study expressed that she did not prefer to dissent to her family because they could not understand her problems.

不多，讲了他们也听不懂 (laugh)，讲了还要给他们解释啊

((Dissent to family members)) not much, they would not understand even if you tell them(laugh), once you tell them then you have to explain everything to them.

The second research question is to investigate migrant workers' preference of dissent strategies. In this section, the quantity of interaction with other constituencies, job tenure, and perceived effectiveness of upward dissent were the most recurrent factors which had impacts on participants' decisions of dissent strategy. In addition, the majority of participants acknowledged the risk of dissent bypassing the immediate leader. Finally, in terms of displaced dissent, migrant workers are more likely to choose their friends because they do not want to bother their families back home with negative emotions.

### 5.3 Perceived differences from urban citizens

In workplaces, the overwhelming majority of respondents voiced there is not much differences between migrants and workers. R1 explained that most enterprises are profit-oriented, thus the work competence of employees is more valued.

在[pause]上海，尤其是在外企 总体情况是还是说，还是看你水平有好多，看你赚好多钱[pause]因为企业主要是为了盈利，这是企业的宗旨。如果你不能给企业带了利润的话...

In [pause] Shanghai, especially in foreign-invested companies, In general, it depends on your own competence, how much money you can make [pause] The main goal of companies is to generate profit. That is the principle. If you cannot bring profit to company...

Another respondent not only acknowledged the importance of work competence but also considered migrant workers are more competent than the local counterparts in the same positions. In his point of view, migrant workers have to perform better in every aspect than the locals to get the same job.

他们可能就是说[pause]强势是强势，工作能力这方面，我感觉并不是这样子的。而且，对于[pause]同样一个职能的对吧，就是说，外地过来人的水平，肯定比上海本地的这个人，就是说，各方面，表现的都要好。

As for them (local Shanghaineses) [pause] they are indeed stronger, but in terms of work competence, I do not think so. And, for [pause] the same position, the migrant's competence is definitely higher than the local's, in every aspect, migrants perform better.

Generally, the organizational policies treat locals and migrants equally in workplaces. However, with the ability to use local dialect as “the secret language”, locals have more advantages in terms of communication in workplace. Shanghainese is a dialect of Wu Chinese, which is not mutually intelligible with Mandarin or other Chinese dialects (Tang & van Heuven, 2007). Thus, the majority of migrant workers in Shanghai are not able to understand the local dialect. In terms of the usage of Shanghainese in workplace, R4 described as follow:

应该有些优势，就是语言方面会有优势。就相对来说，因为管理层都是上海人，你给他汇报情况，有些是用普通话的嘛，但是私底下或者进入到相对比较，比较生活类话题的时候，他们就会切换用上海话交流了。

((Locals)) have some advantages, in terms of language. Relatively speaking, the management is basically all Shanghainese, when you report to him, normally you use Mandarin. But in private or talking about everyday life issues, they will switch to Shanghainese.

R7 reported the similar situation that the Shanghainese is used mainly in casual talks. R7 is from Zhejiang province where the local dialect also belongs to the Wu Chinese group. He could understand Shanghainese well, however locals never communicated with him in Shanghainese.

我是听得懂的。但好像从来没有人用上海话跟我交流过，都是用普通话的。

I can understand((Shanghainese)). But no one has communicated with me in Shanghainese though, always in Mandarin.

R8 expressed the managers would use Mandarin more frequently than her local co-workers. She became upset when she could not understand the dialect in the workplace. She also expressed her wish to master the dialect in the future.

坦白来讲，肯定会有，还是会有，尤其是当他们用上海话交流的时候，我也听的不是很懂。所以他们讲很快的话，我也不知道他们在讲什么。然后，uh [pause]这种感觉是非常的 upset。管理层都是比较注意的，他们平时讲话都不会用上海话，但是同事跟同事之间有的时候

都会用上海话说。他们可能也不是很刻意的，就是在讨论一个问题的时候，一开始普通话，后来说着，说着就变成上海话了。我肯定是希望也能听得懂的呀！

Honestly speaking, of course there is, there still is. Especially when they communicate in Shanghainese, I do not understand much. So when they speak really fast, I have no idea what they are talking about. Then, uh [pause] that feeling is very upset. The management level pays a lot of attention to this, managers do not use Shanghainese normally, but local colleagues will sometimes use Shanghainese. Maybe they do not mean to do it, but when they are discussing something, in the beginning it is Mandarin, then it becomes Shanghainese. I surely wish to be able to understand!

Aside from the communication advantage of locals, the government policies favor local citizens as well. As discussed before, local citizens receive more benefits than migrant workers from the government (Tang, 2000). All participants in this study were well acquainted with the local hukou policies. Since the latest hukou reform in 2009, a resident permit system was introduced in Shanghai (Zhao & Courtney, 2010). As a result, migrants are entitled to many benefits once they obtain the local residential permit. Several respondents felt the differences between locals and migrants were diminishing and they were optimistic for the future.

上海户口，它是看你 [pause]它是积分制嘛，连续工作上，交税6年或7年吧，你就可以有这个资格去申领这个上海户口。各方面表现这个，本地人跟外地人这个差别啊，这个差别越来越小，拿不拿户口也无所谓

Shanghai Hukou, it is looking at [pause] it is the scoring system. If you keep on working and paying taxes for six or seven years, then you are qualified to apply for Shanghai Hukou. In all aspects, the difference between migrants and locals is reducing, then it does not matter if you get local Hukou or not.

Although obtaining local citizenship is not as critical as before, the hukou status still creates housing and children schooling for migrants. R5 expressed her understanding as follows:

主要是租房子啊，其他的都差不多。uh [pause]（福利）可能还是要差一点。因为，如果我们办了居住证的话是一样的。如果是上海户口，那政府给他们的福利是不一样的。公司的话都是一样的，对外来入，本地人都一样[pause]就是上海市政府会对上海本地户口的，就

说，本地人会有优待。就医疗保险之类的。其实我觉得户口不是很重要，只是说会对子女上学会比较方便。如果不是为了下一代考虑的话，我觉得的户口这个东西对我来说，没有什么任何的意义

It is shown mainly in renting houses, other things are pretty much the same. Uh [pause] (the welfare) might be less (than the locals). For the company, everyone is treated the same no matter you are a migrant worker or local [pause] Shanghai government treats local Shanghainese better, like in terms of medical insurance and so on. Actually I do not think local hukou is that important, only it makes going to school easier for children. If it is not that I have to consider for the next generation for the future, I do not think hukou means anything to me.

Although the Shanghai government intended to reduce the differences between locals and migrants by introducing the resident permit policy, obtaining a resident permit is not always easy for migrants. A permanent address is needed in order to apply for a resident permit in Shanghai (Shanghai Police Office, 2011). That is, migrants need to either have a private house or rent a place and register in the local office. Purchasing real estate in Shanghai is clearly impossible for the majority of migrants. The more feasible way to have a permanent address is to rent a place and then register together with the landlord. However, the process of registration is quite complicated. R3 was one of the victims of the bureaucracy and she presented several real life problems as follows:

房东是不愿意帮你开的。因为你要以借住的形式的话，他要去备案，他要去交税的。而且税的比率还蛮高的。而且即使你出钱，他也不愿意。因为他要求房东给着你去某个地方，而且要工作日。然后还要 [pause]我们这个房东的话，年纪很大了。我这个房子的话，还是别人分租下来的。房东这边肯定行不通的嘛，只能是自己想办法了。我在想，找谁，找朋友或亲戚去弄这个东西。说实话就违规嘛，就有可能被发现。那被发现，就可能会有不良的信用记录。

The landlord is not willing to help you. Because if you are lodging there, then he has to file on record and pay taxes, and the tax rate is pretty high. Even though you are willing to pay the tax money yourself, he still does not want to. Because it requires the landlord to go with you to some place (the local office), and it has to be on working days. Moreover [pause] our landlord is very old. And my apartment was sublet by someone else. That is why you cannot rely on the landlord, you can only rely on yourself. I was thinking to find friends or relatives to help get it done. To be honest, it is

against the law, and then there is chance they will find out. If they find out, then that will be marked on my credit history.

The hukou system does not only make the settlement in cities difficult for migrant workers but also make it hard for them to leave. The benefits like pension and medical insurance cannot be transferred to another place (Dong 2009). In other words, workers who have been paying taxes to Shanghai government can only enjoy the benefits in Shanghai. R4, a Beijing citizen, contributed this as the main reason to his intention to leave Shanghai and go back to Beijing:

包括我每个月交的医疗保险，我是拿不走，我只能在上海用。我回北京，什么都没有了。所以不可能这样，就放弃自己家乡然后来这。这点也是当初我出来，大家劝我的一个主要原因吧

Every month I pay for the medical insurance, I cannot take it with me, I can only use it here in Shanghai. Once I go back to Beijing, I have nothing. So you cannot give up your home Hukou and live here. This was also the main reason everyone advised me ((not to leave Beijing)) when I decided to go to Shanghai.

Respondents in this study were asked their perception and interactions with locals. All respondents expressed they did not have many local friends. R3 explained her perception of the social division as follows:

我生活中接触的少。外来人[pause]不管你是从天南海北来的，都会认为自己为外来人，都能打成一片。但你可能跟上海人混不到一个圈子里去

I rarely interact with any((locals)). Migrant [pause] it does not matter where you are from, you will always think you are a migrant, and then easily you can become a harmonious whole. But probably you cannot enter the local Shanghainese group.

R6 in the previous section stated her leader and colleagues who were from the same province took good care of her in the workplace. This further confirms that migrants tend to form their own groups and interact less with locals.

This section presents results regarding research question four which aims to study the perceived differences between migrants and locals. In general, the gaps between two social groups are diminishing in Shanghai, especially when migrants get a residential permit. However, the complicated application process might be a major barrier. R3, a qualified candidate, had been working in Shanghai for more than six months, and still was not able to get a resident permit. Due to this, she was even considering to bypass the law and get “help” from others. Moreover, results suggest the local dialect, which is not understandable for most migrants, serves as a secret language among local Shanghainese in workplaces. Lastly, all participants expressed they rarely had local friends, which could be an evidence of the social division between migrants and locals.

To conclude, this chapter highlighted main factors influencing respondents’ organizational behaviors and their perceived differences from local citizens. The next chapter is dedicated to discussing these findings.



## 6. DISCUSSION

The first research question addressing perception of workplace freedom of speech uncovered themes related to leadership style and official democratic channels in workplaces. The majority of participants acknowledged the leader was the determining factor influencing their perception of workplace freedom of speech. One possible reason is that the power of leaders is overwhelmingly large in Chinese organizations and decisions of the leaders can overwrite organizational policies when in conflicts. It is hardly surprising that the management in China is mostly top-down with a wide distance between leaders and subordinates (Conte & Novello, 2008). Although authoritarian leadership style tends to produce a restrained group climate (Zhang, Tsui & Wang, 2011), it is largely accepted by Chinese employees (Jing & Jin-Nam, 2013). This is consistent with Hofstede (1997)'s description of power distance: members of organizations within a country with large power distance are likely to expect and accept unequally distributed power. Chinese culture is more relationship-oriented (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1997), and coordination in Chinese organization is mainly achieved in informal, relational and implicit ways (Martinsons & Westwood, 1997). Chen et al. (2002) reported Chinese employees' performance is more strongly linked with loyalty to supervisor than with organizational commitment. Many Chinese leaders classify employees into in-group or out-group members based on their loyalty to the leaders (Cheng, 1995). Therefore, the role of leader is the most influential factor in determining one's professional life. In terms of facilitating workplace freedom of speech, Chinese organizations need carefully take the working relationship between subordinates and supervisors into consideration.

The type of organization is essential in shaping the organizational culture (Peng & Heath, 1996). Two respondents from foreign-invested firms stated the working climate in foreign investment companies is more liberal. However, they failed to back up this argument

with further explanation. In this study, five respondents were from foreign investment companies while the other three were working in private-owned organizations. The ownership type seems to have little impact on employees' organizational behaviors. One possible explanation is that the working environment is dominated by Chinese culture regardless the ownership form. All respondents, even those working in foreign investment companies, described they interacted only with Chinese in workplaces. Thus, in this context, the original culture of the foreign investment companies has limited impact on employees.

The official channels for voicing opinions in organizations seem to be less significant. Furthermore, safety and effectiveness of using these channels are often questioned. NetEasy news (2005) reported a village committee in Fengtai district, Beijing has set suggestions boxes in order to welcome feedbacks and comments. However, a camera facing the suggestion boxes was established simultaneously. It was not surprising that all feedbacks were positive because people could not express critical opinions anonymously. The majority of respondents in this study regarded official channels in their organizations as more of a show. As workplace freedom of speech is strongly linked with organizational commitment and job satisfaction, organizations should by all means facilitate democratic climates in workplaces (Gorden & Infante, 1987). Kassing (2000) described "...dissent, then, becomes incorporated into the organizational fabric of what is acceptable, condoned, and even expected" (p. 390). In order to achieve that, organizations need to enhance the credibility and effectiveness of their democratic structures as well as ensuring dissenters are excluded from any type of retaliation.

Organizational dissent is a process where dissenters, managers, and colleagues co-construct (Garner, 2013). The results revealed the quantity of interaction with other constituencies may impact on dissenter's strategy. The nature of the job predetermines individual's interaction with other people in the organization, which ultimately affects

individual's dissent strategy. In this study, respondents whose main tasks did not involve the supervisors chose to dissent less upwards. On the other hand, one respondent who worked predominantly with her supervisor preferred upward dissent strategy than other alternatives.

In this study, two respondents who spent fairly shorter time in the current organizations stated they did not dare to express dissent in the organizations. One possible explanation provides that employees who stay longer in the organizations learn over time the organizational norms about dissent expressions (Kassing, 2006; Kassing & Armstrong, 2001). Kassing (2006) reported job tenure in present organization and total work experiences correlate positively with upwards dissent. The young migrant, generally have shorter working experiences than senior workers, are less likely to directly express articulated dissent. An alternative reason is that the Chinese culture values more ascription than achievement and age is a crucial element in ascription cultures (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1997). The young newcomers who are generally less experienced and have less previous achievement are perceived as less competent and constructive in the companies. Thus, they are not encouraged to express opinions and their expressed opinions are not appreciated in workplaces.

One particular dissent behavior was identified by many respondents which should be avoided under any circumstances: dissent bypass the immediate leader. In this context, the leader not only loses face in front of the subordinates but also is seen incompetent in the eyes of the higher managers. One Chinese proverb says: a person needs face like a tree needs bark (Ho, 1976). In Chinese culture, face refers to personal dignity, prestige, and status, thus is significant in social interactions (Cardon, 2006). Interestingly, Chinese face can be measured, altered and traded (Cardon & Scott, 2003). An individual's amount of face depends on the one's social status, thus people on the top of the pyramids possess more amount of face in Chinese organizations (Qiumin, & Lee, 2007). In the business context, the face is seen the most precious, however, fragile possession (Brunner & Wang, 1988). Many communication

strategies such as indirectness and praising are employed to maintain face and give face to others in social interactions. However, when one party violates the face conventions, the strategies of shaming and retribution are likely to be used by the counter party. This may explain the employee who voices dissent bypassing the immediate leader is very likely to experience retaliation because the immediate leader wants to restore the lost face by punishing him/her, if not explicitly, then in implicit ways.

The majority of respondents were less willing to discuss about work issues with their family members. Due to the financial reasons, migrants in cities typically are separated from their families (Wong et al., 2007). It is not surprising that most of the family members are not acquainted with the professional life in urban cities. Moreover, Jiaming and Xun (2010) reported the existence of significant value differences across generations in China. All participants in this study were born in 1980s and thus are more influenced by the modern values. Their parents, on the other hand, were mainly born in 1960s, two decades before China adopted the economy reform policies. The old generation grew up in the planned economy possess more collectivistic and traditional values. One respondent explained she did not talk to her family members about work related issues because they would not understand. The fact that the family is not familiar with the urban working life and the value differences might be communication barriers between young migrants and their elder generation family members.

An alternative reason migrant workers choose not to dissent to their family members is they do not want make the family worry. This behavior could be driven by the Chinese traditional value: filial piety. Confucianism is seen the most influential culture traditions in China throughout all times, and filial piety is one of the most fundamental pillars of Confucianism (Qin, 2013). Filial piety refers to children should repay the sacrifices which their parents have made for them (Bryant& Lim, 2013). In addition to provide merely

physical and financial support, filial responsibility requires young generations to treat the elderly with respect and gratitude (Cheung, Kwan & Ng, 2006). In this study, when asked about dissent to family members, many respondents stated they would report only what is good while concealing what is unpleasant to their families. Since the family is far away from the working place and hardly understands the working life in cities, it will only cause anxiety if migrants discuss negative things with their families. To make family members worry is obviously contradictory to filial piety norms. Thus, the majority of migrants choose to report only positive things of their lives to family members and discuss the negative feelings rather to other audiences. As Kassing (1997) defined the audiences of displaced dissent are family members and friends outside out the workplace. One implication of this study suggests further classification of displaced dissent is needed because Chinese employees may choose to express vastly different to these two groups.

In workplaces, the professional migrant workers expressed the organizations tend to treat migrants and locals equally. The work competence and the contribution to the company are valued the most in profit-oriented organizations. Locals, nonetheless, have slight communication advantages since they share the local dialect which is not mutually intelligible with Mandarin and other Chinese dialects (Tang & van Heuven, 2007). According to the majority of respondents, the use of dialect in workplaces mainly took place in informal settings. Carnavale, Fainer & Meltzer (1990) found newly employed graduates regard informal discussions as the most important type of communication in fostering rapport and building work relations. Thus, young migrant workers in this study, not able to participate in small talks in local dialect, are likely to have weaker work relations with local workers. Sandig and Selting (1997) asserted accent and dialect represent individual's geographical membership and social class aspiration. The R7 in the study, whose home dialect is similar to Shanghainese, has never communicated in Shanghainese with locals. The possible reason is

that locals still see him as an outsider and refuse to speak Shanghainese to him even though he could understand. This might explain some migrants who have spent years in Shanghai and are able to understand Shanghainese are still regarded as outsiders. Wang, Cui, Cui, Wei, Harada, Minamoto & ... Ueda (2010) reported the non-native dialect serves as an attribution to the identity of outsider in Shanghai. In this context, the Shanghainese dialect is likely to be used as a tool for locals separate themselves from migrants. In workplaces, the segregation between locals and migrants may potentially hinder the performance of organizations, which should be taken into consideration by policy makers.

In China, Shanghai is one of the pioneers in reducing the differences between locals and migrants (Zhao & Courtney, 2010). The new round of reform in 2009, the fourth adjustment since 1994, introduced the residential permit system which entitled migrants many social benefits which were once only accessible for locals (Fan, 2009). The young professional workers in this study are all qualified candidates to apply for the residential permit because of their high education background and professions. However qualified migrants may have difficulties obtaining the residential permit due to the complicated application process. Thus, a less bureaucratic procedure should be made by the government in order to ensure the rightful benefits of citizens are met.

The hukou system is not only the main barrier for migrants' settlement in cities but also makes it costly for migrants to move to other destinations because of the fragmented and poor portable social insurance programs (Li, 2008). Many social insurance policies are implemented locally, thus are extremely difficult to transfer. According to Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security of the People's Republic of China(2012), the amount of migrants who achieved transferring medical insurance from the urban cities to rural origins from 2010-2012 are respectively 120 000, 50,000 and 897 000. Although the number has been picking up gradually, it is yet extremely insignificant comparing to the total 150 million

floating population in China. Nielsen, et. al. (2005) reported the main factor Chinese migrant workers are reluctant in participating in urban social insurance schemes is the fear not being able to collect the benefits if they move back home or to other places. In addition, the contribution rates and entitlements vary regionally. Migrants frequently pay high level contributions in urban cities and collect low level benefits back in rural origins (Dong 2009).

Young professional migrants recruited in this study are well educated and highly skilled, which account for merely a small proportion of the whole floating population in China. The majority of migrants are hopeless to obtain urban citizenship. As the urbanization pressures continue increasing in China, it becomes both an economic and political necessity to intensify hukou reform in order to promote labor mobility and bridge the gaps between migrants and locals (Yingyan, 2010). Fan (2009) pointed out all hukou reforms are meaningless unless they break completely the link between residency and social security. In the future, China needs to ultimately abolish the system of 'cities with invisible walls' and seek for a more sustainable and balanced growth model (Melander & Pelikanova, 2013).

In conclusion, the study contributed to literature on organizational dissent and workplace freedom of speech in several ways. First, this study has tested organizational dissent and workplace freedom of speech in a different cultural setting. A few factors identified by previous studies conducted in US such as, job tenure and subordinate-supervisor relationship also had a significant effect on Chinese employee's organizational behaviors. However, the job tenure and subordinate-supervisor relationship could be more important to Chinese employees in organizations because Chinese culture is more ascription and relationship oriented. Moreover, a few unique dissent behaviors of Chinese were found in this study which could be distinctive from other cultures. For example, under the influence of deep-rooted Confucian values, Chinese employees tend to avoid dissenting directly to a higher manager or family members. Thus, this study suggests further classification is needed

in addition to Kassing's (1997) three categories of dissent audiences in order to understand better the dissent behaviors of Chinese employee. Last, the Chinese cultural and economic background has huge impacts on employees' organizational behaviors.

Little is known how dissent and workplace freedom of speech vary across nations since respective studies were predominantly conducted in US. As increasing globalization continues, it is crucial to understand organizational dissent and workplace freedom of speech in international settings. Few previous studies on organizational dissent and workplace freedom of speech have considered any external factors. This study reveals the Chinese social, economic and political factors are essential in shaping individual's organizational behaviors. Parsons (1968) stated intercultural research needs to pay attention to the context which includes economic, political, educational and religious factors. Thus, future studies on organizational dissent and workplace freedom of speech not only need to consider culture as a variable but also take the context-specific factors into account.



## 7. CONCLUSION

The aim of the study is to investigate the perception of workplace freedom and preference of dissent strategy among young professional migrant workers in Shanghai. First, this study fills the gap which organizational dissent and workplace freedom of speech were little studied qualitatively. The event of dissent is co-constructed and influenced by previous experiences and present expectations (Garner, 2013). Future researchers should employ more qualitative methods in order to explore the complexity of dissent.

The result also revealed that traditional Chinese values are important in shaping employee's organizational dissent expression and perception of workplace freedom of speech. Since China has gone through dramatic social and economic changes over the past decades, the traditional values have been challenged greatly by the industrial capitalism (Lu & Alon, 2004). Cheng and Schweitzer (1996) asserted in today's China, only parts of traditional values remain. Nonetheless, Jin, Yu and Kang (2013) found the Chinese traditional norms and values still predominantly guide individual's social behaviors. In the study, the impacts Chinese culture have on individual's organizational behaviors are four fold. First, supervisor-subordinate relationship in Chinese organizations is perceived as the most important determinant in one's working life. Second, maintaining face is extremely crucial since face is the most precious and vulnerable asset in business life. Third, migrant workers tend to report only good news while hiding the negative emotions to their family members back home due to filial piety. Last, it is possible that job tenure is more important in influencing organization behaviors in Chinese companies due to the fact that Chinese culture is more ascription-oriented.

Another finding of the study is employees choose not to speak up through the official channels when they feel constrained. This is consistent with Kassing's (2000) statement that democratic discourse is more important than democratic structure in fostering workplace freedom of speech. Additionally, the quantity of interaction with other constituencies in the organization is found to have impacts on employees' dissent strategies. In addition, this study suggests the future

This study provided many insights into the social division between migrant workers and local Shanghainese in terms of language and social benefits. The local dialect serves a communication wall between locals and migrants. Hukou system has segregated people from rural and urban areas geographically, socially, and economically for more than half a century (Bao et al., 2011). Unlike the low-skilled migrants, young professional migrant workers in Shanghai are entitled to many social benefits due to the recent hukou reform which is in favor to educated and skillful labor force. Nevertheless, the real equality between migrants and local citizens has been hardly reached. Further hukou reforms are needed in order to retain the elite migrant work force in urban cities.

## 8. EVALUATION OF THE STUDY

Given the fact organizational dissent and workplace freedom of speech has never been studied in China, the qualitative method best addresses the exploratory nature of this study. There are eight participants in this study. The small number of participants could limit the scope of the results. In addition, another major limitation of this study is the lengths of interviews are considerably short. In this case, the researcher might not be able to probe the issues in-depth. Conducting longer or follow-up interviews in this study may help generate more reliable and nuanced data. Moreover, in many interviews, it was evident that respondents' understandings of workplace freedom of speech diverged from the definition employed. The expression "freedom of speech" has a special meaning in China since the censorship is common on Chinese web and media (Rauhala, 2013). In this study, participants tend to perceive a higher level of workplace freedom of speech because they are used to a censored environment and thus may consider a constrained environment as "normal". This may limit the result of this study as well. Another limitation of this study could be the gender issues are not addressed. Xin (1998) found evident gender segregation among rural migrants. Magnani and Zhu (2012) stated the male migrants in China overrepresented in high income industries and occupations within each industry. Thus, future researches on Chinese domestic migrants should employ gender as a variable since the inequality in gender is rather obvious in Chinese society.

The majority of interviews exceeded 40 minutes whereas the interview with R7 was only 20 minutes. Using webcam was requested by the researcher because being able to analyze the facial expressions and the body language helps the researcher better control the flow of interviews. R7 was the only one who rejected to show his face during the interview for no particular reason, which demonstrated his distrust towards the researcher. This surely

hinders the quality and credibility of his answers. In the future, more interviews than planned should be carried out, so that data of poor quality can be eliminated.

In general, most of the interviews went smoothly and the outcomes were fruitful. The researcher shared his experience being a member of minority in a foreign country in the interviews. This helped foster rapport with participants who confronted similar social problems such as difficulties obtaining residential permit, little interaction with locals and so on. Most of the participants comfortably voiced their opinions, shared even negative instances and stated voluntarily they can be revisited if needed. Moreover, many of them are very interested in this study and requested the researcher to inform them the results once the study is completed.

## 9. DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

This study explored the relationship between migrant workers and local citizens. A limitation could be that only migrant workers were recruited in this study. The future research should take local citizen's perception into consideration in exploring the social division between these two groups. In Shanghai, the most frequent difficulties migrants confront are housing and children schooling. While in this study, many respondents expressed the local citizenship was not extremely significant to them. A possible reason is the respondents in this study are single and without kids. Future researchers can extend this study by recruiting married migrant couples with kids and investigating the meaning local citizenship is to them.

Due to the fact that jobs in state-owned firms are controlled and migrants usually are restrained to apply for these jobs (Cui, Tani, & Nahm, 2012), the number of migrants working in state-owned firms is rather small. Thus, this study fails to include any migrants working in state-owned enterprises. As hukou reform continues, migrants, especially with education and skills in the future are more likely to be employed in state-owned enterprises. The organization culture of state-owned enterprises is distinctive from private and foreign investment companies (Xin et al., 2002). Future research should also pay attention to state-owned enterprises in order to understand fully the Chinese organizational culture. In addition, respondents, working in foreign investment companies, had little interaction with foreigners in the workplaces in this study. Future study should examine employees who interact directly with foreign constituencies in order to understand to what extent the original organization culture shapes Chinese employees' organizational behaviors. Lastly, hukou policies and culture vary largely across regions in China (Littrell, Alon, & Chan, 2012). Another direction for future research is to extend the knowledge of migrants' situations by studying migrants in other parts of China.

## REFERENCES

- An, X., Deng, H., Wang, Y., & Chao, L. (2013). An integrated model for effective knowledge management in Chinese organizations. *Program: Electronic Library & Information Systems*, 47, 320-336.
- Avtgis, T. A., Thomas-Maddox, C., Taylor, E., & Patterson, B. R. (2007). The influence of employee burnout on the expression of organizational dissent. *Communication Research Reports*, 24, 97-102.
- Bao, S., Bodvarsson, Ö. B., Hou, J. W., & Zhao, Y. (2011). The Regulation of migration in a transition economy: China's hukou system. *Contemporary Economic Policy*, 29, 564-579.
- Bernard, H. R. (1988). *Research methods in cultural anthropology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishing.
- Bond, M.H. & Hwang, K (1993) *The social psychology of the Chinese people* M.H. Bond (Ed.), *The psychology of the Chinese people*, Oxford University Press, Oxford (1993), pp. 211–266.
- Boyatzis, R. E. (1998). *Transforming qualitative information: thematic analysis and code development*. Sage.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3, 77-101.
- Brinkmann, S., & Kvale, S. (2005). Confronting the ethics of qualitative research. *Journal of Constructivist Psychology*, 18, 157-181.

- Bryant, L., & Lim, S. (2013). Australian-Chinese families caring for elderly relatives. *Ageing and Society*, 33, 1401-1421.
- Byung-giu, S., & Sangkuk, L. (2013). Rural migration in Korea: a transition to the modern era. *History Of The Family*, 18, 422-433.
- Cameron, K. S., and Freeman, S.J. (1991). Culture congruence, strength, and type: Relationship to effectiveness. In Woodman, R.W., and Pasmore, W.A. (Eds) *Research in Organizational Change and Development* (pp.23-58). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.
- Cardon, P. W. (2006). Reacting to face loss in Chinese business culture: An interview report. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 69, 439-443.
- Cardon, P. W., & Scott, J. (2003). Chinese business face: Communication behaviors and teaching approaches. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 66, 9-22.
- Carnavale, A., Gainer P., & Meltzer, A. (1990). Workplace basics: The essential skills employers want. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Chan, K., & Will, B. (2008). Is China Abolishing the Hukou System?. *China Quarterly*, 195, 582-606.
- Chan, K. (2010). The Household registration system and migrant labor in China: Notes on a debate. *Population & Development Review*, 36, 357-364.
- Chang, K., & Lu, L. (2009). The influence of occupation on stressors and work behaviors. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 20, 591-605.

- Chatterjee, S. (2001). Relevance of traditional value frameworks in contemporary Chinese work organizations: Implications for managerial transition. *Journal of Human Values*, 7, 21-32.
- Chen, Z. X., Tsui, A. S. & Farh, J. L. (2002). Loyalty to supervisor vs. Organizational commitment: Relationships to employee performance in China. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 75, 339–356.
- Cheng, B. S. (1995). Chinese CEO's employee categorization and managerial behavior. Paper presented at the Symposium on Indigenous Behavior in Effective Management and Organizations, sponsored by the International Association of Applied Psychology, Guangzhou, China.
- Cheng, H., & Schweitzer, J. C. (1996). Cultural values reflected in Chinese and U.S. television commercials. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 36, 27-45.
- Cheung, C., Kwan, A., & Ng, S. (2006). Impacts of filial piety on preference for kinship versus public care. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 34, 617-634.
- Chris King-Chi, C. (2010). Class struggle in China: Case studies of studies of migrant worker strikes in the Pearl River Delta. *South African Review of Sociology*, 41, 61-80.
- Chunyan, Z., Qingshan, G., Hongling, Y., Li, C., Xianhua, F., & Wei, J. (2013). Quality of life in China rural-to-urban female migrant factory workers: a before-and-after study. *Health & Quality of Life Outcomes*, 11, 1-9.
- Cochran, D. S., & Dolan, J. A. (1984). Qualitative research: An alternative to quantitative research in communication. *Journal of Business Communication*, 21, 25-32.
- Conte, V. A., & Novello, D. (2008). Assessing leadership in a Chinese company: A case study. *Journal of Management Development*, 27, 1002-1016.



- Cotton, J. L. (1993). *Employee involvement: Methods for improving performance and work attitudes*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Croucher, S. M., Kassing, J. W., & Diers-Lawson, A. R. (2013). Accuracy, coherence, and discrepancy in self- and other-reports: Moving toward an interactive perspective of organizational dissent. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 27, 425-442
- Croucher, S. M., Braziunaite, R., Homsey, D., Pillai, G., Saxena, J., Saldanha, A., & ... Agarwal, K. (2009). Organizational dissent and argumentativeness: A comparative analysis between American and Indian organizations. *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research*, 38, 175-191.
- Cui, L., & Shi, J. (2012). Urbanization and its environmental effects in Shanghai, China. *Urban Climate*, 2, 1-15.
- Cui, Y., Tani, M., & Nahm, D. (2012). The determinants of employment choice of rural migrant workers in China: SOEs and non-SOEs. *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 1, 98-107.
- Démurger, S., Gurgand, M., Li, S., & Yue, X. (2009). Migrants as second-class workers in urban China? A decomposition analysis. *Journal of Comparative Economics*, 37, 610-628.
- Denison, D. R., and Mishra, A. H. (1995). 'Toward a theory of organizational culture and effectiveness'. *Organization Science*, 6, 204-23.
- Denscombe, M. (2010). *The Good research guide : For small-scale social research projects*. Maidenhead, England: McGraw-Hill/Open University Press.

- Ding, D. Z., Goodall, K., and Warner, M. (2000). 'The end of the "iron rice-bowl": Whither Chinese human resource management?'. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 11, 217-36.
- Dong, K. (2009). Medical insurance system evolution in China. *China Economic Review*, 20, 591-597.
- Doody, O., & Noonan, M. (2013). Preparing and conducting interviews to collect data. *Nurse Researcher*, 20, 28-32.
- Eiteman, D. K. (1990). "American Executives' Perceptions of Negotiating JVs with the PRC Lessons Learned." *Columbia Journal of World Business*. 59-67
- Fan, M. (2009, March 19). Shanghai hukou reform 'just for show'. *China. Org.CN*. Retrieved from: [http://www.china.org.cn/china/features/content\\_17468979.htm](http://www.china.org.cn/china/features/content_17468979.htm)
- Farrer, J. (2010). 'New Shanghailanders' or 'New Shanghainese': Western Expatriates' Narratives of Emplacement in Shanghai. *Journal of Ethnic & Migration Studies*, 36, 1211-1228.
- Garner, J. T. (2007). Give me liberty or give me (occupational) death: Organizational dissent and workplace freedom of speech. Paper presented at the International Communication Association Convention. San Francisco, CA.
- Garner, J. T. (2009a). When things go wrong at work: An exploration of organizational dissent messages. *Communication Studies*, 60, 197-218.
- Garner, J. T. (2009b). Strategic dissent: Expressions of organizational dissent motivated by influence goals. *International Journal of Strategic Management*, 3, 34-51.

- Garner, J. T. (2013). Dissenters, managers, and coworkers: The process of co-constructing organizational dissent and dissent effectiveness. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 27, 373-395.
- Garner, J. T., & Wargo, M. (2009). Feedback from the pew: A dual-perspective exploration of organizational dissent in churches. *Journal of Communication & Religion*, 32, 375-400.
- Goldstein, A., & Guo, S. (1992). Temporary migration in Shanghai and Beijing. *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 27, 39-56.
- Gorden, W. I. (1984). Corporate cultures: The rites and rituals of corporate life. *Academy of Management Review*, 9, 365-366.
- Gorden, W. I., & Infante, D. A. (1987). Employee rights: Context argumentativeness, verbal aggressiveness, and career satisfaction. In C. A. B. Osigweh (Ed.), *Communicating employee responsibilities and rights* (pp.149–163). Westport, CT: Quorum.
- Gorden, W.I., & Infante, D. A. (1991). Test of a communication model of organizational commitment. *Communication Quarterly*, 39, 144–155.
- Gossett, L., & Kilker, J. (2005). My job sucks: Counter-institutional websites as locations for organizational member voice, dissent, and resistance. Paper presented at International Communication Association. Washington, DC.
- Graham, J. W. (1986). Principle organizational dissent: A theoretical essay. In B. M. Staw & L. L. Cummings (Eds.), *Research in organizational behavior* (Vol.8, pp.1–52). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

- Hastings, S. O., & Payne, H. J. (2013). Expressions of dissent in email: Qualitative insights into uses and meanings of organizational dissent. *Journal of Business Communication, 50*, 309-331.
- Hegstrom, T. G. (1990). Mimetic and dissent conditions in organizational rhetoric. *Journal of Applied Communication Research, 18*, 141-152.
- Hegstrom, T. G. (1995). *Focus on organizational dissent: A functionalist response to criticism*. In J. Lehtonen (Ed.), *Critical perspectives on communication research and pedagogy* (pp. 83-94). St. Ingbert, Germany: Rohrig University Press.
- Ho, D. Y.-F. (1976). On the concept of face. *American Journal of Sociology, 81*, 867-884.
- Hofstede, G. (1980). *Culture's consequences: International differences in work related values*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Hofstede, G. (1988). The Confucian connection: From cultural roots to economic growth. *Organizational Dynamics, 16*, 4-21.
- Hofstede, G. (1997). *Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind (Revised)*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Hofstede, G. H. (2001). *Culture's consequences (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Hofstede, G. & Hofstede, G. J. (2005). *Cultures and organizations: Software of the Mind: Intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival (2nd ed.)*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Jianjun, Z., & Hean Tat, K. (2010). Interorganizational exchanges in China: Organizational forms and governance mechanisms. *Management & Organization Review, 6*, 123-147.

- Jiaming, S., & Xun, W. (2010). Value differences between generations in China: a study in Shanghai. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 13, 65-81.
- Jin, B., Yu, H., & Kang, J. (2013). Challenges in Western-Chinese business relationships: The Chinese perspective. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 31, 179-192.
- Jing, D., & Jin Nam, C. (2013). Leadership effectiveness in China; The moderating role of change climate. *Social Behavior & Personality: An International Journal*, 41, 1571-1584.
- Jiing-Lih, F., Hacckett, R. D., & Jian, L. (2007). Individual-level cultural values as moderators of perceived organizational support--employee outcome relationships in China: Comparing the effects of power distance and traditionality. *Academy Of Management Journal*, 50, 715-729.
- Kassing, J. W. (1997). Articulating, antagonizing, and displacing: A model of employee dissent. *Communication Studies*, 48, 311-332.
- Kassing, J. W. (1998). Development and validation of the Organizational Dissent Scale. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 12, 183-229.
- Kassing, J. W. (2000). Exploring the relationship between workplace freedom of speech, organizational identification, and employee dissent. *Communication Research Reports*, 17, 387-396.
- Kassing, J. W. (2006). Employees' expressions of upward dissent as a function of current and past work experiences. *Communication Reports*, 19, 79-88.
- Kassing, J. W. (2008). Consider this: A comparison of factors contributing to expression of employee dissent. *Communication Quarterly*, 56, 342-355.

- Kassing, J. W. (2009). "In case you didn't hear me the first time": An examination of repetitious upward dissent. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 22, 416-436.
- Kassing, J. W. (2011). *Dissent in organizations*. Cambridge, UK: Polity
- Kassing, J. W., & Armstrong, T. A. (2002). Someone's going to hear about this: Examining the association between dissent-triggering events and employees' dissent expression. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 16, 39-65.
- Kassing, J. W. & Avtgis, T.A. (1999).Examining the relationship between organizational dissent and aggressive communication. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 13, 100–115.
- Kassing, J. W., & Avtgis, T. A. (2001). Dissension in the organization as it relates to control expectancies. *Communication Research Reports*, 18, 118–127.
- Kassing, J. W., & McDowell, Z. (2008). Talk about fairness: Exploring the relationship between procedural justice and employee dissent. *Communication Research Reports*, 25, 1-10.
- Kassing, J. W., Piemonte, N. M., Goman, C. C., & Mitchell, C. A. (2012). Dissent expression as an indicator of work Engagement and intention to leave. *Journal of Business Communication*, 49, 237-253.
- Lee, C.K. (2007). *Working in China: Ethnographies of labor and workplace Transformation*. London/New York: Routledge.
- Lei, K., & Li, L. (2012). Discrimination against rural-to-urban migrants: The role of the hukou system in China. *Plos ONE*, 7, 1-8

- Leung, K. (2008). Chinese culture, modernization, and international business. *International Business Review*, 17, 184-187.
- Li, B. (2008). Why do migrant workers not participate in urban social security schemes? The case of the construction and service sectors in Tianjin. *Migration and Social Protection in China*, 14, 184-204.
- Li J. W. (2002). On protection of the labor rights of migrant workers. *Academic Exploration*, 5, 71–74. [In Chinese]
- Li, T.F., & Zhou, R.X. (2009). Investigation on the cognition of occupational hazards among peasant workers. *Occupation and Health*, 25, 2257–2259.
- Li, X., Zou, H., Liu, Y., & Zhou, Q. (2014). The relationships of family socioeconomic Status, parent-adolescent conflict, and Filial Piety to adolescents' family functioning in mainland China. *Journal of Child & Family Studies*, 23, 29-38.
- Littrell, R. F., Alon, I., & Chan, K. (2012). Regional differences in managerial leader behavior preferences in China. *Cross Cultural Management*, 19, 315-335.
- Liu, Y., Dijst, M., & Geertman, S. (2014). Residential segregation and well-being inequality between local and migrant elderly in Shanghai. *Habitat International*, 42, 175-185.
- Lu, L. and I. Alon: 2004, 'Analysis of the changing trends in attitudes and values of the Chinese: The case of Shanghai's young & educated', *Journal of International and Area Studies*, 11, 67–88.
- Mackenzie, P. W. (2002). Strangers in the city: The hukou and urban citizenship in China. *Journal of International Affairs*, 56, 305.

- Madge, C., & O'Connor, H. (2002). Online with e-mums: Exploring the internet as a medium for research. *Area*, 34, 92–102.
- Magnani, E., & Zhu, R. (2012). Gender wage differentials among rural–urban migrants in China. *Regional Science & Urban Economics*, 42, 779-793.
- Martinsons, M. G., & Westwood, R. I. (1997). Management information systems in the Chinese business culture: An explanatory theory. *Information & Management*, 32, 215
- McDonough, G. P. (2010). Why dissent is a vital concept in moral education. *Journal of Moral Education*, 39, 421-436
- Melander, A. & Pelikanova, K. (2013). Reform of the hukou system: a litmus test of the new leadership. ECFIN Economic, *Issue Briefs*. 26. Retrieved from: [http://ec.europa.eu/economy\\_finance/publications/economic\\_briefs/2013/pdf/eb26\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/economic_briefs/2013/pdf/eb26_en.pdf)
- Merrigan, G., & Huston, C. L. (2009). *Communication research methods*. Oxford, UK: Oxford UP.
- Milliken, F. J., Morrison, E. W., & Hewlin, P. F. (2003). An exploratory study of employee silence: Issues that employees don't communicate upward and why. *Journal of Management Studies*, 40, 1453-1476.
- Nielsen, I., Nyland, C., Smyth, R., Zhang, M., & Zhu, C. (2005). Which rural migrants receive social insurance in Chinese cities? Evidence from Jiangsu survey data. *Global Social Policy*, 5, 353-381.
- Ngok, K. (2012). Serving migrant workers: A challenging public service issue in China. *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 71, 178-190.



- Ouchi, W. G. (1981). Theory Z: How American business can meet the Japanese challenge. *Strategic Management Journal*, 4, 381-383.
- Owen, W. F. (1984). Interpretive themes in relational communication. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 70, 274-287.
- Parsons, T. (1968). *The structure of social action*. New York: Free Press.
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. 3rd ed. USA: Sage Publications.
- Peng, M. W., & Heath, P. (1996). The growth of the firm in planned economies in transition: Institutions, organizations, and strategic choice. *Academy of Management Review*, 21, 492-528.
- Peters, T. J. & Waterman, R. H. (1983). In search of excellence. *Human Resource Management*. 22, 325-328.
- Pettigrew, A. M. (1979). On studying organizational cultures. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 24, 570-581.
- Pitt-Catsoupes, M. Matz-Costa, C. & Besen, E. (2009). Workplace flexibility: Findings from the age & generations study. Sloan Center on Aging & Work at Boston College, *Issue Brief 19*. Retrieved from:  
[http://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/research\\_sites/agingandwork/pdf/publications/IB19\\_WorkFlex.pdf](http://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/research_sites/agingandwork/pdf/publications/IB19_WorkFlex.pdf)
- Premeaux, S. F., & Bedeian, A. G. (2003). Breaking the silence: The moderating effects of self monitoring in predicting speaking up in the workplace. *Journal of Management Studies*, 40, 1537-1562.

- Pullin, P. (2010). Small talk, rapport, and international communicative competence. *Journal of Business Communication*, 47, 455-476.
- Qin, D. (2013). Confucian Filial Piety and the fifth commandment: A fulfillment approach. *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies*, 16, 139-164.
- Qiumin, D., & Lee, Y. L. (2007). The Chinese concept of face: A perspective for business communicators. *Journal of Business & Society*, 20, 204-216.
- Rauhala, E. (2013). China's Great Firewall won't be touched by Beijing's new reforms. *Time.Com*, 1.
- Roberts, K. (2002). Female labor migrants to Shanghai: Temporary 'floaters' or potential settlers?. *International Migration Review*, 36, 492-519.
- Rose, G.F. & Tang, Z.L. (2002) Shanghai: reconnecting to the global economy. In Sassen, S. (Eds.) *Global Networks* (pp. 273-307). New York: Routledge,
- Rouleau-Berger, L. & Shi, L. (2005) 'Migrant workers in Shanghai: Inequality, economic enclaves, and the various routes to employment', *China Perspectives*, 58, 2-9.
- Roulston, K. (2001). Data analysis and "theorizing as ideology". *Qualitative Research*, 1, 279-302.
- Russomanno, J. A. (1996). Workplace freedom of expression: A case for the broadcast newsroom employee. *Communication Law & Policy*, 1, 1.
- Sandig B. & Selting, M. (1997) Discourse styles. In Van Dijk T (Eds.) *Discourse as Structure and Process* (pp. 138-156). London: Sage.
- Schein, E. H. (1992). *Organizational culture and leadership*, 2nd edn. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

- Shanghai Police Office. (2011). 上海市居民身份证办证工作规定. Shanghai: Shanghai Government.
- Shi, Y., Zheng, X., Sun, Y., & Jia, Z. (2013). Intra-urban migration patterns in the perspective of improved radiation model - A case study of Beijing. *Advanced Materials Research*, 869, 110-116.
- Sprague, J. A., & Ruud, G. L. (1988). Boat-rocking in the high technology culture. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 32,169-193.
- State Council (2004) Gazette of the State Council of the People's Republic of China. April 2004, People's Republic of China.
- State Statistics Bureau. (2005). China labour statistical yearbook (ZhongGuo Lao Dong Tong Ji Nian Jian). Beijing: China Statistical Publishing House [in Chinese].
- Tang, C., & van Heuven, V. J. (2007). Mutual intelligibility and similarity of Chinese dialects: Predicting judgments from objective measures. *Linguistics in the Netherlands*, 24, 223-234.
- Thomas, D. C. (2008). *Cross-cultural management: Essential concepts* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Trochim, W. M., (2006). Qualitative measures. In the research methods knowledge 2nd Edition. Retrieved from: <http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/qual.php>
- Trompenaars, F. & Hampden-Turner, C.(1997). *Riding the waves of culture: Understanding cultural diversity in business*. 2nd edition. London: Nicholas Prealey.
- Tseng, Y. (2011). Shanghai rush: Skilled migrants in a fantasy city. *Journal of Ethnic & Migration Studies*, 37, 765-784

- Tsui, A. S., Bian, Y., & Cheng, L. (2006). China's domestic private firms: Multidisciplinary perspectives on management and performance. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe.
- Tsui, A. S., Hui, W., & Xin, K. R. (2006). Organizational culture in China: An analysis of culture dimensions and culture types. *Management & Organization Review*, 2, 345-376.
- Wang, J., Cui, Z., Cui, H., Wei, C., Harada, K., Minamoto, K., & ... Ueda, A. (2010). Quality of life associated with perceived stigma and discrimination among the floating population in Shanghai, China: A qualitative study. *Health Promotion International*, 25, 394-402.
- Wang, R.H., (2007) Innovation of Changjiang Delta. Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press.
- Wang, W., & Moffatt, P. G. (2008). Hukou and graduates' job search in China. *Asian Economic Journal*, 22, 1-23.
- Wang, Y., Shibusawa, H., Leman, E., Higano, Y., & Mao, G. (2013). A study of Shanghai's development strategy to 2020. *Regional Science Policy & Practice*, 5, 183-200.
- Webster, C., & White, A. (2010). Exploring the national and organizational culture mix in service firms. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 38, 691-703.
- Wen, M., & Guixin, W. (2009). Demographic, psychological, and social environmental factors of loneliness and satisfaction among rural-to-urban migrants in Shanghai, China. *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, 50, 155-182.
- Wong, D.F.K. & Lee, D.C.M. (2003) China blue collar workers: work stress, coping and mental health. Unpublished manuscript, Department of Social Work and Social Administration, University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong.

- Wong, D., & Song, H. (2008). The resilience of migrant workers in Shanghai China: the roles of migration stress and meaning of migration. *International Journal of Social Psychiatry*, 54, 131-143.
- Wong, F.K.D., Chang, Y.L. & He, X.S. (2007) Rural migrant workers in urban China: Living a marginalized life. *International Journal of Social Welfare*, 16, 32–40.
- Wu, M., & Wang, J. (2012). Developing a charismatic leadership model for Chinese organizations: the mediating role of loyalty to supervisors. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 23, 4069-4084.
- Xia, Q. H., Jiang, Y. Y., Yin, N. N., Hu, J. J., & Niu, C. J. (2012). Injury among migrant workers in Changning district, Shanghai, China. *International Journal of Injury Control & Safety Promotion*, 19, 81-85.
- Xiaobo, C., Rockett, I. H., Tingzhong, Y., & Ruoxiang, C. (2012). Work stress, life stress, and smoking among rural-urban migrant workers in China. *BMC Public Health*, 12, 1-8.
- Xiaojun, L., & Guy, M. E. (2014). How emotional labor and ethical leadership affect job engagement for Chinese public servants. *Public Personnel Management*, 43, 3-24.
- Xiaogang, W., & Treiman, D. J. (2004). THE HOUSEHOLD REGISTRATION SYSTEM AND SOCIAL STRATIFICATION IN CHINA: 1955-1996. *Demography*, 41(2), 363-384.
- Xie, C.(2005, September 6 ). 村委会摄像头盯着党员意见箱 负责人称为了安全.  
NetEase News. [In Chinese]. Retrieved from:  
<http://news.163.com/05/0906/02/1SUCQS1U0001122B.html>

- Xin, K. R., Tsui, A. S., Wang, H., Zhang, Z., and Chen, W. (2002). Corporate culture in Chinese state-owned enterprises: An inductive analysis of dimensions and influences. In Tsui, A. S., and Lau, C. M. (Eds), *Academic Press The Management of Enterprises in the People's Republic of China* (pp.415–43). Boston, MA: Kluwer.
- Xin, M. (1998). Gender occupational segregation and its impact on the gender wage differential among rural-urban migrants: A Chinese case study. *Applied Economics*, 30, 741-752.
- Xinhua News Agency (2004) China has nearly 10% school dropouts among migrant children. 6 November 2004. Electronic file retrieved 29 December 2004 from InfoTrac [In Chinese]
- Yingyan, W. (2010). Intention to stay in Chinese foreign-invested companies: previous experiences, initial expectations and current satisfactions. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 21, 1996-2012
- Zhang, K.H. & Song, S.F. (2003) Rural–urban migration and urbanization in China: Evidence from time-series and cross-section analysis. *China Economic Review*, 14, 386–400.
- Zhang, Z., & Treiman, D. J. (2013). Social origins, hukou conversion, and the wellbeing of urban residents in contemporary China. *Social Science Research*, 42, 71-89.
- Zhang, A., Tsui, A. S., & Wang, D. (2011). Leadership behaviors and group creativity in Chinese organizations: The role of group processes. *Leadership Quarterly*, 22, 851-862.

Zhao, L. & Courtney, F. R. (2010). China's hukou reform: The Guangdong and Shanghai cases. EAI Background, *Issue Brief 551*. Retrieved from:  
<http://www.eai.nus.edu.sg/BB551.pdf>