

How do urban people in China form stigmatization on rural-to-urban migrant children?

Prepared for:
The Dandelion School
Beijing, China

April 2014

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Executive Summary

1. Introduction and problem statement

Since China's economic reform 30 years ago, it started to experience the most extensive internal rural-to-urban migration. According to the Sixth National Population Census in 2010, there are a total number of 260 million migrants, among which 42 million are migrant children aged from 0 to 14. Although migrant populations are the engines of China's spectacular economic growth, previous studies on migrant workers and migrant children showed that they experience institutional, interpersonal discrimination and stigmatization in the host cities.

Academia has not reached a single definition of stigma and stigmatization. But most described stigma as having an attribute that is socially salient to others. This attribute is also associated with undesirable and negative stereotypes, which further leads to separation, discrimination and status loss. Previous studies also showed that stigma has negative effects on children because it would reduce their self-esteem and confidence. They are more vulnerable than adults because they do not have control over the situation. Long-term exposure to stigma will lead to withdrawal, depression and other psychological problems.

Previous studies on stigma showed that a full understanding about the process and content of stigma helped combat stigma. As a result, in order to prevent the negative outcomes and reduce stigma, the Dandelion School proposed this study to gain a deeper understanding about stigma toward migrant children. The main purpose of this study, as required by the client, was to explore how urban residents form stigmatization on migrant children. Thus, this study generated implications for the client to conduct anti-stigma campaigns in future.

2. Data and methodology

This study adopted Link and Phelan's conceptualizing of stigma as the framework. Following this framework, the study explored how urban residents label, stereotype and separate migrant children. It also analyzed why urban residents stigmatize migrant children. Considering the exploratory nature, this study used in-depth interviews with the perpetrators of stigma. This study adopted several criteria for recruiting interviews participants to reflect a wide range of educational level, occupation, age, gender, marital status and home location. Parent and teacher participants were referred by the author's English teacher in middle school. The rest were voluntarily recruited online. Interviews were conducted via face-to-face and telephone.

Based on interview questions that have been tested by previous studies, the author prepared a list of questions to cover during the conversation. The questions were divided based on the framework of stigma. But questions varied according to the proceeding of the conversation.

3. Key findings

This study found that, similar to urban residents' impression about migrant workers, attributes that lead to labeling include appearance, facial expression, behavior in public and manner of speaking. Because of a lack of matched colors and low quality, migrant children's overall clothing gave a sense of mess and disarray. Since they lived a marginalized life in the host city, they acted timid, avoided eye contact and violated social norm in public area. Their strong regional accent was salient in the host city where the local dialect is prevalent.

Participants depicted migrant children in a way similar to that of migrant workers because traditional Chinese belief thinks that parents are the teacher of their children. Thus, in the eye of urban residents, migrant children were believed to be lacking discipline and bad mannered. Influenced by media news and stereotypes about migrant workers, they also believed that migrant children received little supervision from their parents thus acting reckless. But migrant children are more innocent and simpler than urban children because they care less about material pursuit and comparison.

This study identified four reasons why participants separated and rejected migrant children. The most frequently mention reason was the huge difference in culture, lifestyle and custom. Participants, particularly those with little children, were afraid that migrant children would negatively affect their young children. Some participants believed that the huge difference in living standard would automatically and gradually separate migrant children from urban people. A small number of participants regarded the institutional difference in *Hukou* status.

Participants stigmatized migrant children mainly because they regarded themselves as the ingroup. Based on the ingroup favoritism theory, urban people stigmatize the outgroup, migrant children, when they perceive potential threats from them. Potential threats include cultural invasion and occupying of public resources. Some also stigmatized because they would like to maintain the status quo. Urban residents were in an absolute advantageous position over migrant children. Thus, they justified their stigmatization hoping to maintain the advantage.

4. Implication

This study found that, consistent with the literature on stigma, the process of stigmatization happened almost automatically. This automatic nature posed huge difficulty in reducing stigma. Thus, in order to combat the stigma on migrant children and change the stereotypes, campaigns should target on the young generation who are still forming their views. The most popular social media site in China, Sina Weibo, was therefore identified as an ideal platform because of its large young users.

The client suggested an anti-stigma educational campaign that contrasts the stereotypes and incorrect beliefs about migrant children. Thus, in order to be effective, the educational campaign should provide information and examples about migrant children that are inconsistent with the stereotypes suggested in the key findings. It should also focus on why the perpetrators stigmatize providing information that relieves the concerns that give rise to urban residents' separation and stigmatization.

1. Introduction

1.1 History of Internal Migration in China

Before the 1978 economic reform, internal migration between rural and urban areas in China was prohibited (Han, Huang, & Han, 2011). Central mechanism that regulates population flows is the *Hukou* system (Yang, 1993). The *Hukou* system, translated literally as “household registration system”, is modeled from the Soviet *Propiska* (internal passport) and initially set up in 1958. It divides individual’s registration status into urban and rural, agricultural and non-agricultural. (Kuang & Liu, 2012). Status is registered when a person is born and official permission is required for any change of residence (Liu, 2005). It controls the free movement as well as the benefits and rights individual citizens can enjoy. Public resources available to individual citizens, such as education, healthcare, housing and employment, are determined by one’s registration status (Zhang, 2011).

Since China’s economic reform began about 30 years ago, there is a growing demand for the labor market to become more compatible with the market economy (Han, Huang, & Han, 2011). In 1984, the Chinese government relaxed the traditional *Hukou* restriction (Liu, 2005), thus opening the gate to large-scale rural-to-urban migration. Low income level and emergence of labor force surplus in rural areas, higher living standards and better overall life prospects in urban areas drove large numbers of rural residents to move into urban cities (Gui, Berry, & Zheng, 2012).

According to the Sixth National Census in 2010 (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2010), the total number of migrant population was 260.93 million on a national level, increasing by 80.7 percent compared with the Fifth National Population Census in 2000. Percentage of the migrant population over total population increases from 11.6 percent in 2000 to 19.6 percent in 2010 nationally. The fractions of the total populations of Guangdong Province, Shanghai and Beijing who were migrants are 50 percent, 37.4 percent, and 35.9 percent respectively (Netease, 2011; Wang, 2011; Du, 2011). Tianjing experiences the highest increase of migrant population among all Chinese provinces and municipalities, which is 242.69 percent, followed by Beijing, 174.34 percent, and Shanghai, 159.08 percent (Zou, 2011).

The Sixth National Population Census shows that future trends of migration is moving towards stability-oriented migration, suggesting that more migrants are moving with their family members and are willing to live a stable life in host cities (Xinhuanet, 2010). Number of migrant children between 0 to 14 year old moving to cities with their parents amounts to 41.63 million, accounting for around 19 percent of the total migrant population (National Health and Family Planning Commission of China, 2011). Therefore, the migrant population is going to pose high burden and challenges on public resources and services in urban cities.

1.2 Conceptualizing Stigma

The roots of contemporary perspectives on stigma can be traced to Erving Goffman’s (1963) classic work *Stigma: Notes on the Management of a Spoiled Identity* (Major & O’Brien, 2005). Goffman defines stigma as the phenomenon whereby an individual with an attribute deeply discredited by his or her society is rejected as a result of the attribute. It is the process by which the reaction of other’s spoils normal identity

(Goffman, 1963). His ideas have been primarily used in the analysis of the psychological impact of stigma on individuals (Kleinman & Hall-Clifford, 2009).

Since Goffman, alternative or elaborated definitions of social stigma have varied considerably (Link & Phelan, 2001). Crocker et al. (1998) propose that stigmatization occurs when a person possesses (or is believed to possess) some attribute or characteristic that conveys a social identity that is devalued in a particular social context. Dovidio et al.'s work (2001) concludes that the social construction of stigma involves at least two components: 1) the recognition of differences based on some distinguished characteristics, or marks, and 2) a consequent devaluation of that person. Therefore, any label becomes a stigma if it is linked to undesirable attributes that are socially salient and are purposefully compiled as a stereotype to categorize people (Chen et al., 2011).

Culture and social contexts play an important role in shaping the attributes that appear to be stigmatizing. Link and Phelan (2001) point out that there is a social selection of human differences. The vast majority of human differences are ignored and are, therefore, socially irrelevant. However, other differences, such as one's skin color, IQ, sexual preference, or gender are highly salient (Link & Phelan, 2001). For a characteristic to be a stigma, it must be shared among members at a group level. Stangor and Crandall (2001) argue, "Whenever a group defines an attribute as a stigma, or whenever it defines a typically stigmatizing attribute, the attributes are never stigmatizing *per se*, but are rather defined by the relation of the groups and its members' beliefs held in a larger social world" (p.64). This is also consistent with Dovidio et al.'s work (2001) in which they say, "Social context fundamentally influences whether a characteristic of an individual will become stigmatizing or will be unattended at all" (Dovidio et al. 2001, p.4). These previous work suggests that this study needs to focus not only on stigmatizing attributes but also why these attributes become stigmatizing within a Chinese sociocultural context.

Fig. 1. Diagram of the process of stigmatization in which social and cultural contexts influence the process



Link and Phelan's work (2001) contributes to the field of stigma study by identifying social process that occurs within a sociocultural context. In their review of social psychological research on stigma, Link and Phelan identify four core components of stigma: 1) people first distinguish and label human differences within a certain social

and cultural context, 2) dominant cultural beliefs link labeled people to undesirable stereotypes, 3) labeled persons are placed into categories to accomplish the separation of “us” from “them”, and 4) labeled persons experience discrimination, rejection and exclusion, which leads to negative outcomes such as unequal compensation, low self-esteem, and restricted access to social network.

Link and Phelan’s (2001) work offers perhaps the most clearly articulated conceptual framework to explore the process of stigmatization, applying to both victims and perpetrators of stigma (Lucas & Phelan, 2012). Their work helps understand the processes which contribute to the stigmatization (Phelan & Basow, 2007) within the sociocultural environment, whose effects can be observed at an individual level (Yang, Kleinman, Link, Phelan, Lee, & Good, 2007). Also, although Link and Phelan’s framework is developed to understand stigmatization associated with mental illness, their conceptualization of various components of stigma is applicable to all kinds of stigma, not only to that of mental illness (Angermeyer & Matschinger, 2004).

1.3 Migration Related Stigma and Discrimination in China

In China, stigmatization on internal rural-to-urban migrant population has a history rooted in the process of nation building and the Chinese government’s initial strategic emphasis on urban growth after 1949 (Chen et al., 2011). Migrant population is called “blind migrant” (*Mang Liu*) at the beginning of large-scale migration, implying aimlessness and instability in Chinese (Lin, Fang, Liu, & Lan, 2009). “Migrant peasant” (*Nong Min Gong*) and “floating population” (*Liu Dong Ren Kou*) are more neutral but still emphasize their status as a poor, rural peasant and imply that they will not become a permanently settled group in host cities (Nielson, Smyth, & Zhang, 2006).

Chen’s study (2013) proposes that the migrant population in China experience two kinds of discrimination: 1) institutional discrimination, which restricts migrants’ access to jobs, education and welfare, and 2) interpersonal discrimination that involves unpleasantness in social encounters, such as exclusion, rejection or assumption of inferiority at the individual level between migrants and urban residents (Wong, Chang, & He, 2007). Interpersonal discrimination, as an inevitable outcome of stigmatization (Link & Phelan, 2001), is more difficult to eradicate because “there are no laws against interpersonal discrimination, no mandates on the number of words one must speak or the amount of smiling one must do to people” (Hebl, Foster, Mannix, & Dovidio, 2002, p.816) on the basis of their identity.

Many studies have been done to show that urban residents stigmatize and interpersonally discriminate against the migrant population, both adults and children (Chen et al., 2011, Chen, 2013, Kuang & Liu, 2012, Guan, 2011, Nielson & Smyth, 2008, Yang et al., 2010, Nielson et al., 2006, Lee, 2012, Gomersall & Wang, 2013, Liu, 2008, Ye, Jiang & Qian, 2011, Li, 2011, Chen & Hoy, 2011). Most frequently mentioned attributes as sources for labeling migrants are accent, appearance and behavior in the public area (Chen, 2013, Guan, 2011). Label as a migrant is also frequently associated with negative images. Chen et al. (2011) find that urban residents often describe migrants as inferior, incapable, cheating, violent, thieves and robbers. Liu’s study (2008) suggests that urban residents frequently describe migrants as “not well-behaved,” “lacking education” and “dirty.”

Findings of Nielson and Smyth's study (2008) show that urban residents often believe that the large percentage of migrant population contributes partly to poor urban safety. In a study done by Nielson et al. in 2004, 62 percent of surveyed urban residents believe migrants are responsible for overcrowding, safety and hygiene problem in their urban hometown. Liu's study (2008) yields similar results that 60 percent urban residents think migrants contribute to damaged urban environment and increasing crime rate. Many studies (Nielson & Smyth, 2008; Liu, 2008; Chen & Hoy, 2011; Ye, Jiang & Qian) on urban residents also suggest that they feel increasing competition for local jobs and believe that increasing unemployment are caused by migrants.

As a consequence of labeling and stereotyping, urban people reveal their intention of separation and exclusion. Study of Ye, Jiang and Qian (2011) finds 23.7 percent of urban people never have contact with migrants. 74 percent of urban people in Shanghai would not have their children to study in the same school with migrant children (Li, 2011). The process of labeling and linking of labels to undesirable attributes creates the rationale for believing that negatively labeled persons are "fundamentally different from those who don't share the label" (Link & Phelan, 2001, p.370).

1.4 Client and Anti-stigma Programs

The Dandelion School in Beijing, established in August 2005, is the author's client of this study. This school is the first and the only middle school established especially for children from low-income migrant families in Beijing. It is a charitable, non-profit educational institution located in Daxing District, an outskirt district of Beijing (The Dandelion School, 2011).

This study was prepared under the client's concern about the negative outcomes of stigmatization on migrant children. The adverse effects of stigma and discrimination on migrants in China have been studied by scholars both in Chinese and international academia (Lin, Fang, Liu, & Lan, 2009; Chen, Wang, & Wang, 2009; Geng, Zhou, & Yiqing, 2012; Lu & Zhou, 2012). Lin et al.'s study conducted in Beijing suggests that perception of stigma and discrimination among migrant children affects their mental health significantly in terms of loneliness, social anxiety and self-esteem. Their study suggests that, on average, migrant children score lower than urban children in mental health. At the same time, children are particularly more vulnerable to stigma than adults and are at higher vulnerability to discrimination because they are often not in control of their circumstances and often do not know to assert their rights (Tran & Mwanri, 2013). Thus, the client of this study wants to initiate an anti-stigma campaign on Chinese social media. This study is, therefore, required by the client to explore the process of stigmatization that yields implication for their anti-stigma campaign.

Results of this study will provide meaningful information and content for anti-stigma campaign. Three major approaches to combat stigma are summarized by Corrigan's meta-analysis (2012): 1) educational approaches that challenge inaccurate stereotypes, 2) interpersonal contact with members of the stigmatized, which can eliminate the untrue stereotypes, and 3) social activism or protest that highlights the injustices of various forms of stereotype and stigma and chastises perpetrators for their stereotypes and discrimination. The client of this study wants to follow an educational approach that provides true images of migrant children and contrasts untrue beliefs. Previous literature on stigma suggests that efforts to reduce stigma will be enhanced by

better understanding the development of stigmatization (Phelan, Link, & Dovidio, 2008), “the multifaceted processes that give rise to the devaluation of a certain group” (Phelan & Basow 2007, p.2878) and the unique cultural processes that create stigma in the lived world of the stigmatized (Kleinman & Hall-Clifford, 2009).

This study present qualitative data collected through face-to-face interviews and internet interviews via Skype with urban residents in Shanghai, China, to analyze the process of stigmatization. Based on Link and Phelan’s (2001) conceptual framework this study explored how the perpetrators of stigmatization form their selection of attributes that contribute to labeling, association of labels with stereotypes and process of separation. This study also explored social and cultural influence on urban people when they form stigmatization. The results of this study, therefore, provided information on stigmatizing attributes, stereotypes and reasons for separation, yielding implications for content that should be put in client’s anti-stigma campaign.

2. Methodology

2.1 Study Design and Sample Selection

Considering the exploratory nature of this investigation, data came from in-depth interviews with urban Shanghai people. A qualitative research method is ideal for this study because it helps describe and gain insight into the opinions, values and attitudes of the subjects, together with meanings and interpretations that they place on their life experiences (Liggins, 2005).

The client raised several criteria for interview participants. In order to reflect the true feelings and insights of urban residents, the following eligibility were agreed and adopted by the author and the client to select samples for interviews: 1) registered under Shanghai urban *Hukou*, 2) born and raised up in Shanghai, 3) not born in Shanghai but moved to Shanghai before elementary school, and the following stratification criteria 4) reflect different income level, educational background and occupation, 5) include at least two elementary or middle school teachers, and 6) keep balance of parent and non-parent subjects.

Due to the time limit, this study selected a total number of 20 subjects. It used a snowball sampling to recruit teacher subjects and parent subjects. The selection of school teacher subjects was facilitated by the author’s middle school teacher, Miss Yang, whom the author has maintained a very good relation with. Three school teachers were recommended by Miss Yang from the author’s middle school which is located in Pudong, one of the favorable destinations of migrants, and other two districts including Yangpu and Jiading where there is a high percentage of migrant population. Nine parent subjects were then recommended by school teachers from both outskirt and center districts of Shanghai. Including one school teachers who also has children, this study recruited a total number of ten parent subjects, ensuring a balance of parent and non-parent subjects.

The remaining nine subjects were recruited from the most popular Chinese social media site, Sina Weibo. Recruitment message was posted by the author, describing the purpose of this goal, example interview questions and selection criteria. Interested people replied the author with their basic information including their *Hukou* status, age, gender, marital status, age of child, occupation, educational level and home location. Recruitment message was sent out on Sina Weibo in December 2013. A total number of 23 responses were received before January 1st. After scrutinizing personal information, nine subjects

were identified to ensure a wide reflection of occupation, location and education background.

2.2 Data Collection

First slot of interviews with parent and teacher subjects was conducted in the coffee shop or fast food restaurant in Shanghai in December 2013. Second slot of interview with non-parent and non-teacher subjects was conducted in United States via Skype. Each interview lasted about 30 to 45 minutes. Approximately 13.5 hours of interviews were tape-recorded and translated verbatim once finished.

Before each interview, the author first explained the purpose of this study and defined the concept of migrant children for each participant. Basically, migrant children defined in this study are: 1) children under 16 year old, 2) children coming from provinces outside of Shanghai and hold an agricultural *Hukou* status. This study used a semi-structured interview. The author had a list of questions to cover attached in Appendix. During an interview, questions asked to each subject varied according to proceeding of each dialogue. When a theme was raised by subjects, following questions were asked to them to elaborate and further explain the theme: 1) can you explain it in details, 2) can you give an example and 3) how does this matter to you. Each subject was also given the opportunity to raise issues he or she regarded interesting, but not covered by the author.

2.3 Data Analysis

Data coding began following the first interview. Four categories of thematic codes were identified before conducting interviews: 1) attributes that distinguish migrant children from urban children, 2) images of migrant children in the eyes of urban people, 3) separation of migrant children and 4) reasons for why urban people stigmatize migrant children. Same thematic codes were used to process interview data. Coding was conducted in Chinese. Writing-up of each theme was done in English.

3. Findings

3.1. Attributes that contribute to the label of rural-to-urban migrant children

Based on Link and Phelan's (2001) framework, the first step in the process of stigmatization involves recognition of socially significant differences in humans. Although a single defining feature of stigma is difficult to reach, stigmatized people are generally believed to possess "some attribute or characteristic that conveys a social identity that is devalued in a particular social context" (Crocker, Major & Steel, 1998, p.5). In the interviews, participants were asked what differences or characteristics among children caught their attention and helped them distinguish rural-to-urban migrant children from local urban children.

Participants' responses about migrant children were consistent with previous studies on adult migrant workers. Almost all agreed on the following four characteristics: 1) appearance, 2) behavior, 3) expression and 4) accent. The majority of participants emphasized that a single characteristic could not act as a defining factor; instead, they would need to combine these attributes together in order to label a child as a migrant.

3.1.1. Appearance

Results of the interviews suggested that appearance is the most salient attribute that helps urban people to distinguish rural-to-urban migrant children from urban children. Participants interviewed referred frequently to children's hairstyle, face, clothing, toys and other accessories.

Participants reported that migrant children generally like to wear very colorful clothes, preferring clothes in bright colors, such as orange, red, yellow and green; however, their parents do not know how to match these colors. Therefore, the unmatched colors give passersby a sense of disarray, which draws the participants' attention. On the other hand, local Shanghai children usually wear muted colors. Their more educated and open-minded urban parents possess a better sense of style and are able to match clothes and colors in an appealing way. In general, migrant children look less fresh and comfortable in their overall clothing due to the lack of matching colors..

Excerpt from participant no.5

"Those rural people like to wear very bright colors. They don't have a sense of matching. In their mind, it seems like the brighter the more beautiful. That's a typical thinking of rural, uneducated people."

(Age 48, male, born in Shanghai, currently living in Huangpu District, high school education, with a child of 14 years old, face-to-face interview)

The identity of migrant children is also revealed by the quality of their clothes. Rural-to-urban migrant families normally have more than one child. Because of economic constraints, clothes may be shared with many children in the family and therefore their clothes often looks worn and out of style. Urban children may not wear brand new clothes, but the material of their clothes suggests that it is of higher quality. Other characteristics of clothing reported by participants include the fact that migrant children tend to wear clothes with fancy logos and graphics, which may appear to be cute in the eyes of their migrant parents. However, due to a lack of design they suggest a lower taste and still give a sense of untidiness and disarray. Children's accessories are another characteristic that draws participants' attention, including their bags, toys and headwear. Consistent with attitudes on clothing, participants tended to regard children having obviously low-quality accessories as migrants from rural areas.

Excerpt from participant no.19

"It's not always about how expensive the clothes or accessory is. It's about proper appreciation of beauty, which urban people have but rural people don't. Therefore, when a child dresses messy and untidy, I will think him or her as a rural-to-urban migrant."

(Age 29, female, born in Shanghai, currently living in Hongkou District, college education, married, with no children, telephone interview)

Participants also relied on a child's skin to judge whether she or he comes from a rural area. Participants reported that when a child has a darker complexion combined with his or her overall clothing, participants tend to regard the child as a rural migrant. It is a common belief in Chinese society that because they always work outside in the sun, rural people have much darker skin. In addition, due to a lack of adequate skincare, migrant

children's skin tends to be less tender than that of urban children of a similar age. Some participants who mentioned this attribute admitted that skin and complexion are not the most reliable and salient attributes. However, when combined with clothing and other accessories, they could label them successfully.

3.1.2. Behavior in Public Area

Children's behavior in public area helped participants to distinguish between migrant and urban children. Participants reported that when they see an elementary-school-aged child walking alone after school, they tend to believe he or she is a migrant. On the other hand, urban children are usually accompanied by their grandparents or other senior relatives. This is not because migrant parents care less about their children's safety, but because most migrant parents are engaged in work without a fixed schedule and are seldom available to pick up their children after school. Further, unlike urban children whose grandparents take the responsibility of picking them up and taking care of them after school, migrant children's grandparents are often left in their rural hometowns.

Excerpt from participant no.4

“In a big city, like Shanghai, child trafficking is not joking. I'll never let my kid go back home alone. Therefore, when you see a kid walk alone, you will definitely notice. I think most urban parents share same thought with me.”

(Age 32, female, born in Shanghai, currently living in Pudong District, college education, with a 4 year old child, face-to-face interview)

Participants from outlying districts, where the majority of rural-to-urban migrants live, also emphasized that migrant children often play in the street or in construction sites with other migrant peers after school. These children sometimes play with dangerous items, such as stones or sticks. They reported that, in contrast, urban children are seldom seen in the street playing dangerous games after school.

Excerpt from participant no.15

“I often see some migrant children playing around construction site when I go back home after work everyday. “

“How do I recognize they are migrant? Their cloth, face and accent. Can you see urban children play in the street like this after school? Not very possible.”

(Age 32, male, born in Shanghai, currently living in Pudong, technical college education, married, with no children, telephone interview)

3.1.3. Facial expressions

Rural-to-urban migrant children are generally more timid and shy than urban children, especially in public areas where there are a large number of people. Their facial expression acts as another means by which interview participants distinguished migrant children from urban children. The primary reason mentioned by several participants is that urban children grow up and live in the city from the time they are born and therefore they are familiar with the people and dialect, public service, and how the city works as a whole. “Little host” was a word mentioned by three participants to describe urban

children's feeling of belonging. Even if not accompanied by their parents, they are seldom seen timid and are willing to talk to people when they need help. On the other hand, migrant children, even when accompanied by their parents, act very timid in public places. Their timidity may derive from their unfamiliarity with the city and people and their feeling of inferiority. They often avoid eye contact with people walking towards them. Some participants provided examples showing why they think migrant children are shy and timid.

Excerpt from participant no.3

"I once saw two migrant children in the subway station in People's Square. It seemed that they did not know how to purchase subway tickets. Obviously, they were too timid to ask for help. They just stood there and looked around helplessly. You can see shyness and helplessness in their eyes."

"Same situation would not happen to a Shanghaiese child. He would just go and ask for help. They have a sense of belonging and therefore they are not afraid."

(Age 38, male, born in Shanghai, currently living in Jin'an District, college education, with a 10 year old child, face-to-face interview)

Migrant children also tend to be more timid and unnatural in some high-end restaurants, sightseeing venues and department stores. At the same time, they show more curiosity than urban children. Migrant children usually live with their parents in the outskirts of the city. Because of economic constraints, they seldom have the opportunity to experience real urban life with their parents, who are busy working throughout the week. They are marginalized in the city in which they live everyday. This marginalization heightens their timidity, as well as their curiosity about the city life.

Excerpt from participant no.8

"I once saw two migrant workers with two little migrant children at the Oriental Pearl TV Tower. The two kids are so excited and curious, obviously much excited than other tourists around. I think it's because they don't have many opportunity to see the outside world."

(Age 57, male, born in Ningbo came to Shanghai at age 7, currently living in Xuhui District, graduate school education, with a 20 year old child, face-to-face interview)

Excerpt from participant no.14

"I seldom saw migrant children in big department stores where local urban kids and teens always like to hang out either with their parents or friends. When you see these migrant children, you can feel they do not act very naturally in this kind of places. I would say they are timid. I think it's because the metropolitan life is so unfamiliar to them."

(Age 19, female, born in Qingdao and came to Shanghai at age 2, currently living in Pudong District, college student, unmarried, telephone interview)

3.1.4. Manner of speaking

Some participants also mentioned migrant children's manner of speaking. The way one speaks, including one's accent, is a significant social force (Cargile & Giles, 1997). An accent, which represents one's manner of pronunciation, constitutes an important part of a speaker's social identity and conveys a considerable amount of social information (Gluszek & Dovidio, 2010). Literature on international migrants suggests that a nonnative accent is one of the most salient characteristics of people from other countries who come to live, work or study in host countries. As a result, people in host countries therefore may potentially stigmatize them as not being native born (Derwing & Munro, 2009). Interview results revealed that the same phenomenon can happen within a country. The interviews identified two forms of speaking that would catch participants' attention: 1) dialects of other parts of China, and 2) Mandarin with a strong regional accent.

Most participants who mentioned this attribute speak Shanghaiese while they are at home or even in the workplace and school. They do not speak Mandarin when talking to others unless they cannot speak Shanghaiese. These people take it for granted that speaking Shanghaiese separates true urban Shanghai residents from *outsiders* (*Wai Di Ren*). Shanghaiese is a dialect of Wu Chinese. Like other Wu dialects, it is largely unintelligible to speakers of other Chinese dialects and standard Mandarin (CNN, 2010). Similarly, dialects of other provinces would seem significantly salient for Shanghaiese.

Excerpt from participant no.12

"When I am in public area, if someone around me speak Mandarin or other dialect, I would almost automatically realize he or she is not among us. I mean, not Shanghaiese. It does happen automatically. I guess probably it's because I speak Shanghaiese all the time and therefore I am sensitive to other languages."

(Age 20, female, born in Shanghai, currently living in Huangpu District, college student, unmarried, telephone interview)

Excerpt from participant no.9

"The most salient attribute for me would definitely be language. True Shanghaiese absolutely should speak Shanghaiese; otherwise, I would consider him or her as outsiders if I know nothing more about him or her. It doesn't matter if he or she is adult or child. I think identity as an urban Shanghaiese is built first by Shanghaiese dialect."

(Age 43, female, born in Shanghai, currently living in Zhabei District, technical college education, with a 11 year old child, face-to-face interview)

By outsiders (*Wai Di Ren*), these participants simply refer to people who are not from Shanghai originally. Outsider (*Wai Di Ren*) is not equivalent to rural-to-urban migrant. It can include non-Shanghaiese who hold an urban registration *Hukou* from other areas and have moved to Shanghai for study or work. The interview found that participants first identified someone as an outsider when he or she does not speak the Shanghaiese dialect. Followed by this observation they then determine if the outsider is from an urban or rural area by his or her accent. As shown in the interview results, participants' knowledge of Chinese dialects is very limited. They have only a rough idea about dialects of provinces famous for sending rural-to-urban migrant workers. Thus, their judgement is often oversimplified and inaccurate. This result is consistent with

previous literature on the concept of stigma, which indicates that “the taken-for-granted nature of labeling is one reasons for why this designation carries huge weight” (Link & Phelan 2001, p.367), thus creating huge difficulty of eradicating it.

Excerpt from participant no.5

“Some dialects or accents may not sound very rural (Xiang Xia), like Beijingers or Cantonese dialect. But others, like dialects of Anhui and North Jiangsu, are obviously spoken only by rural people at least to me.”

(Age 48, male, born in Shanghai, currently living in Huangpu District, high school education, with a 14 child, face-to-face interview)

Excerpt from participant no.15

“It’s just personal judgment. If it sounds like a rural dialect, such as those of very inner land of China where there’s a large number of migrant workers, I would say that’s a rural-to-urban migrant child. It might be inaccurate; but at least it works for me to judge whether a child is a migrant from a rural place.”

(Age 32, male, born in Shanghai, currently living in Pudong District, technical college educated, married with no children, telephone interview)

A small portion of participants, however, expressed concern that the young generations of Shanghai natives are no longer able to speak the Shanghaiese dialect and therefore, dialect as a means by which to judge whether a child is a native or a rural-to-urban migrant may not work in the future. They believe that the loss of Shanghaiese by the younger generation may result from the large influx from the outside the city and the consequent cultural invasion.

3.2. Stereotypes of migrant children

When being asked whether they have ever been in close contact with a migrant child, most participants said they had not. Three parent participants know several migrant children because their son or daughter attends the same school as the migrants. As parents, they need to attend the student-parent-teacher meetings held by their children’s school. They reported that attending these meetings is the only way in which they have contact with migrant children. Four participants reported that they have contact with migrant children through their house cleaners who have migrated with their families from their rural hometowns to Shanghai. During summer holidays, these house cleaners sometimes bring their sons and daughters to the participants’ homes. The remaining of the participants have never had contact with migrant children. They form stereotypes of migrant children by accidental encounters with them in the street, reports from other people and from the media.

The interview results suggested that most participants had little contact with migrant children but they almost automatically applied stereotypes formed from encounters with individuals to the group as a whole. This is consistent with the outgroup homogeneity effect in which ingroup people believe outgroup members share the attributes of a specific outgroup member whom they encounter (Park & Hastie, 1987). Moreover, previous studies on the concept of stigma (Link & Phelan, 2001; Jones et al., 1984; Crocker et al. 1998) showed that the process of stereotyping is automatic. Ingroup

people do not need to have a deep understanding about the outgroup in order to derive stereotypes. Participants reported that once they recognized migrant children, they almost automatically associated them with “discrediting dispositions”—negative evaluations and stereotypes.

This automatic nature of stereotyping contributes to the difficulty of changing it and eliminating the stigma. The primary reason for this difficulty is that automatic processes are inflexible and impervious to the perceiver’s intentions and goals (Blair, 2002). Because they are inflexible and uncontrollable, they reflect people’s true attitudes: attitudes that are deeply seated, and resistant to external pressures and strategic processes (Fazio, Dunton, Jackson & Williams, 1995).

3.2.1. Lack of Discipline

The image of migrant children mentioned most frequently by participants is that they are bad-mannered and lack discipline. The majority of the participants admitted that they have little direct contact with migrant children and that this stereotype derives mainly from their long-standing beliefs about migrant workers.. Participants’ negative attitudes toward migrant workers that were found in this study are largely consistent with conclusions from previous literature, in which people have indicated that migrants are impolite, uncultivated, rude and do not conform to social norms when in public. Without knowing much about migrant children and instilled with the old Chinese proverb that “children are influenced and cultivated by their parents”, these participants automatically transfer their stereotypes about migrant workers to their children. In general, migrant children do not act and speak in a cultivated and polite manner; they often talk loudly and even curse in public and they do not know the proper social norms of behavior. No huge difference in terms of their attitudes has been detected between participants who have contact with migrant children and those who have not. The only noticeable difference is that participants who have direct contact with migrant children were able to give specific examples to support their belief.

Excerpt from participant no.13

“I really don’t have many experience with migrant children. But I believe children’s behavior and manner are all trained by their parents.”

(Age 31, male, born in Shanghai, currently living in Jiading District, college education, unmarried, telephone interview)

Excerpt from participant no.18

“They don’t know to say thank you when receiving something from others. When they come to visit others’ home, they don’t know that touching other’s stuff without permission is impolite. I’m not saying that they are bad. But they just lack proper discipline.”

(Age 33, male, born in Shanghai, currently living in Jin’an, college education, married with no children, telephone interview)

A few participants even hold the belief that migrant children are dangerous and threaten the safety of others and society. A common belief among these participants is that the majority of juvenile crime in the city is committed by migrant children. Similar to previous findings, this small portion also bases their belief on the relationship between

parents and children, stating that migrant workers account for the largest percentage of criminals in Shanghai and that the parents' behavior influence that of their children significantly. However, some of them offered other explanations, e.g., that migrant children may receive little care and attention from family, teachers and peers, and therefore they are more likely to go to extremes when they are faced with problems due to a lack of communication and understanding on the part of others.

Excerpt from participant no.11

“Do you know that around 80 percent young people in Shanghai’s Juvenile Delinquency Reformatory are children and teens of migrant family. My thought does not come from nowhere. There’s statistics.”

(Age 35, female, born in Shanghai, currently living in Baoshan District, high school education, with an 8 year old child, face-to-face interview)

Extcerpt from participant no.14

“Urban children seek help when they encounter a problem by talking to parents or friends. But probably because the city is still so unfamiliar to them and their parents are so busy, migrant children are more likely to air their grievances and unpleasantness by doing something accidental and extreme.”

(Age 19, female, born in Qingdao and came to Shanghai at age 2, currently living in Pudong, college student, unmarried, telephone interview)

3.2.2. Lack of parental supervision

In the eyes of participants, migrant children receive little supervision from their parents and are therefore considered wild children (*Ye Hai Zi*). Their lack of discipline is also perceived to be a result of the lack of parental supervision. Traditional Chinese believe that “parents are the first teacher of their children”, and they appreciate children who are well-cultivated by their parents’ influence. Tradition appreciates a close parent-child relationship in which parents pay meticulous attention and give detailed guidance to their children. During the interview, most participants admitted that they never had close contact with a migrant family. Thus, this stereotype about migrant children is still largely derived from their migrant parents who have long been stereotyped by urban residents. In general, participants believed that migrant children are not supervised or tutored by their parents in three aspects—personal safety, schoolwork and forming the right value system.

Participants consider that migrant children to be poorly supervised by their parents as a result of hearing news and stories in which migrant children were injured or even died due to a lack of supervision by parents or other adult relatives. As mentioned earlier, unlike urban residents, most migrant parents do not have a fixed work schedule. Similarly, while urban children who have grandparents to take care of them, migrant children do not have senior relatives to attend them while their parents are at work. As a result, all these sad news and stories paint migrant children as wild and reckless.

Excerpt from participant no.13

“Each summer you can hear news about a migrant child swimming in a river or a pond and died from drowning. Children may lack a sense of danger and the ability to assess

risk, but their parents should teach them and accompany them. Nearly all these sad stories happen to migrant children. It's not a coincident."

(Age 31, male, born in Shanghai, currently live in Jiading District, college education, unmarried, telephone interview)

Excerpt from participant no.9

"Once I hear some news in which a child get badly injured while adults are not around, I subconsciously think he or she must be from a migrant family. We won't let our children do any dangerous or risky activities. But migrant children don't have adults to warn them."

(Age 43, female, born in Shanghai, currently living in Zhabei District, technical college education, with an 11 year old child, face-to-face interview)

Participants, particularly those with children, also doubt that migrant children receive tutoring from their parents outside school. This doubt can be traced to their stereotypes about migrant workers who are believed to be low-skilled and poorly educated. Compared with urban parents, migrant parents are on average, less well educated¹. Although the education level of migrants has increased in recent years, 55.20 percent of them still receive only a middle school level education (Shanghai Bureau of Statistics, 2011). As a result, participants take it for granted that migrant children receive little tutoring in schoolwork from their parents.

Excerpt from participant no.10

"Migrant workers don't have the time, as well as the ability, to teach and tutor their children. They don't even have a degree from middle school."

(Age 45, female, born in Shanghai, currently living in Huangpu District, college education, with a 17 year old child, face-to-face interview)

When asked whether participants thought there was a huge difference between migrant and urban children in terms of their values, it is not surprising to find that several participants responded by asserting that migrant children do not receive cultivation and advice about values from their parents. This thinking is still associated with the long-held stereotypes that migrant workers are poorly educated, uncultivated and aimless. Thus, they do not realize the importance of cultivating their children's value system when they are young.

Excerpt from participant no.4

"I strongly doubt if migrant workers would teach their children how to form correct value set. They don't realize that themselves. How could they teach their children."

(Age 32, female, born in Shanghai, currently living in Pudong District, college education, with a 4 year old child, face-to-face interview)

Excerpt from participant no.6

"I don't think their parents have the ability to pay attention to this aspect."

¹ See statistics on education level of the total population in Shanghai: <http://www.stats-sh.gov.cn/fxbg/201109/232633.html>

(Age 28, male, born in Shanghai, currently living in Songjiang District, college education, unmarried, telephone interview)

3.2.3. Simpler than urban children

Participants reported that, in general, migrant children are simpler and more innocent than urban children of the same age. Several factors contribute to this belief. First, because of economic constraints, most migrant families cannot afford expensive clothes and toys for their children. It is not that migrant parents invest less in their children, but most of them still have a lower standard of living and therefore, expensive clothes and new toys are simply unaffordable to them. Urban Shanghai families are typically more affluent than migrant families and parents therefore spend more on their children's clothes, toys and other accessories. However, urban children, spoiled by their parents' unconditional investment, are more sensitive to material pursuits. They are more likely to be involved in competition with their friends. On the other hand, although living in metropolitan Shanghai, migrant children's lives are more constrained within their outskirt migrant communities. Therefore, unlike urban children, they have much less contact with fashion and current trends and care less about material pursuits and making comparison with others.

Excerpt from participant no.16

“Urban children of this generation are surround with various kinds of fanny stuff. And once they want something, parents satisfy them. No wonder they like to compare with their friends and show off. But migrant children are less exposed to these things and therefore are less indulged in material pursuits.”

(Age 24, female, born in Shanghai, currently living in Xuhui District, technical college education, unmarried, telephone interview)

Excerpt from participant no.19

“Migrant children are simpler because their life is distant from the metropolitan life of Shanghai.”

(Age 29, female, born in Shanghai, currently live in Hongkou District, college education, married with no children, telephone interview)

3.3. Separation of migrant children from urban children

The third step in the stigmatization process in Link and Phelan's framework (2001) involves separating “us” from “them”. The rationale for and process of separation is based on the previous process. Linking of labels to undesirable attributes becomes the rationale for “believing that the stigmatized group is fundamentally different from those who don't share the label” (Link & Phelan, 2001, p.370). Results from the interviews suggest that the reasons given by participants for separating “migrant children” from “urban children” reflect their stereotypes of the former. Stereotypes of a devalued group—migrant children—become the basis for excluding or avoiding the group (Leary & Schreindorfer, 1998, Major & Eccleston, 2004). Further, sociocultural contexts and traditional belief also play an important role in urban residents' process of categorization.

In the course of the interview, participants expressed different levels and forms of separation and exclusion. Some suggested they would avoid physical contact as well as

emotional acceptance. More than half of the participants, on the other hand, said that they would not purposefully separate migrant children from themselves physically, such as avoiding having their own children study in the same school. However, they emphasized that it is better not to maintain close relationships with them. It is not surprising that almost all participants felt distant from migrant children even if they could accept physical integration.

Excerpt from participant no. 5

“Being friends with migrant children, I would say, is fine. But, to be honest, I do not hope that their relations go too deep.”

(Age 48, male, born in Shanghai currently living in Huangpu District, high school education, with a 14 year old child, face-to-face interview)

Excerpt from participant no.1

“If they can really find some common interests, they can be friends. I mean I actually doubt a little bit. I don’t believe, or hope, they can maintain a very close relations.”

(Age 46, female, born in Shanghai, currently living in Pudong District, college education, with a 19 child, face-to-face interview)

3.3.1. Difference in Custom and Culture

Nearly all participants agreed that huge differences in customs and culture served as a rationale to separate migrant children and urban residents. This applied to children as well as their migrant parents. Their argument is based on the uniqueness of Shanghai’s culture, which began to flourish in the late 19th century when it first became a foreign concession. During the concession era, Shanghai was characterized as the most cosmopolitan city in China (Wu, 2003), opening its gates to foreigners and a great variety of migrants from other parts of China who went there to seek economic opportunity. The arrival of Western mercantilism into the semi-colonial city brought a hybrid, commercial atmosphere, as well as Western architecture and urban space (Wu, 2003).

The Shanghaiese participants felt proud that the integration of Western and traditional Chinese culture makes Shanghai a unique city, different from any other cities in mainland China. When culture as a theme was raised during the interviews, many participants began to talk about their point of view of the evolution of Shanghai’s culture. Shanghai, in their eyes, not only represents internationalization, but also access to Western ideas, thereby linking China and the rest of the world.

Excerpt from participant no.20

“I saw a video some days ago depicting the history of Shanghai. Shanghai used to be the seventh largest city all over the world back to the 30s. No Asian city could match Shanghai.”

(Age 26, male, born in Shanghai, currently living in Jinshan District, technical college education, married with no children, telephone interview)

Excerpt from participant no.2

“You know the word Haipai? It literally means Shanghai style. And what developed therefore is: Haipai food, Haipai dress, and also Haipai English.”

(Age 39, female, born in Shanghai, currently living in Jin’an District, graduate school education, with an 11 year old child, face-to-face interview)

Excerpt from participant no.15

“Shanghai’s culture is very unique. It’s the most international and open-minded city in China. Migrant children, even if they migrated here at a very young age, cannot understand our culture, let alone share it. From my inner heart, it’s hard to accept them as members of our group.”

(Age 32, male, born in Shanghai, currently living in Pudong, technically college education, married with no children, telephone interview)

Influenced by the city, Shanghaiese are also viewed as the most cosmopolitan people of China. They are associated with a kind of sophistication obtained only by living in a complex city with a strong merchant character (Lu, 1999). During the concession era, Shanghaiese were the first in China to see such things as newspapers, telephones, department stores and cinemas. Even now, Shanghaiese are still famous for their up-to-date, open minded, enthusiastic pursuit of trends and fashion. Due to a strong presence of Western countries, the Shanghaiese’ lifestyle is also closer to that of Westerners compared with other larger cities in central China. Shanghaiese take pride in their close-to-Western lifestyle, and the commercialization that flourishes as a result of by foreign investment.

Excerpt from participant no.19

“I think Shanghaiese in present China has already become a cultural representation. When people talk about Shanghaiese, this word carries so many implications.”

(Age 29, female, born in Shanghai, currently living in Hongkou District, college education, married with no children, telephone interview)

Interview results suggested that one of the stereotypes about migrant children held by urban people is their poor and backward lifestyle and mentality inherited from their rural families and hometowns. Large differences in culture and lifestyle thus create barriers for the acceptance of migrant children by urban people. This culturally-oriented resistance applies much more strongly to their rural parents rather than it does to the children. Participants suggested that the majority of the migrant children might come to the city at a very young age, but their social interaction were limited to migrant peers and they receive cultural and ideological influence primarily from their rural parents. Thus, they do not believe that migrating at a young age helps these children bridge the cultural gap.

Second, the separation of migrant children is derived from Shanghai residents’ feeling of superiority about their identity as Shanghaiese. During the interview, the participants’ tone and statement revealed their pride in being the true inheritors of this unique culture, and their feelings of superiority. This sense of pride and superiority thus cause these urban people to look down on migrants and be reluctant to promote social and cultural inclusion. This reluctance or resistance not only applies to migrants, both

children or adults, but also to people from other parts of China. This feeling of superiority and pride has even earned Shanghaiese notoriety for excluding outsiders from other parts of China.

Shanghai's history of excluding outsiders can be traced back to how they refer to them. Regardless of where outsiders are from, they are called *rural people* (*Xiang Xia Ren*) by the elder generation of Shanghaiese. Even people from Beijing or Guangzhou, the other two major cities in China, have to tolerate being regarded as rural in the eyes of old Shanghaiese (Yu, 2007). Thus, from the perspective of the snobbish Shanghaiese, rural (*Xiang Xia*) thus becomes a typical stigmatizing adjective to describe others. Although, fewer and fewer of the young generation use *Xiang Xia* and *Xiang Xia Ren* to describe people they do not know arbitrarily, the feeling of superiority never fades. In a famous internet forum, KDS, Shanghai netizens even created a rank listing of people from other areas of China that Shanghaiese reject most. Proud of being the leader in a modern lifestyle and up-to-date ideas since its first opening of a commercial port in the 19th century, urban Shanghai still look down on people from the Chinese interior, who are perceived to be close-minded, outdated, reserved and rural in terms of their lifestyle (Yu, 2007).

Excerpt from participant no.7

"No matter rural-to-urban migrant children, or other outsiders (Wai Di Ren), it's hard to regard them as members of our group, emotionally speaking. They don't share our culture and lifestyle. And Shanghai's culture is so unique that I don't think outsiders can understand and get assimilated."

(Age 44, male, born in Shanghai, currently living in Songjiang District, technical college education, with a 12 year old child, face-to-face interview)

Excerpt from participant no.18

"You are shaped by where you are born, grow up and live with. Migrant children are not influenced by the same culture and society as we do. We live, act and think differently. I don't even want them to learn because "

(Age 33, male, born in Shanghai, currently living in Jin'an District, college education, married, with no children, telephone interview)

Thus, these feelings of superiority and disdain for other cultures and lifestyles serve as the major reasons for why urban Shanghai people cannot accept migrant children emotionally as members of their group.

3.3.2. Bad-behavior would affect urban children

Another rationale for separating migrant children is associated closely with the stereotypes perceived by urban people. Migrant children are regarded as not well-behaved, rude, impolite, less well-supervised by parents and reckless. These stereotypes account for their being rejected by urban people.

A common belief held by the majority of the parent participants is that migrant children's bad behavior will affect their son or daughter and therefore, they prefer to keep their children distant from them. This desire for physical, as well as emotional separation,

is most prominent among parent participants with young children because they are concerned that young children are much more easily influenced by others. Two parent participants shared personal experience in which they thought their young children were affected negatively by migrant children.

Excerpt from participant no.11

“My concern for this does not come from nowhere. My son, 8-year-old, goes to grade two in elementary school. I once saw him putting pencil in his mouth while doing homework. I was surprised because he has never done that before. I chided him and asked how he learned this. It turned out that he imitated from one migrant student in his class, whom I happened to know during parents meeting.”

(Age 35, female, born in Shanghai, currently living in Baoshan, high school education, with 8 year old child, face-to-face interview)

Excerpt from participant no.3

“We never allow my son to speak dirty words. Neither do we at home. But he once accidentally said a dirty word, which was not Shanghaiese dirty words. I guess it was a dialect from Anhui or Henan Province. But I think he learned it from his migrant peers at school.”

(Age 38, male, born in Shanghai, currently living in Jin’an District, college education, with a 10 year old child, face-to-face interview)

Most parent participants do not have personal experiences of their children being affected negatively by migrant children. However, because the stereotypes of migrant children are deep-seated and associated automatically with this label, separation is achieved smoothly (Link & Phelan, 2001). When asked if they would prefer to have their children go to the same school with migrant children, the majority of them said no, expressing their concerns about the potential negative influence of migrant children on their own in terms of speech, behavior and lifestyle. They were particularly worried that migrant children’s rudeness and impolite manner of speaking would affect their young children. Migrant children are also perceived as reckless and therefore should be excluded from playing with urban children outside school.

Excerpt from participant no.11

“They like to play dangerous games. I don’t mean that our kids never play dangerous games. But they are very reckless, not afraid of danger. I hope my kid would not play with them.”

(Age 35, female, born in Shanghai, currently living in Baoshan, high school education, with an 8 year old child, face-to-face interview)

However, when asked if they wanted migrant children to be friends with urban children, participants’ attitudes varied. Parent participants with young children held more negative attitudes. However, participants whose children were in high school or college are more open, believing that their children should make independent judgements about right and wrong and that it is better for parents not to interfere in their children’s personal affairs. Generally, participants maintained a neutral attitude that as long as

parents can monitor their children, making friends with migrant children would not worry them.

Excerpt from participant no.1

“As long as my kid won’t be negatively affected, I would not interfere. It’s his choice of friends.”

(Age 46, female, born in Shanghai, currently living in Pudong District, college education, with a 19 child, face-to-face interview)

Excerpt from participant no.6

“I think children are less concerned and snobby than adults. They don’t have a long-seated negative impression. If my kids have migrant friends, I think I will teach him not to imitate bad behavior and bad words. Then, I think it’ll be fine.”

(Age 28, male, born in Shanghai, currently living in Songjiang District, college education, unmarried, face-to-face interview)

3.3.3. Differences in standard of living

The differences in standard of living was another factor that leads urban people to separate migrant children from themselves. Participants who showed this concern emphasized that it is not the urban-rural economic disparity *per se* that prevents them from accepting migrant children. Instead, their lower standard of living prevents migrant children from engaging in the same activities with urban people, which lead subsequently to involuntary exclusion by urban people. The majority of responses emphasized that it is not urban people’s intention to exclude migrant children; it occurs because migrant children do not have an equal opportunity to enjoy and experience what urban people do in their daily life. Gradually, they become marginalized. The lower standard of living of migrant children’s families plays an essential role in promoting this involuntary separation. School often organizes various types of activities and events for their students, such as interest groups and fieldtrips, which incurs extra expenses. As reported by the majority of parent participants, many migrant children would avoid this extra economic burden by not participating in these activities and events.

Excerpt from participant no.9

“My daughter’s elementary organize spring and fall trips to nearby cities every year, which would cost around 200 Yuan per student. Before each trip, it’s like a big party for these kids. They do grocery shopping and prepare clothes together. But my daughter tells me each time there would be several students who do not go with the whole class. And I happen to know during the parent meeting that these kids are from migrant family. If they cannot get involved in this kind of collective activities, gradually, they will definitely be isolated.”

(Age 43, female, born in Shanghai, currently living in Zhabei District, technical college education, with an 11 year old child, face-to-face interview)

Economic constraints also prevent migrant children from cultivating the same interests with urban children, which gradually builds a glass wall between the two groups. Urban Chinese parents of this generation are enthusiastic about having their young

children participate in all kinds of interest groups, ranging from academic—such as oral English and Olympic math—to arts or sports—such as piano, swimming—hoping to prepare them for their future. Instilled with the common saying “don’t let your children lose on the starting line”, they are willing to invest as much as possible in their children.

Excerpt from participant no.2

“Why we work so hard every day? It’s for our kids. We are willing to pay anything as long as it’s helpful to our children. My son starts to play piano at the age of four. He also learns English since kindergarten. Everyone does it. I mean, every Shanghai parents. Competition would be incredibly severe in future and we must prepare as early as possible.”

(Age 39, female, born in Shanghai, currently living in Jin’an District, graduate school educated, with an 11 year old child, face-to-face interview)

Excerpt from participant no.11

“Sending my son to interest groups is almost the largest expenditure in my family.”

(Age 35, female, born in Shanghai currently living in Baoshan District, high school education, with an 8 year old child, face-to-face interview)

However, migrant families cannot afford this huge investment. Thus, their children do not have the chance to play piano or violin, or learn swimming or Olympic match, as urban children do routinely. Participants who raised this concern said that friendship among young children is built on shared interests and how much time they spend together. When migrant children are excluded from urban children’s daily activities, a glass wall is gradually built between the groups.

Excerpt from participant no.11

“Migrant children don’t have the economic bases to get involved in the activities urban children do. They cannot play together; how could they build a relation. In the long run, they are slowly excluded.”

(Age 35, female, born in Shanghai currently living in Baoshan District, high school education, with an 8 year old child, face-to-face interview)

Excerpt from participant no.5

“My son, 14-year-old, likes to play handheld game consoles. He likes to hanging out with those boys who are also big fans of these games. Migrant students in his school cannot afford these games. You know it’s not a small expenditure. Gradually, they form their own group based on interest, and exclude those who don’t share it. But you can say it’s based on money.”

(Age 48, male, born in Shanghai currently living in Huangpu District, high school education, with a 14 year old child, face-to-face interview)

In this sense, participants argued that they are not separating migrant children from their own intentionally but that the process of separation is achieved beyond their control and occurs gradually and automatically. In the long run, an implicit boundary line is drawn.

3.3.4. Institutional difference

Several participants mentioned the difference in *Hukou* status as a rationale for the boundary line. Rural-to-urban migrant children, as their name suggests, are registered under agricultural status, while local urban children hold a non-agricultural *Hukou*. These participants believe that *Hukou* status represents social status and their responses show support for the *Hukou* system.

Excerpt from participant no.18

“There must be some reasons for the current Hukou system to exist. Some resources are limited only to us. I mean, urban non-agricultural registered citizens. They, rural-to-urban migrant children, are not entitled to these. They are treated differently under institutional laws. How could they belong to the same group with us.”

(Age 33, male, born in Shanghai currently living in Jin’an District, college education, married with no children, telephone interview)

Excerpt from participant no. 11

“I think Hukou system decides that children with agricultural status are different with urban people. They have special elementary and middle schools for migrants. Even if they go to public school, they cannot go to high school in our city, let alone attending the College Entrance Exam here². Prohibition created by Hukou system gives rise to the categorization and separation.”

(Age 35, female, born in Shanghai currently living in Baoshan District, high school education, with a 8 year old child, face-to-face interview)

These participants based their rationales for separation on what has already happened under the current *Hukou* system, believing that unequal treatment received by migrant and urban children draws the boundary line. They also expressed the concerns that unequal treatment received at an early age would gradually widen the gap between migrant children and urban people when they grow up, and thus deepening the rift.

Excerpt from participant no.15

“Gap would widen when they grow up. Even if we are not intentionally separate them from us, they would not be at same socioeconomic level with us, separating themselves from us. They are treated differently from us when they are young by institutions. How could we accept them as members of our group.”

(Age 32, male, born in Shanghai currently living in Pudong District, technical college education, married with no children, telephone interview)

² Attending the High School Entrance Exam in Shanghai and going to Shanghai public high school is open only to children with Shanghai *Hukou*. Children without Shanghai *Hukou* must meet six criteria in order to receive permission; otherwise, they have to go back to their *Hukou* registered location for high school. See criteria on Shanghai Bureau of Education website: http://www.shmec.gov.cn/web/xwzx/show_article.php?article_id=67981

When mentioning treatment received by migrant children versus urban children, these participants unintentionally used “*different*” rather than “*unequal*” to describe it. Further discussion about the difference between these two terms will be analyzed in the following section.

4. Why urban people stigmatize migrant children?

Social psychologists have developed many theories to explain why people stigmatize certain groups. The interview results showed that three major reasons can be identified for urban residents’ stigmatization of migrant children: 1) after they successfully draw the boundary line, people tend to stigmatize members of other groups as a cross-cultural feature of human life (Fox, 1992); 2) urban people prefer the status quo and believe the treatment of migrant children can be justified for legal, social, and logical reasons (Crandall, 2001), and 3) urban people want to enhance their own self-esteem by forming stereotypes, the function of which is believed to be an enhancement of personal and collective self-esteem (Stangor & Schaller, 1996).

4.1. Ingroup favoritism

In Sidanius’s work (1993) suggested that it is human nature to form hierarchical groupings. Turner et al.’s study (1987) indicated that discrete and hierarchically arranged social groups can be referred to as “ingroups” and “outgroups”. People have various standards by which to draw the boundary line. However, regardless of the standard, ingroup refers to urban residents who have higher social status in terms of income, education and social and political power. Outgroup therefore refers to migrants, both children and adults, who are socially inferior. Once categorization and separation are achieved by urban people based on their rules, preference for their own group subsequently happens automatically. Social identity and group differences are accentuated. In the absence of realistic causes for intergroup conflict, categorization could serve as a strong predictor of ingroups favoring stigmatization (Ramiah, Hewstone, & Schmid, 2011).

This ingroup favoritism also reflects Link and Phelan’s framework (2001) in which they suggested that stigma is entirely dependent entirely on social, economic and political power. It takes power to stigmatize. Urban residents have the power to ensure that the human differences they recognize and label can be identified broadly within their society. They are also able to control access to major domains, such as educational institutions, jobs, housing, and health care.

When there is competition for scarce resources (predominantly of a material nature), group members will always show preference for their own group (Sherif & Sherif, 1953). When competition for resources exists, human nature predicts that people will value their own group because “it increases the likelihood that one’s efforts and resources will go toward those who are already committed to reciprocate, and not those outgroup.”(Neuberg et. al., 2001). Stigmatization is therefore a reaction to threats from outgroups to the ingroups’ core values or limited resources. During the interviews, when public resources were raised as a theme, participants responded with concerns, worries and rejection. Participants revealed different levels of concerns and unwillingness to share resources with migrant children. Participants with young children in elementary and

middle schools showed more rejection because migrant children are potential threats to their children in terms of educational resources.

Excerpt from participant no.2

“Everyone knows it’s better to have a smaller class where teacher is able to pay more attention to each student. But with the influx of migrant children, class is getting bigger and bigger.”

(Age 39, female, born in Shanghai currently living in Jin’an District, graduate school educated, with an 11 year old child, face-to-face interview)

Excerpt from participant no.7

“Only Shanghai children could attend College Entrance Exam in Shanghai³. Migrant children should go back to where they are from.”

(Age 44, male, born in Shanghai, currently living in Songjiang District, technical college educated, with a 12 year old child, face-to-face interview)

Excerpt from participant no.5

“I do not want any positions to open to migrants. (referring to the College Entrance Exam).”

(Age 48, male, born in Shanghai, currently living in Huangpu District, high school educated, with a 14 year old child, face-to-face interview)

In addition to concerns about realistic and material threats, symbolic threats stemming from differences in values, beliefs, culture, and attitudes between the ingroup and outgroup members are also likely to generate stigmatization (Neuberg et. al., 2001). Previous interview results suggested that Shanghaiese are proud of their position as the residents of the most international, open-minded, and modern city in China. They also have a superior feeling with their East-West integrated culture and lifestyle. Guided by this belief, they perceive any attempt at cultural assimilation as a threat to their own culture. Stigmatization therefore is activated as a strategy to prevent symbolic threats and maintain their distinct social identity (Ramiah, Hewstone, & Schmid, 2011).

Excerpt from participant no.19

“I do not want culture and lifestyle from their rural hometown to be mixed with ours.”

(Age 29, female, born in Shanghai, currently living Hongkou District, college educated, married with no children, telephone interview)

4.2. Use of stereotypes to maintain status quo

Stigmatizing a certain group may originate from the motivation to maintain the status quo that provides advantages to one’s own group. The stigmatized group’s unequal treatment can be justified subsequently by some moral or legal reasons (Biernat & Dovidio, 2001). Urban residents involved in the process stigmatization believe that the

³ Students who do not hold Shanghai *Hukou* should meet the following criteria in order to take the College Entrance Exam in Shanghai. The criteria are not possible to satisfy by migrant families. See criteria: <http://sh.sina.com.cn/news/k/2013-11-19/143470583.html>

rejection, avoidance, and inferior treatment are fair, appropriate and justified, which in turn allows the practice of stigmatization to continue (Crandall, 2001).

The intention to allow this practice is revealed most obviously when *Hukou* system, and public resource and welfare allocated according to that system were raised as themes in the interviews. The primary “justifiable” ideologies held by participants included 1) any current treatment is the result of their personal choice, 2) differential treatment is determined by law.

Some participants believed that people should be responsible for any outcomes that result from their personal choices. Guided by this belief, they think that migrant families choose to migrate to urban cities and therefore they should anticipate any treatment they may receive. Consequently, they are accountable for this treatment because their decision to migrate is made with careful anticipation and consideration.

Excerpt from participant no.17

“When I first came to England for graduate school, I also lived a very hard life. I know this would happen before coming there. But this my own choice. Therefore, I should take responsibility of any results. We assume human beings are all rational. Rational people should be responsible for any decision made under careful consideration.”

(Age 24, female, born in Shanghai, currently living in Yangpu District, graduate student, unmarried, telephone interview)

Excerpt from participant no.19

“Migrant families should clearly understand their situation in urban cities before they migrate. They must know their children cannot enjoy equal resources and may receive negative treatment. There are plenty of stories. I think must have heard from their relatives or friends who migrate earlier than them. But they still decide to come.”

(Age 29, female, born in Shanghai, currently living in Hongkou District, college education, married with no children, telephone interview)

Another common belief held by participants is that any stigmatization or interpersonal or institutional discrimination against migrant children results from the *Hukou* system and laws dependent on the *Hukou* system. This belief is consistent with the reasons offered to explain why participants separate migrant children from their own.

Excerpt from participant no.11

“I don’t think we purposefully stigmatize migrant children. But you know Hukou plays an important role in Chinese society. We cannot ignore one’s status represented by Hukou.”

(Age 35, female, born in Shanghai, currently living in Baoshan, high school education, with an 8 year old child, face-to-face interview)

Excerpt from participant no.18

“You can say whatever this is unequal or different treatment. But it’s decided by Hukou. If we really want to find a perpetrator, it’s the government who establish the system.”

(Age 33, male, born in Shanghai, currently living in Jin’an District, college education, married with no children, telephone interview)

Therefore, stigmatization and any discrimination that results from it are justified by these two explanations offered by participants.

4.3. Improve self-esteem

Stigmatization as a way of increasing self-esteem is documented in the social stigma literature (Stangor & Schaller, 1996). High social status or high self-esteem can be attained when one group dominates another. Brigham's work (1971) suggested that the explanation for stigmatization is rooted in the function of stereotypes. The essential aspect of the process of stereotyping is generalizing from a salient characteristic, appearance, behavior or accent, to a set of assumed traits, bad-mannered, uncultivated, dangerous, and reckless. Stereotyping is blamed for its overgeneralization (Brigham, 1971); however, as observed by Stangor and Schaller (1996), stereotyping has a fundamental function in enhancing personal and collective self-esteem. Guided by this belief, urban residents may attain a sense of positive group distinctiveness and a flattering self-image by engaging in stigmatization and forming stereotypes about migrant children, from whom they may perceive a threat to their self-esteem.

Although stigmatization as a function to improve self-esteem can be found across cultures and countries, this widely held explanation does not seem to be applicable in the case of migrant children, as suggested by the interview results. During the interview, participants' choice of words and tone of voice suggested that the social status and standard of living of migrant children, as well as their parents, are so low that urban people do not even need stigmatization in order to improve self-esteem.

Excerpt from participant 7

"That's not possible. We live a much better life than these migrant families. How could we feel better by seeing their poor life?"

(Age 44, female, born in Shanghai, currently live in Songjiang District, technical college education, with a 12 year old child, face-to-face interview)

Excerpt from participant 3

"I think our life and theirs are not comparable. If we want to improve feelings about ourselves, I think at least we need to find some groups that are comparable to us, right?"

(Age 38, male, born in Shanghai, currently living in Jin'an District, college education, with a 10 year old, face-to-face interview)

These responses, however, reflect the tremendous gap between urban residents' lives and those of the marginalized migrant residents. In the interview, a tone of disdain was detected frequently when they were asked if migrant children's lives are comparable to theirs.

5. Implication for stigma reduction programs

The process of stigmatization process suggested by this study reveals that it is multifaceted and multilevel; therefore, any approach to address the issue must be multifaceted and multilevel. Most important, an approach to change must ultimately address the fundamental cause of stigmatization—it must change the deeply held attitudes and beliefs of the urban residents that lead to labeling, stereotyping, separating

and devaluing (Link & Phelan, 2001). The stigmatization process also implies that it takes power to stigmatize (Link & Phelan, 2001). Urban residents hold an absolute superior position in which they are, on average, better educated and having higher incomes and greater access to public resources, such that they live a much better life in their hometowns. Although both powerful and powerless groups may stereotype and evaluate the other negatively, because the former has more access to resources and controls, the mainstream culture, their beliefs are likely to prevail.

Link and Phelan's framework (2001) also suggested that a feasible anti-stigma approach could change the circumstances so as to limit the power of such ingroups. However, changing circumstances, power and resources distribution are beyond the scope of this study. Therefore, this study focused primarily on providing implication for anti-stigma campaigns that target on urban residents' stigmatizing attitudes.

5.1 Platform to implement the campaign

One major consequence of stigmatization is avoidance, separation and rejection of the stigmatized migrant children. Both the literature on stigma (Dovidio, Major, & Crocker, 2001, Goffman, 1963, Link & Phelan, 2001, Major & O'Brien, 2005) and the interview results suggest that this separation is based primarily on stereotypes and the belief that by separating themselves from migrant children, urban residents can avoid being affected by migrant children's stereotypic traits. The process of stereotyping happens almost automatically (Blair, 2002), and as a result, this automatic nature makes it extremely difficult to change. Considering this aspect, the key to ending stigma within a generation will reside in reaching the young people, who are still forming their values and societal attitudes (Coelho, 2006).

Therefore, the proposed online anti-stigma campaign therefore should target the young urban generation. Social media are an ideal platform considering the demographics and numbers of their users. Further, the use of social media is currently exploding in China. A survey of 5,700 internet users in China conducted by McKinsy (Chiu, Lin, & Silverman, 2012) suggested that 95 percent of them are registered on a social media site and 91 percent of respondents stated that they have visited a social media site in the previous six months. Thus, social media have become the new and most popular platform through which any stakeholders to perform advocacy or marketing campaign.

Among popular social media sites, *Sina Weibo*, known as the Chinese version of Twitter, has the largest number of users at 240 million, followed by *Tencent QQ* and *Renren*, with 183 million and 147 million respectively (Tanner, 2012). Another advantage *Sina Weibo* has is that its users are relatively young. Data suggests that users between the age of 23 to 30 and 19 to 22 are the two largest groups, accounting for 40 percent and 37 percent respectively (Tanner, 2012). Therefore, conducting an anti-stigma campaign on *Sina Weibo* could offer the opportunity to target the largest number of young internet users.

5.2 Approaches to stigma reduction

Advocacy, governments, and other public service groups rely on a variety of approaches to diminish stigma and the effects of stigma on the stigmatized group. Approaches include protests that seek to suppress stigmatizing attitudes, education that

replaces stigma with accurate conceptions, and contact that challenges public attitudes through direct interactions (Corrigan & Penn, 1999). Compared with protest that “emphasizes the diminishing of negative attitudes rather than promotes more positive attitudes” (p. 767), an educational approach has a greater effect and is more easily accepted by the public. As required by the client, this study focus primarily on an education campaign that seeks to educate the perpetrators of stigmatization, change their stereotypes, and replace their stereotypical attitudes with accurate conceptions.

An educational approach seeks to improve attitudes towards the stigmatized group by focusing on stereotype-inconsistent information (Brewer, 1998; Weber & Crocker, 1983). The results of this study suggest that once urban people begin to pay attention to the appearance, behavior and non-native accent of migrant children, they also begin to construct stereotypic labels. Common stereotypes held by urban residents are that migrant children lack discipline, behave badly, are reckless, dangerous, uncultivated and received little care and supervision from their parents. Therefore, information and examples provided to replace the stereotypic images should emphasize the inaccuracy of these beliefs. The majority of migrant children are no different than urban children. They are not rude, wild or unfettered. They may receive less care, discipline and tutoring from their parents because their parents have to strive for a basic living, which most urban families already have. Migrant children, as a result, are more independent and responsible compared with urban children at a similar age. Examples may include a migrant child taking care of his or her younger brother or sister.

Education programs could also focus on why the perpetrators of stigmatization shun and stigmatize the victims (Rusch, Angermeyer, & Corrigan, 2005). Previous sections of this study have presented reasons for why urban residents direct these behaviors to migrant children. This separation between “us” and “them” could be diminished by providing information that relieves the concerns of urban residents that give rise to their intentional separation. Contents that should be included in an education campaign include: 1) the influx of other cultures and customs to Shanghai by migrants will not affect Shanghai’s local culture; 2) every culture, lifestyle and customs is unique and worthy of respect and protection; 3) migrant children are not bad-mannered and therefore they will not affect urban children negatively, and 4) children, whether from urban or rural areas, should have equal rights to education and other public resources and that institutional differences should not be regarded as an excuse for unfair discrimination.

5.3 Concerns with education program

Attitudes toward stigmatized groups are notoriously hard to change because cognitive processes can work against change. Urban people may perceive a particular migrant child as an exception who does not change the rule (Brewer, 1998; Rothbart & John, 1985). Also, there are strong motives that oppose change because positive and inconsistent information may threaten urban people’s longstanding beliefs (Levine & Campbell, 1972). These imply that when initiating education that provides positive, inconsistent information on social media, it is necessary not only to give several examples, but also to find information that is dispersed widely throughout the group, and to make the target audience aware of the dispersion.

The manner in which the content of the education program is structured is also very important. A previous study (Devine, 1995) showed that an education program is

more effective for participants who have a neutral knowledge and understanding of migration-related stigma. Thus, an education program may be at the risk of reaching only those who already agree with the message. On the other hand, people who see persuasive information that attempts to contradict their long-held beliefs may act with resistance (Fitzsimons & Lehmann, 2004), which may, in turn, reinforce their negative attitudes toward migrant children. Thus, in order to avoid negative reactions from those who do not have knowledge about migration and migrant children, the word choice and tone in such an education program should be selected and elaborated with great care.

6. Study limitation

This study has several limitations. First, due to the time limit, this study recruited only 20 participants for the interviews. Although the author attempted to select participants that were able to reflect wide demographic characteristics, 20 participants are not sufficiently representative to draw a definitive conclusion. It also suffers from several sample selection bias. First, the 20 interviews were conducted in two modes—face-to-face and telephone via telephone. While telephone interviews are largely depicted as a less attractive alternative to face-to-face interviews because of the absence of visual cues that may lead to a loss of contextual and nonverbal data (Novick, 2008), telephone interviews may allow participants to feel more relaxed and able to discuss sensitive information. The author detected some level of reserve during the face-to-face interviews when some negative terms were raised. However, the author anticipated this problem before conducting the interview. Thus, before each interview, she reiterated the purpose of this study and her expectation for a totally neutral response. Each time when a feeling of reserve was detected, she comforted and encouraged the participants to give honest answers. In general, the author did not detect a huge difference in terms of attitude and responses between face-to-face interviewers and telephone interviewers in terms of their attitude toward migrant children.

However, when conducting telephone interviews, participants were generally more open and responsive compared with the face-to-face participants, and therefore the author was able to go deeper into the conversation. This may result from the second sample selection bias—that the telephone interviewers were voluntarily recruited. These voluntary response samples suffer from bias because they only included people who choose to volunteer. Their being more responsive may result from the fact that they were more interested in or more concerned about migrants and migrant issues, and this interest and concern caused them to voluntarily respond to the recruitment message. Thus, inferences from voluntary response samples are not as trustworthy as conclusions based on a random sample.

Another concern derives from the selection of parent and teacher interview participants. Teacher participants were referred by the author's English teacher in her middle school. Parent participants were then referred by the teachers and other parents. Although the author maintained wide range of demographic characteristics in terms of parents' age, gender, occupation, home location and education background, they may still share common social networks, which poses a possible selection bias.

The location where the interviews were conducted may also pose a limitation on the generalization of this study. This study was conducted in Shanghai because it is one of the most desirable destination for migrants, and it is the author's hometown. Although the author tried to maintain a neutral attitude when conducting the interviews and analyzing the results, she may still bring her personal experience of living in Shanghai into the analysis. In addition, this study revealed that cultural heritage, lifestyle and history play an important role in how the residents of this city form stigmatization toward migrant children. Shanghaiese are famous for being exclusionary because of a feeling of pride about their unique culture, history, lifestyle and dialect, which exacerbates their negative attitude toward migrant children. However, each city in China has different sociocultural background, lifestyle, dialect and history. Residents in other cities, where migrants also regard as favorable destinations, may not have as negative attitude as the Shanghaiese do. At the same time, their negative attitude and exclusion may derive from reasons other than a feeling of superiority as the Shanghaiese do. Thus, when considering generalizing the conclusion of this study to other cities, one need to recognize the difference in sociocultural contexts that may lead to different attitudes.

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Appendix

Table 1: Demographic information of interview participants

Demographic Information of Interview Participants									
	Number	Age	Gender	Birth Place	Location	Company Type ⁴	Education Level	Age of Child ⁵	Interview Time
Parent participants Face-to-face interview	1	46	Female	Shanghai	Pudong	SOE	College	19	Dec.16 2013
	2	39	Female	Shanghai	Jin'an	Foreign	Graduate	11	Dec.16 2013
	3	38	Male	Shanghai	Jin'an	Foreign	College	10	Dec.17 2013
	4	32	Female	Shanghai	Pudong	Public Sector	College	4	Dec.18 2013
	5	48	Male	Shanghai	Huangpu	SOE	High School	14	Dec.20 2013
	7	44	Male	Shanghai	Songjiang	Private	Technical College	12	Dec.24 2013
	8	57	Male	Ningbo	Xuhui	Foreign	Graduate	20	Dec.24 2013
	9	43	Female	Shanghai	Zhabei	Private	Technical College	11	Jan. 5 2013
	11	55	Female	Shanghai	Baoshan	Public Sector	College	17	Jan.6 2013
Teacher participants Face-to-face interview	6	28	Male	Shanghai	Jiading	Public Sector	College	Single	Dec.22 2013
	10	46	Female	Shanghai	Yangpu	Public Sector	College	17	Jan.5 2013
Other participants Skype interview	12	20	Female	Shanghai	Huangpu	Student	College	Single	Jan.18 2014
	13	31	Male	Shanghai	Jiading	Foreign	College	Single	Jan.19 2014
	14	19	Female	Qingdao	Pudong	Student	College	Single	Jan.22 2014
	15	32	Male	Shanghai	Pudong	Public Sector	Technical College	Married	Jan.24 2014
	16	24	Female	Shanghai	Xuhui	Private	Technical College	Single	Jan.27
	17	24	Male	Shanghai	Nanhui	Student	Graduate	Single	Jan.28 2014
	18	33	Male	Shanghai	Jin'an	SOE	College	Married	Feb.10 2014
	19	29	Female	Shanghai	Hongkou	Public Sector	College	Married	Feb.12 2014
	20	26	Male	Shanghai	Jinshan	Foreign	Technical College	Married	Feb.16 2014

⁴ Enterprise types are classified as 1) state owned enterprise (SOE), 2) private company, meaning not owned by the state, invested, established and managed by natural persons, 3) foreign company established by foreign investment, maybe jointed established with companies in China, 4) public sectors including government, institutions, non-profit organization and school

⁵ When participants do not have children, this column suggests their marital status.

Table 2: Guideline Interview Questions

Category	Questions
Labeling	What will reveal a child's identity as a migrant when you see him or her in public area?
	Why you notice these differences and how do they matter to you?
Stereotyping	Have you been in touch with a migrant child and what's your experience?
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What's your feeling about migrant children? 2. What are the typical images of migrant children?
	What contributes to this believing?
Categorizing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What's your opinion towards group differences in terms of origin, lifestyle and value between migrant children and urban children? 2. How these differences seem matter to you? 3. Are there any other differences not mentioned by the first question?
	1. Are you willing to have your children study in the same school with migrant children and why?
	2. Do you accept migrant children to be your children's friend and why?
Why Stigmatize	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In your opinion what would be the future of Shanghai be with these migrant children? 2. How these affect urban people's life? 3. What's your expectation of future government policy toward migrant children?
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What's your opinion about the current allocation of education resources in Shanghai? 2. What's your opinion about non-Shanghai-Hukou-holder's attending high school and college entrance exam in Shanghai
	<p>(Tell the fact to interviewees that previous studies show barriers for migrant children to attend urban public school is not only extra financial burden but also interpersonal discrimination they are afraid to experience from their peer students and teachers. As a result, many migrant children would choose migrant school where education facility is very poor and resources are very limited)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What's your opinion towards this? 2. Who or what should be responsible for this and why?