International Journal of Educational Research 122 (2023) 102266

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

International Journal of Educational Research

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/ijedures

Self-selection or self-disqualification? Chinese rural-to-urban migrant parents' involvement imaginaries in home-school interaction

Keyi Lyu [a,b], Cheng Zhong [c,*]

[a] Jing Hengyi School of Education, Hangzhou Normal University, China
[b] Chinese Education Modernization Research Institute of Hangzhou Normal University, China
[c] Center for Sociology of Education, Nanjing Normal University, China

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:
Rural-to-urban migrant
Home-school interaction
Educational involvement
Imaginary
China

ABSTRACT

In the past decades, the expansion of parentocracy in China's official and civil rhetorics has bolstered the home-school interaction (HSI hereafter) paradigm where parents actively participate in children's schooling. In previous studies, migrant parents are usually simply described as cohorts who are unwilling and incompetent to HSI. This paper introduces the concept of "involvement imaginaries" to capture migrant parents' dynamic perceptions of their roles, abilities, and contributions in and to HSI. The findings suggest a process wherein migrant parents self-select to integrate themselves into the urban HSI field and acquire urban disposition, and then come to self-disqualify in encountering structural and institutional barriers. Through this, the study challenges the stereotypes about migrant parents and contributes to understanding the symbolic biases and violence that exclude them from HSI.

1. Introduction

Over the past decades, the ideology of parentocracy has swept across urban areas in China (Meng, 2020). The terms like "mompetition", "wolf father", "ji wa", and "scientific parenting" indicate Chinese parents' proactive involvement in children's education.[1] Nowadays, Chinese parents' educational involvement has expanded to schoolwork tutoring, school choice, school activities, and so on (Huang & Lin, 2019; Tsang & Lee, 2016). In this context, HSI, as a major form of educational involvement, caught increasing scholastic attention.

This study focuses on rural-to-urban migrant[2] parents' participation in HSI. The existing studies have noted that since migrants lacked cultural capital and academic resources (Li et al., 2010; Zhang, 2018), they were inclined to perceive themselves as incompetents and voluntarily shirk the responsibility of education to schools (Xie & Postiglione, 2016; Yu, 2020). For example, Chen

* Correspondence author.
E-mail address: c-zhong@link.cuhk.edu.hk (C. Zhong).

[1] The term "mompetition" means "拼妈" (pin ma) and is used to underscore mothers' "decisive role in bringing up children". The term "ji wa" means "鸡娃" in Chinese and shares a similar connotation with "tiger parenting" and "helicopter parenting". See: Xu, F. (2022, May 12). Marvelous mothers. *China Daily*. https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202205/12/WS627c565fa310fd2b29e5c1b2_3.html; Shi, Y. (2018, November 21). 'Mompetition' reflects burden on mothers. *China Daily*. https://global.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201811/21/WS5bf493dca310eff303289f57.html.

[2] In this study, the notions "migrant" and "migrant parents" refer to those migrate from rural areas to urban areas.

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2023.102266
Received 14 July 2023; Received in revised form 12 September 2023; Accepted 12 October 2023

(2014) indicated that parents had no alternatives but sought help from teachers because they did not know about urban schooling and modern educational methods. If not intentionally, these studies have built a disreputable image of migrant parents—people who held weak willingness and capacity and abandoned themselves in HSI (Ji & Koblinsky, 2009; Sheng, 2020; Wu, Zhang, & Wang, 2017).

But some recent studies indicated that migrant parents generally aspired their children could be "real citizens", and they pinned their hope on education (Friedman, 2022; Ling, 2020; Xiao & Cai, 2014). Some studies found that migrant parents self-selected to learn from their urban counterparts and urbanized their parenting style (Chen, Li, & Yuan, 2021; Peng, 2018). Along with HSI becoming a new way of accumulating advantages, migrant parents actively participated (Peng, 2019).

The above discussions reminded us that simply describing migrant parents as "indifference" and "incompetent" and attributing their "incapability" to their insufficient capital and disadvantaged habitus might be inappropriate. Scrutiny over the process wherein migrant parents conduct self-selection and self-disqualification is necessary. Based on a field study with eighteen migrant parents in Yongkang, a developing city in Zhejiang province, this study explored how migrant parents got involved in HSI. This study spotlights migrant parents' dynamic imaginaries, which pretheoretically conduct their involvement in HSI. Specifically, how do they understand their roles and abilities to involve in HSI? How do they imagine the possible contribution of their involvement? Focusing on migrant parents' imaginaries, this study offered a framework for understanding migrant parents' dynamic mentalities in HSI and unraveling the veiled structural and cultural biases.

2. Urbanization, rural-to-urban migrant, and education

In the past four decades, China regarded urbanization as an essential way of promoting economic development by absorbing and using rural labor well (Gao, 2022). The surge of migrants is one of the most significant characteristics of population urbanization. The number of migrant populations increased from 6.57 million in 1982 to 376 million in 2020, representing 34.9% of the entire Chinese population (NBS, 2021; NHC, 2018).

Nowadays, migrants born in the late 1970s and early 1990s have been the main force driving urban economic development (Mu et al., 2022). The new generations of migrants who came to cities in the 1980s demonstrated a strong desire to reside in urban areas (Cai & Wang, 2007; Duan & Ma, 2011; Liu & Xu, 2007). However, like the previous generations, these migrants face numerous restrictions imposed by the household registration system, which denies them equal access to social welfare, medical insurance, housing, and educational services (Chan & Buckingham, 2008). The dualistic rural-urban household registration system, for instance, stipulates that migrant child cannot equally avail of social welfare, such as medical benefits and subsidized educational fees (Ma et al., 2018; Solinger, 1995; Wang, 2016). According to the system, migrant children must return to their hometown to attend public schools, or pay extra high fees for attending private schools in the city (Ling, 2020).

Over the years, the Chinese government has issued many policies to enhance the living conditions and status of migrants in urban areas, including improving educational opportunities for migrant children. Measures have been adopted, such as reducing the public school registration threshold, increasing public education investment, and adding more public school places (Hu & Szente, 2010). According to statistics, in the last ten years, the proportion of migrant children aged 6–14 enrolled in public schools has increased significantly from 33.94% in 2010 to 52.58% in 2020 (Wei, 2022).

But what cannot be ignored is, migrant families' disadvantages were not merely related to population policy and educational institutions, but were also associated with the families' cultural capital and rural dispositions (Funnell, 2008; Mu & Jia, 2016). In 2013, the then State Council Premier Li Keqiang articulated that the key to urbanization was the urbanization of people. The thesis of people-oriented urbanization highlighted the rural residents' transformation in values, lifestyles, tastes, and status (Wen, 2013). In the educational field, one of the challenges migrant families met was how to be a "fish in water" (Reay, 1998) like their urban counterparts. In this regard, for migrant parents, urbanizing themselves became an available way of adapting to urban schooling.

Previous literature has noticed the disconformity and difficulty the lower-class group met when converting their habitus and desired social identities to those of the upper class. Kaufman (2003) offered an informative account of how working-class youths made painstaking efforts not to be Labour. Kaufman articulated that social transformation of personal identities was not easy as it needed the agents to break up with the world they had associated with and strive for acknowledgement from the key others in a new field. Drawing on Bourdieu's thesis, Exley (2013) pointed out that when the lower-class group were exposed to a field outside their experiences, they and their children were more likely to confront problems of alienation, exclusion, and awkwardness.

When the above studies indicated the difficulties migrant parents might face in urban schooling, they also implied the possible symbolic violence in urbanizing migrants. Conducting scrutiny on China's modernization, Paul Willis (2020) pertinently pointed out the symbolic order of "city good, country bad" (p. 44) emerging in China. When the perceptions and actions of middle-class groups and urban residents were enshrined (Huang & Lin, 2019), the dispositions (i.e., educational values, parenting styles, parental involvement) of migrants might be accordingly seen as "outdated" and "illiterate". Echoing Michael Apple's (2012) appeal to critical studies, this study tried to unravel the structural violence embedded in the process of migrants involving and fitting themselves in urban schooling.

3. Parentocracy, parental involvement, and home-school interaction

Parentocracy is one of the most remarkable educational phenomena in the current world (Brown, 1990). The thesis of "being good parents" situates at the core of parentocracy (Shi & Wang, 2021). In China, parentocracy has deeply reshaped the parental role and HSI (Zhao, 2022). It created an intensive/extensive parenting culture that urged parents to involve in every aspect of their children's education, including educational system design, curriculum design, activity volunteering, and even school management (Barrett DeWiele & Edgerton, 2015).

In tandem with the educational marketization reform of the 1990s, Chinese parents got drawn into parentocracy. The buzzwords such as "mompetition", "ji wa", "ze xiao re" (school choice fever), and "bu xi re" (private tutoring fever) vividly depicted the magnificent phenomena that parents engaged in education with great enthusiasm (Dong, 2014; Shi, 2018; Zhang, 2020). In addition to investing in and planning children's learning activities, Chinese parents, according to recent studies, proactively learn about parent-child communication, HSI, learning methods, and children's psychological development (Sheng, 2020; Zhong, 2023).

Importantly, parentocracy in China is not solely a result of marketization forces, but also influenced by the Confucian traditions and the government's neoliberal discourses. The government has issued many policies highlighting parents' accountability and encouraging them to attend HSI. For example, in 2019, nine Ministries stipulated *National Guidelines for Family Education*, which illustrated how to understand parenthood, what parents should do and how to do in HSI (CNWCWY, 2019). Specifically, it defined parents as "the first teachers of children" and required parents to "actively communicate and cooperate, maintain an open mindset…employ various educational resources scientifically and reasonably". In 2023, the Ministry of Education further identified schools' and parents' duties and underscored that schools should facilitate parents' participation in HSI (MoE, 2023).

HSI is an important institution for parents performing parentocracy. In HSI, Parents moved from the "shadowy position as the background basis for ensuring equality of educational provision to the foreground as the key arbiters of the quality of education for children" (David, 1995, p. 276). Previous research has provided evidence of the positive correlations between parents' active engagement and their children's outcomes and behavior in school (Cooper, Robinson, & Patall, 2006; Jeynes, 2007; Simon & Epstein, 2001). However, not all parents have the time, energy, knowledge, and abilities to participate in children's schooling. To some extent, HSI is a space where "cultural hegemony" operates. Children from middle and upper-class families are more likely to benefit from HSI (David, 1995; Lareau, 2002; Ravn, 2005). Parents' involvement in HSI is not merely about parents' willingness to compete for "advantage positions" for their children, but is closely associated with their inherent economic, social and cultural capital (Ball, 1993; Barrett DeWiele & Edgerton, 2015; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Power & Whitty, 2006).

In China, the field of HSI is rapidly emerging as a competitive arena. Studies conducted in China have shown that middle-class parents in urban areas tend to be more strategic and capable in their involvement with HSI. For example, Sheng (2020) found, in comparison with migrant parents, that middle-class parents who have more flexible family support systems were less likely to miss out on home-school activities. They actively seek HSI knowledge through social media and friends with educational insight, making their participation meet teachers' expectations.

4. Conceptualizing "involvement imaginary"

In this study, our understanding of social imaginary is first rooted in Charles Taylor's pivotal contributions. For Taylor (2004), social imaginary is not the intellectual schemes but "the ways we can think or imagine the whole of society." Drawing on Taylor's definition, Rizvi and Lingard (2009) further conceptualized social imaginary as "a way of thinking shared in a society by ordinary people." In this regard, the term "social imaginary" is akin to the Bourdieuan notion "habitus" (Bourdieu, 1986), which operates unconsciously and powerfully as it frames our meaning-making of ourselves and our society. Social imaginary guides our everyday practice.

Return to this study, HSI is a form of practice guided by individual imaginaries and shaped by broader social imaginary. Unpacking migrant parents' imaginary is necessary for understanding how they involve themselves in HSI relationships in the urban context. We agree with Rizvi and Lingard (2009) that social imaginary is carried in existing material and discursive practices. Arguably, the migrant education programs and HSI programs are part of China's educational urbanization and modernization policy trend. The migrant education and HSI programs are embedded within a social imaginary of educational urbanization and modernization.

Along with the rapid urbanization in the 1990s, a large number of rural populations migrated to urban areas. In this context, the central government conducted the policy of *Che Dian Bing Xiao* (removing small-sized teaching venues in villages and merging them into urban schools). This policy concentrated educational resources in urban schools and stimulated rural families' desire for urban education(An, 2021; Kipnis, 2011). As a part of urbanization, the policy formed a center-periphery spatial pattern (Wallerstein, 1990) of educational resource allocation, and meanwhile, established a meritocratic imaginary of the city's power. Specifically, urbanization fabricated a myth of an "expert system" in the industrial context. Rural families regarded urban schooling as promoting class status and becoming elites in the industrial era(Friedman, 2022; Ling, 2020). A recent buzzword "Jiao Yu Jin Cheng" (entering the city for education), epitomizes rural families' desire to position their children in urban schools and further in the upper social class.

In the same duration, China implemented continuous national projects of modernizing education. Arguably, educational urbanization is a part of educational modernization. Here we do not intend to develop a definition of "modernization" or "educational modernization". Rather, we draw on Alexander's (1994) and Murphy's (2004) thesis and understand educational modernization as a meta-language instructing us on living. In this sense, educational modernization is a social imaginary per se, as it constitutes the cultural schemas and scripts for understanding who we are, what is good, and what we can do to achieve it. As a recent policy agenda, HSI is a part of educational modernization, facilitating "parenting modernization" (Zhang & Gao, 2020).

Here we offer a specific kind of social imaginary—involvement imaginary. According to Taylor (2004), social imaginary concerns how people imagine their social existence, interact with others, and how things go. Echoing Taylor's definition, we define the term involvement imaginary as a way migrants imagine their roles, abilities, and contributions in participating in HSI. We understand involvement imaginary as a meta-language that conducts how migrant parents involve in HSI. Involvement imaginary is a "cultural model (i.e., a learned, widely shared implicit cognitive schema) (Strauss, 2006, p. 323) that emerges from parents' involvement in HSI. It consists of ideas of what is pursuable and workable and what should be avoided. The dynamics of parents' involvement imaginary offers an avenue to the cultural process of HSI wherein parents adjust their expectations, cognitions, and strategies.

5. Field site and methods

5.1. Research field

This qualitative research was conducted in Yongkang, a developing county located in the central region of Zhejiang province, China. During the late 1980s and 1990s, Yongkang initiated urbanization by developing manufacturing industries and attracting large migrant populations of low-skilled workers. Over the past 20 years, the migrant population has increased from 69,000 in 2000 to 550,000 in 2020 (Yongkang Municipal Bureau Statistics, 2022).

Yongkang government valued migrants as important human resources and adopted the strategy of "education to attract migrants".[3] By 2021, 78.9% of all migrant children aged 6 to 11 have enrolled in public primary schools (Yongkang Municipal Bureau Statistics, 2022). While primary schools' quota could cover most migrant students, admission to junior high school was limited. Migrant students whose parents did not obtain a local household registration were required to rank top 30% in examinations. As a result, migrant migrants placed great importance on education and pinned their hope of staying in Yongkang on children's academic performance. One interviewer stated:

> If [my son] studied well, our whole family could continue to work and live here. If not, …you know there is no other choice but to send him back to hometown…Could you imagine how hard life would be in that case?

Two primary schools, Zhuitou and Dawu, were selected. These schools were group-mixed. Zhuitou had a population of 204 migrant students, making up 89% of the total student population. Dawu served 302 migrant students, accounting for 60.9% of the total. Given the increasing emphasis on parental involvement in education, both Zhuitou and Dawu have formulated formal HSI policies and offered numerous opportunities for parents to participate in school issues (see Table 1).

5.2. Methods

A pilot study was conducted from September 2021 to November 2021. By home visiting with the teachers, the first author built an initial relationship with thirty-four migrants. Field visits began in November 2021 and ended in March 2022. Twenty-three migrants who reported rich experiences participating in HSI were selected (see Table 2).

Since involvement imaginaries are embedded in everyday stories, myths, images, notions, and ideals (Taylor, 2004), household interviews were conducted to collect parents' HSI stories. Interviews were initially conducted in the form of daily conversations and then in a formal form (i.e., semi-structured) as rapport between researcher and rapport developed. Open-ended questions were asked: How do you understand HSI, and why do you participate? How do you understand your role in HSI, and how do you interact and communicate with teachers and other parents in HSI? What do you think your performance and contributions to HSI? Formal interviews lasted around 62 minutes on average and were taped with permission. Parents were encouraged to share their views authentically.

Interviews were also conducted with teachers and principals. The staff interview concerns:

(1) School policies on HSI and the way migrant parents get involved;
(2) Teachers' perceptions of HSI and the parental role during HSI;

Thematic analysis was applied to unpack parents' involvement imaginary with reference to Braun and Clarke's (2019) work. The analysis began with inductive coding to identify the themes within data in a bottom-up way. The emerging themes were then reviewed, selected, and refined. Parents frequently used the transitional expressions "I'd like to, but I don't know" and "I initially…, but then I …" indicating their enthusiasm, confusion and nerves. This led to the emergence of dynamic imaginaries of roles (i.e., mythical ownership), ability (i.e., incompetent redneck), and contribution (i.e., unordinated contributor). These imaginaries suggested a transformation from self-selection to self-disqualification as a key dynamic in parents' involvement imaginaries. The data were then recoded around this concept, resulting in a three-level thematic map (Braun & Clarke, 2019, p. 91) that illustrated the overall story. The following sections showcase migrant parents' imaginaries and dilemmas in HIS.

6. Mythical ownership: "learn to be an active and cautious follower"

Many migrant parents argued that HSI gave them a sense of ownership. In excitement, Lian accounted that it wasn't until attending the parent meeting in Dawu that she realized parents were more than "children's pickup servers outside the school gate," but "a part of the school". Lian showed the "Home-School Cooperation Manual", of which the front page wrote: "The most comprehensive education is the collaboration between school and family (Lev Vygotsky)." In a similar manner, many migrant parents built a sense of affinity and responsibility when they initially participated in HSI.

However, migrant parents' psychological ownership is mythical. In later communications and interactions with teachers, parents found that their ownership was usually undesirable. Lyu shared a story of "hitting a brick wall".

[3] Measures, such as expanding the degrees, lowering the "threshold" to enter the public schools, and improving the education quality of the private schools, were taken.

Table 1
HSI programs in two schools.

HSI content	Description	Zhuitou	Dawu
Parent Association (PA hereafter)	PA members are crucial in organizing parent activities, fostering school spirit, and coordinating home-school relations.	Approximately 10% of parents participate in it	Approximately 15% of parents participate in it
Be a Good Parent	Home-based parenting activities, such as academic support, fostering good habits, and moral development	Routine	
Parent Meeting	The school will report on teaching achievements, student development, and the future.	Once every semester	
School Open Day	Inviting parents to visit the school and participate in activities.	Once every year	
Volunteering	Volunteer activities	Depend on school	
Supervising	Supervise the routine work of the school (only for PA members)	Depend on parents	
Making advice	Only for PA members.	Routine	

Table 2
Participants and their children.

Code	Occupation*	Education**	Children***
Lian (female)	PT	SHS (drop-out)	D, 20; S, 17; D, 10
Xu (male)	Worker	PS (drop-out)	D, 18; S, 11
Zhang (female)	Worker	JHS	D, 16; S,13
Xuan (male)	Worker	PS (drop-out)	D, 13; S, 7
Liu (female)	PT	PS	S, 10
Huang (male)	Seller	PS	S, 11; D, 8
Cheng (female)	Seller	SHS (drop-out)	S, 16; D, 10
Lu (male)	SW	PS	D, 18; S, 9
Feng (male)	SW	SHS	D, 14; S, 9
Lyu (male)	SW	SHS	S, 19; D, 12; D,8
Wu (female)	PT	SHS (drop-out)	D, 13; D, 6
Tian(male)	SW	PS	D, 14; S, 8
Wei (female)	PT	JS	S, 8; S, 2
Guo (male)	Driver	SHS (drop-out)	S, 10; D, 6
Yin (female)	Full-time mother	JC	D, 12; D,7
Yuan (male)	SW	SHS (drop-out)	D, 12; D,8
Zhao (female)	Worker	JC	D, 12; D, 3
Wang (male)	Worker	SHS	S, 9; S, 1

* PT=Part-time Worker; SW=Skilled Worker
** PS = Primary School; JHS=Junior High School; SHS = Senior High School; JC=Junior College
*** D=Daughter; S=Son; The number represents the children's age.

A teacher shared a classroom decoration plan in the WeChat group and requested suggestions. I shared some ideas. Surprisingly, the teacher privately messaged me and advised me to tell her my thoughts privately instead of posting them in the public group next time… There were many things alike.

While many parents shared similar experiences, few could definitively answer what the "brick wall" was. According to parents, the only thing for sure was that the principals and the teachers, rather than the parents, retained the final interpretations of boundaries. The principals and teachers agreed they had "absolute power" in HSI. Although they highlighted the value of migrant parents' ownership and involvement, they doubted if migrant parents had "the capability to cooperate with [them] efficiently". Confronting with the unwritten "lines" and "boundaries", migrant parents felt helpless and confused. Some parents shared the feelings of walking on eggshells. They learnt to carefully conjecture teachers' preferences and acted as teachers' "ideal parents"—conformists who obediently fulfilled teacher's requirements. Lyu's accounts illustrated how parents modified their understanding of ownership within the unequal power relationships.

> I was inspired when the teachers said that we were equal families in HSI and we could make a better family together. I wanted to be a dedicated member of HSI family. However, I seemed to have misunderstood "ownership". We had no say in this so-called family. Time and again, constructive suggestions were slighted, and unconditional implementation of teachers' decisions and requirements were praised…I realized that there was no family but only a hierarchical relationship…Yes, I still had the ownership, which, however was not what I initially understood.

According to Lyu, the ownership proposed by teachers has little to do with parents' equal participation in HSI. Still, it implied parents' compliance with the teachers' arrangement and a willingness to provide the necessary facilitations and resources when the school needed them. Zhang concluded that parents had the "ownership" of executing teachers' orders and performing teachers' plans. In this regard, Principal Wang in Dawu articulated, "Do not make a fuss please. This was how we school interacted with parents. The urban parents knew it well. They (migrant parents) always wanted too much". For principal Wang, the "ownership" that migrant parents were unsatisfied with was an unspoken but widely acknowledged value in urban HSI.

As the above analysis shows, migrant parents did not grasp the rules of ownership in the urban HSI field. While migrant parents

enthusiastically participated in HSI and aspired to share ownership, they found that their ideas and thoughts were "unwanted" (Crozier, 1999a). They realized they were followers called to serve, far from being "an owner" or "a collaborator". During HSI, parents learned "not to use [their] brain and support teachers unconditionally" (Yin). Amidst the setbacks, unease, and perplexity, parents stopped "naively" (Zhang) proclaiming their ownership. When they continued to participate in HSI actively, they internalized cautious followership.

7. Incompetent redneck: "come to admit incapability"

While most migrant parents worried about their low educational background (see Table 2) and self-doubted whether they could handle HSI, they still actively self-select to participate in HSI. Notably, HSI activities like "Be a Good Parent" gave them hope. Parents were told that with the school's facilitation and cultivation, they could achieve self-improvement and become "modern parents" with scientific knowledge of parenting. The informants looked forward to being capable educators and actively took the courses (Peng, 2019; Yu, 2020). For example, Xu stated:

> Uneducated parents like me lacked confidence in their children's education. But Mrs. Chen [a teacher in Dawu] encouraged us to learn to be parents. She shared professional materials that introduced ways to improve parenting. I was excited, knowing that I could be a knowledgeable and capable parent.

The activities of "Be a Good Parent" organized in both Dawu and Zhuitou effectively motivated parents to learn about "doing parenting". However parents soon found the content and approach of the program were incompatible with their prior knowledge and schedule. For example, tutoring children's schoolwork is a major activity in HSI. Cheng studied two online courses recommended by teachers. One course is about disciplinary knowledge (e.g., Chinese, Math, and so on), and another is about the methods of tutoring children. Cheng gave up after one month of hard studying, as she found the courses went far beyond her existing knowledge. Cheng stated:

> I have learnt about these [disciplines] in primary school, but as you know, I was never a good student. If I could learn well, I would not be a migrant worker. Either, my parent rarely tutored me. They were illiterate peasants and busy farming. I did not have qualified knowledge and a model leading me on how to tutor children's schoolwork.

Similarly, many informants talked about their poor academic performances. Besides, informants shared their parents' indifference to their schoolwork during their studenthood. Nevertheless, no informants blamed their parents for caring little about their studies. Instead, since they have become parents themselves, they built a better understanding of their parents' "indifference". For example, Tian stated:

> Once, I thought that if my parents could care more about my studies, would my life be different? But when I became a father myself, I realized that it wasn't because I did not want to tutor my child, but because I did not have time. As a skilled worker, my job was to maintain and repair machines. You would not know when the machines broke down, and I must be on call.

Like Tian, most migrant parents worked for long hours (i.e., nearly 12 hours a day) and they did not have enough time to follow HSI's requirements and learn scientific parenting. Notably, if lack of literacy and time caused informants' initial sense of incapability, the HSI activities like "Be a Good Parent" aggravated their sense of inadequacy.

Reviewing the course materials, we found the "scientific parenting" emphasized in the courses was not migrant-friendly. Suggestions like "one-hour parent-child communication", "creating an independent study space", and "offering appropriate encouragement and punishment" demanded significant emotional labor and economic investment. It was hard, if not impossible, for migrant parents exhausted from "struggling to live" (Yu, 2020) to enact. On the one hand, migrant parents admired modern and scientific parenting. On the other hand, they were troubled by their weak cultural capital and huge workload. Confronting the conflicts between HSI requirements and their conditions, migrant parents tended to attribute their failure to their incapability to meet HSI's requirements. Zhao offered a representative account:

> I admitted that the teachers' methods were good and mine was rough… But what could I do? I did not have the time and money…I was just a redneck with poor literacy and was not good enough to acquire the knowledge and skills.

Tutoring schoolwork was not what HSI all about. HSI involved a series of works (e.g., facilitating organizing activities, making advice, and so on), which were also, according to parents, beyond their capabilities. For migrant parents, HSI was a "job" quite different from, and to some extent, conflict with the low-skilled jobs they were engaging in. Especially when they learned about the duties of PA members, many of them found PA duties required "middle-class" dispositions. For example, Guo argued that she was just "a bumpkin who sold labor" while the local parents did all the communication, accounting, and organization. Wu, a mother of two, argued that the HSI tasks could only be done by a particular group of parents who not only possessed the appropriate skills but also had sufficient sensitivity and gentleness.

My viewpoint clashed with another parent's when we discussed an exhibition plan. I spoke loudly and angrily. In contrast, that parent, was very polite while pointing out the differences between our opinions and analyzed the pros and cons calmly…He convinced

me that his plan was better…I felt ashamed…I always struggled to control my emotions and tried to act calmly and professionally, but my sushi (素质)[4] is, comparatively low.

Like Guo and Wu, many informants felt sorry for their "poor performance" (Liu). Time and again, their capability was evaluated in participating in HSI and interacting with teachers and urban parents. They found their cultural capital was incompatible and inferior in the field of HSI. The conflicts between the urban HSI field and parents' capital and rural habitus led to a sense of inner conflict and a form of self-denial (Hochschild, 2012). As a result, the migrant parents' sense of incapability was exacerbated and further produced negative feelings, such as shame, awkwardness, and helplessness. They consciously reduced their participation in HSI to avoid the embarrassment of "being clumsy, stupid, and out of control".

8. Outcast contributors: "try not to cause trouble"

Echoing their initial enthusiasm for sharing ownership and promoting HSI ability, migrant parents ambitiously expected to contribute to children's academic performance and HSI at the very beginning. Though migrant parents lacked confidence in their capabilities, they were determined to "do [their] best" (Wei). As aforementioned, parents actively participated in activities like tutoring, taking online courses, serving in PA, etc. Still, parents found that "efforts were big, but the effect was little" (Huang). For instance, Cheng was committed to tutoring her child's schoolwork. When tutoring her daughter in math, she found that she could not explain the reasoning and thinking process but simply give correct answers. Instead of facilitating learning activities, such a crude method evoked her daughter's strong opposition.

Teachers observed migrant parents' difficulties in enacting HSI. Further, they indicated that migrant parents' contribution was somewhat negative. Mrs. Wang, a teacher in Dawu, displayed recent mid-term exam results. It showed that among the 50 students in the class, only one migrant student ranked in the top ten, while eight were in the upper middle level (ranked No. 10–25), and the remaining thirteen were in the lower end (ranked No. 26–50). Other teachers also reported the divergence in achievement between migrant students and local students. According to teachers, migrant students' poor performance was related to their parents' "illiteracy" and "wrong instructions".

Migrant parents also received negative feedback in terms of PA activities. Teachers reported that they appreciated migrant parents' active involvement, but they found the way migrant parents attend HSI unsatisfactory. As aforementioned, migrant parents lack dispositions (e.g., communication and accounting) valued by the urban HSI field. When teachers were asked to name the five most contributing parents, all the names mentioned were those of local parents. When the first author discreetly mentioned the names of some migrant parents who regularly come to the school, a teacher responded, "They rarely brought substantial contributions to the school. My only wish was that they did not hold the school and their children back".

The informants stated that they sensed teachers' nuanced attitudes toward HSI. They found that teachers preferred to communicate with local parents and invited local parents to do high gold-content work, like assisting in planning school activities. Instead of complaining about biased treatment from teachers, parents blamed themselves. Lyu, for example, reflected on her own limitations after participating in several HSI activities. She stated:

> In the first few activities, I confidently shared ideas for planning activities. But when I heard other parents' much better proposals, I felt like a smug bumpkin—having no ability but still trying to show off! During the activities, I didn't see myself making any substantial contributions, either intellectually or physically…I could fully understand why the teachers seldom asked me for help…because I was not able to help.

While migrant parents like Lyu still looked forward to contributing, they acknowledged being somehow outcasted. Surprisingly, they embraced being an outcast and attributed their unpopularity to their shortcomings. Migrant parents like Wang claimed, "Though the teachers seldom asked me for help, I was prepared to be in HSI whenever needed." Wu showed a more flinching attitude, saying, "It did not matter if you couldn't help. Now my request on myself was tiptoeing around for not causing trouble." As regards, many informants transformed from "proactively attending HSI and trying to make contributions" to "passively waiting for commands", or even "escaping to avoid making troubles".

Parents' acceptance of being outcasted was related to their ingrained trust and respect for teachers. Except for Xuan, all the interviewees spent their childhood in rural areas. In Chinese rural settings, teachers hold a unique and highly respected position. A telling detail in Wei's account showed that villagers did not directly address teachers by their names but referred to them respectfully as "[Surname] teacher" in their daily interactions. Besides, Feng emphasized that teachers played a significant role in cultivating the entire rural community.

In the countryside, most folks were farmers and lacked formal education. Whenever there was something important, my uncle, a village official, would ask school teachers for help. Especially when it came to writing, keeping village records, or maintaining family genealogies. Teachers were highly respected.

Moreover, many interviewees grew up in the massive urban-to-rural migration in the 1990s. The migratory movements resulted in a great number of left-behind children (e.g., Wei, Liu, Wang, Huang, Yin, and Yuan). These informants were brought up by their grandparents. Besides grandparents, rural teachers were "the most important people". Yuan recalled:

[4] Suzhi is a Chinese term that refers to the innate and nurtured physical, psychological, intellectual, moral, and ideological qualities of human bodies and their conduct.

> In the second grade, my parents started working away from home. It was a lonely and sad period for me. However, our teacher showed a lot of love and care to us left-behind children. After school, we would go to his house to do our homework. Sometimes, he even treated us to snacks and dinner. I can't imagine how I would have spent my life without him.

The informants built up unconditional trust in teachers and considered teachers' suggestions and comments true. Interacting with their children's teachers, migrant parents argued that they met their former selves. They humbly accepted what teachers said, even when the teachers undervalued and to some extent, distanced them in HSI.

9. Conclusion and discussion

Unlike the previous studies that simply described migrant parents as a cohort who lacked interest and capability in HSI (Sheng, 2020; Xie & Postiglione, 2016; Zhang & Liu, 2015), this study interrogates whether migrant parents are truly indifferent and incompetent and why they appear so. The findings suggest three dynamic imaginaries regarding migrant parents' roles, abilities, and contributions in and to HSI. Specifically, parents transform from active ownership sharers to cautious followers, from scientific parenting learners to incompetents, from ambitious contributors to timid outcasts. These imaginaries exhibit a process of migrant parents self-selecting and self-disqualifying in HSI.

Migrant parents' self-selection in HSI indicates their recognition of the symbolic discourse that worships urban dispositions (Friedman, 2022; Huang & Lin, 2019). For migrant parents, the urban schools with advanced campuses, glory knowledge, decent teachers, and diverse activities were admirable. They self-select to participate in urban HSI and learn scientific parenting valued by the urban educational system (Peng, 2018, 2019). However, the journey of migrants integrating themselves into the urban schooling field is hard. The findings resonate with the current literature that examines the impacts of social class, rural background, experiences of urban-rural floating, and work environment on migrant parents' educational involvement (Chen, 2014; Sheng, 2012; Yu, 2020). Echoing the existing studies (Mu & Jia, 2016), this study confirms that lack of cultural capital and urban dispositions indeed impeded migrant parents' involvement in HSI.

Different from the former studies merely attributed migrant parents' indifference and incapability to their rural habitus and lack of capital (Li, Wang, Cheng, Yin, & Chen, 2015; Li & Li, 2011; Zhang & Liu, 2015), this study sheds a rare light on the symbolic barriers, which contribute to migrant parents' self-disqualification. Since migrant parents grew up in rural families and schools, they held rural habitus and dispositions (Mu & Jia, 2016), unordinated and devalued by the urban HSI field. Migrant parents' enthusiasm and capability, as the findings suggested, were not recognized by the urban HSI field. Encountering continuous unrecognition, migrant parents internalized negative feedback in attending HSI and drew back (Crozier, 1999b; Reutter et al., 2009). This study rebutted the simple stigmatization of migrant parents' indifference and unpacked migrant parents' nuanced mentalities of being afraid of causing trouble. Moreover, this study revealed a "rural mentality" that made the aforementioned symbolic barriers to function. That is, parents' high recognition and trust in teachers, which was rooted in their rural habitus, made them unconditionally accept teachers' disapproval of them and embrace self-disqualification.

Also, migrant parents' "incompetence" was somewhat made by the urban schooling field (Yu, 2020). Feng, a skilled woodworker, provided an example. Feng was once invited to lecture students about carpentry and felt proud of himself. He argued that it was the first time he found himself useful in PA. He was happy that his talent—woodworking was recognized and admired. Feng's experiences implied that the current form of HSI did not well respect and explore the capabilities of migrant parents. In past decades, HSI reforms in China have created increasing opportunities for migrant parents, previously marginalized in urban schools, to be involved in their children's schooling (Li et al., 2015). This study suggests, that while migrant parents are welcome to participate in HSI, they are required to follow teachers and to "learn to parenting" like urban parents (Finn, 2019; Vincent, 2017). As a result, they are still socially and culturally marginalized in a subtle way in HSI (Exley, 2013).

The process of migrant parents disqualifying themselves also suggests that the parents lack sufficient institutional support in HSI. The barriers brought by teachers and the HSI system were neglected (Lin, Mikolajczak, Keller, & Akgun, 2023). Table 1 shows that while schools listed parents' duties in HSI, schools provided few recognitions and facilitations. Even the online parenting course was not designed for migrant parents. When migrant parents navigated in HSI, they attained mistrust, unrecognition, and criticism from teachers, instead of caring, understanding, and help. As such, HSI might cause more inequalities and develop cultural hegemony (Ravn, 2005; Wu et al., 2017), as it evidently admires urban parents (Huang & Lin, 2019; Sheng, 2020). Unraveling the symbolic bias and institutional barriers, this study contributes to countering the prevailing accusations of "disreputable migrant parents" and calls policymakers and practitioners' attention to take migrant parents' circumstances and 'voices' (Crozier, 1999a) into consideration.

Funding

This work was supported by 2023 General Project of Zhejiang Province Office for Education Science Planning: Practical Rationale and Empowerment Strategies for the Involvement of Migrant Parents under the Law on Family Education Promotion: An Empirical Study in Zhejiang Province (2023SCG020).

Ethics approval

The study was conducted according to the guidelines of the Declaration of Helsinki, and approved by East China Normal University Committee on Human Research Protection (protocol code HR 061–2021 and approved at 15 February 2021).

Declaration of Competing Interest

There are no competing interests to declare.

References

Alexander, J. C. (1994). Modern, anti, post, and neo: How social theories have tried to understand the "new world" of "our time". *Zeitschrift für Soziologie, 23*(3), 165–197.

An, Y. (2021). Flow of students, the reorganization of educational resources and the imbalance of urban and rural compulsory education: Based on the case study of N county of Gansu. *Journal of Beijing University of Technology (Social Sciences Edition), 21*(05), 39–47.

Apple, M. W. (2012). Can education change society? *Routledge*. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203083550

Ball, S. J. (1993). Education markets, choice and social class: The market as a class strategy in the UK and the USA. *British Journal of Sociology of Education, 14*(1), 3–19. https://doi.org/10.1080/0142569930140101

Barrett DeWiele, C. E., & Edgerton, J. D. (2015). Parentocracy revisited: Still a relevant concept for understanding middle-class educational advantage? *Interchange, 47*(2), 189–210. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10780-015-9261-7

Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In J. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of theory of research for the sociology of education* (pp. 241–258). Greenwood Press.

Bourdieu, P., & Passeron, J. (1977). *Reproduction in education, society and culture* (2 ed.). Sage Publications.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2019). Reflecting on reflexive thematic analysis. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health, 11*(4), 589–597. https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2019.1628806

Brown, P. (1990). The 'third wave': Education and the ideology of parentocracy. *British Journal of Sociology of Education, 11*(1), 65–86.

Cai, H., & Wang, J. (2007). A study on migrant workers' permanent migration intentions. *Sociological Studies, 6*, 86–113.

Chan, K. W., & Buckingham, W. (2008). Is China abolishing the hukou system? *The China Quarterly, 195*, 582–606.

Chen, B.-B. (2014). Rural-to-urban migrant children's behaviors and adaptation within migration social contexts in China. *Global perspectives on well-being in immigrant families* (pp. 75–94). Springer Science + Business Media. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-9129-3_5

Chen, B., Li, Y., & Yuan, L. (2021). Social class, migration and personal experiences and reflections: Childrearing among the internal migrant population. *Journal of Educational Studies, 17*(3). https://doi.org/10.14082/j.cnki.1673-1298.2021.03.010

China National Working Committee for the Wellbeing of the Youth.. (2019). *National guidelines for family education (revised)*. Retrieved May 14 from https://www.zgggw.gov.cn/zhengcefagui/gzzd/zgggw/13792.html.

Cooper, H., Robinson, J. C., & Patall, E. A. (2006). Does homework improve academic achievement? A synthesis of research, 1987–2003. *Review of Educational Research, 76*(1), 1–62.

Crozier, G. (1999a). Is it a case of 'We know when we're not wanted'? The parents' perspective on parent-teacher roles and relationships. *Educational Research, 41*(3), 315–328. https://doi.org/10.1080/0013188990410306

Crozier, G. (1999b). Parental involvement: Who wants it? *International Studies in Sociology of Education, 9*(3), 219–238. https://doi.org/10.1080/09620219900200045

David, M. E. (1995). Parental wishes versus parental choice. *History of education, 24*(3), 267–276. https://doi.org/10.1080/0046760950240306

Dong, H. (2014). Cooling down the "choice fever": From internal interventions to social governance. *Global Education, 43*(2), 50–62, 49.

Duan, C., & Ma, X. (2011). A study on the new situation of the younger generation of farmer-turned migrant workers in China. *Population & Economics*, (4), 16–22.

Exley, S. (2013). Making working-class parents think more like middle-class parents: Choice Advisers in English education. *Journal of Education Policy, 28*(1), 77–94. https://doi.org/10.1080/02680939.2012.689012

Finn, R. (2019). Specifying the contributions of parents as pedagogues: Insights for parent-school partnerships. *Australian Educational Researcher, 46*(5), 879–891. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13384-019-00318-2

Friedman, E. (2022). The urbanization of people. *The urbanization of people*. Columbia University Press.

Funnell, R. (2008). Tracing variations within 'rural habitus': An explanation of why young men stay or leave isolated rural towns in southwest Queensland. *British Journal of Sociology of Education, 29*(1), 15–24. https://doi.org/10.1080/01425690701728720

Gao, F. (2022). The Logical transformation of China's urbanization: Implications and significance. *Journal of Social Sciences, 504*(8), 109–119. https://doi.org/10.13644/j.cnki.cn31-1112.2022.08.018

Hochschild, A. R. (2012). *The managed heart*. University of California Press.

Hu, B. Y., & Szente, J. (2010). Education of young Chinese migrant children: Challenges and prospects. *Early Childhood Education Journal, 37*(6), 477–482. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-009-0362-8

Huang, H., & Lin, X. (2019). Chinese parental involvement and class-based inequality in education: The role of social networking sites. *Learning, Media and Technology, 44*(4), 489–501. https://doi.org/10.1080/17439884.2019.1620767

Jeynes, W. H. (2007). The relationship between parental involvement and urban secondary school student academic achievement: A meta-analysis. *Urban Education, 42*(1), 82–110. https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085906293818

Ji, C. S., & Koblinsky, S. A. (2009). Parent involvement in children's education: An exploratory study of urban Chinese immigrant families. *Urban Education, 44*(6), 687–709. https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085908322706

Kaufman, P. (2003). Learning to not labor. *The Sociological Quarterly, 44*(3), 481–504. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1533-8525.2003.tb00542.x

Kipnis, A. (2011). *Governing educational desire: Culture, politics, and schooling in China*. University of Chicago Press.

Lareau, A. (2002). Invisible inequality: Social class and childrearing in black and white families. *American Sociological Review, 67*, 747–776.

Li, J., Wang, J., Cheng, Z., Yin, T., & Chen, J. (2015). The great devotion: A survey on the educational understanding, educational expectations and educational participation of migrant parents. *Educational Science Research*, (1), 5–18, 1009-718X(2015)01-0005-14.

Li, X., Zhang, L., Fang, X., Stanton, B. F., Xiong, Q., Lin, D., & Mathur, A. (2010). Schooling of migrant children in China: Perspectives of school teachers. *Vulnerable Children and Youth Studies, 5*, 79–87.

Li, Y., & Li, Q. (2011). The investigation of rural migrant children's family-school cooperation education: Taking example of families in four rural migrant children schools in Guiyang. *Youth Studies, 379*(4), 29–37, 94.

Lin, G.-X., Mikolajczak, M., Keller, H., Akgun, E., et al. (2023). Parenting culture(s): Ideal-parent beliefs across 37 countries. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 54*(1), 4–24. https://doi.org/10.1177/00220221221123043

Ling, M. (2020). *The inconvenient generation: Migrant youth coming of age on Shanghai's edge*. Stanford University Press.

Liu, C., & Xu, J. (2007). A Study on the second generation peasant workers and their citizenization. *China Population, Resources and Environment, 17*(1), 6–10.

Ma, Y., Hou, X., Huang, J., Wang, W., Li, Y., Zhou, X., et al. (2018). Educational inequality and achievement disparity: An empirical study of migrant children in China. *Children and Youth Services Review, 87*, 145–153. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2018.02.026

Meng, B. (2020). When anxious mothers meet social media: Wechat, motherhood and the imaginary of the good life. *Javnost - The Public, 27*(2), 171–185. https://doi.org/10.1080/13183222.2020.1727276

Ministry of Education of the PRC. (2023). *The opinions on improving the school-family-society cooperative education mechanism*. Retrieved January 17 from http://www.moe.gov.cn/srcsite/A06/s3325/202301/t20230119_1039746.html.

Mu, D., Wang, M., Zhang, J., Tian, W., Qiu, S., & Su, G. H. (2022). Migration–deposition coupling characteristics and influence of corrosion products on heat transfer in steam generators. *Applied Thermal Engineering, 211*, Article 118507. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.applthermaleng.2022.118507

Mu, G. M., & Jia, N. (2016). Rural dispositions of floating children within the field of Beijing schools: Can disadvantaged rural habitus turn into recognised cultural capital? *British Journal of Sociology of Education, 37*(3), 408–426. https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2014.939264

Murphy, R. (2004). Turning peasants into modern Chinese citizens: "population quality" discourse, demographic transition and primary education. *The China Quarterly, 177*, 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305741004000025
National Bureau of Statistics.. (2021). *Seventh national census bulletin (No. 7)*. Retrieved May 11 from http://www.stats.gov.cn/sj/zxfb/202302/t20230203_1901087.html?eqid=ace59590004b91100000000464310ef8.
National Health Commission. (2018). *Report on China's migrant population development*. China Population Publishing House.
Peng, Y. (2018). Migrant mothering in transition: A qualitative study of the maternal narratives and practices of two generations of rural-urban migrant mothers in southern China. *Sex Roles, 79*(1), 16–35. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-017-0855-7
Peng, Y. (2019). Getting rural migrant children into school in South China: Migrant agency and parenting. *Asian Population Studies, 15*(2), 172–189. https://doi.org/10.1080/17441730.2019.1578531
Power, S., & Whitty, G. (2006). Education and the middle class: A complex but crucial case for the sociology of education. In H. Lauder, P. Brown, J. A. Dillabough, & A. Halsey (Eds.), *Education, globalization, and social change* (pp. 446–453). Oxford University Press.
Ravn, B. (2005). The cultural context of parental participation and Scandinavian/Western European issues. *Promising practices for family involvement in schooling across the continents* (pp. 13–30).
Reay, D. (1998). Engendering social reproduction: Mothers in the educational marketplace. *British Journal of Sociology of Education, 19*(2), 195–209.
Reutter, L. I., Stewart, M. J., Veenstra, G., Love, R., Raphael, D., & Makwarimba, E. (2009). Who do they think we are, anyway?": Perceptions of and responses to poverty stigma. *Qualitative Health Research, 19*(3), 297–311. https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732308330246
Rizvi, F., & Lingard, B. (2009). *Globalizing education policy*. Routledge.
Sheng, H. (2020). Recourse activation: Group differences of parental participation in the tide of Parentocracy. *Society, 40*(2), 168–203. https://doi.org/10.15992/j.cnki.31-1123/c.2020.02.006
Sheng, X. (2012). Cultural capital and gender differences in parental involvement in children's schooling and higher education choice in China. *Gender and Education, 24*(2), 131–146. https://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2011.582033
Shi, Q., & Wang, K. (2021). Be good parents: Parenting dilemma under the wave of parentocracy–a text analyssi based on letters from readers of popular magazines. *Contemporary Youth Research*, (2), 13–19.
Shi, Y. (2018). Mompetition' reflects burden on mothers. *China Daily*. https://global.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201811/21/WS5bf493dca310eff303289f57.html.
Simon, B. S., & Epstein, J. L. (2001). *School, family, and community partnerships. Promising practices for family involvement in schools* (pp. 1–84). Greenwich, Conn: Information Age Publ.
Solinger, D. J. (1995). China's urban transients in the transition from socialism and the collapse of the communist" urban public goods regime". *Comparative Politics*, 127–146.
Strauss, C. (2006). The imaginary. *Anthropological theory, 6*(3), 322–344. https://doi.org/10.1177/1463499606066891
Taylor, C. (2004). *Modern social imaginaries*. Duke University Press.
Tsang, E. Y.-H., & Lee, P. K. (2016). Raising successful offspring by Chinese middle-class parents. *Asian Journal of Social Science, 44*(1-2), 165–186. https://doi.org/10.1163/15685314-04401010
Vincent, C. (2017). The children have only got one education and you have to make sure it's a good one': Parenting and parent–school relations in a neoliberal age. *Gender and Education, 29*(5), 541–557.
Wallerstein, I. (1990). Culture as the ideological battleground of the modern world-system. *Theory. Culture & Society, 7*(2-3), 31–55. https://doi.org/10.1177/026327690007002003
Wang, L. (2016). Local adaptation of central policies: The policymaking and implementation of compulsory education for migrant children in China. *Asia Pacific Education Review, 17*(1), 25–39. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12564-015-9408-3
Wei, J. (2022). *Stay together! China's migrant children development report 2022*. Retrieved 4 July from https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/PaTgXe2t4AtZnfsKssl5dA.
Wen, J. (2013). Returning to "human" urbanization: Urbanization's strategic transition and meaning rebuilding. *Exploration and Free Views, 279*(1), 57–60.
Willis, P. (2020). *Being modern in China: A western cultural analysis of modernity, tradition and schooling in China today*. Polity Press.
Wu, C., Zhang, J., & Wang, M. (2017). What prevents parents from involving in their children's education: Social class differences, school discrimination and parent involvement. *Educational Research, 38*(1), 85–94.
Xiao, S., & Cai, Y. (2014). Child rearing and the urban sociocultural adaptation of migrant workers. *Open Times, 4*, 9–10, 183-193.
Xie, A., & Postiglione, G. A. (2016). Guanxi and school success: An ethnographic inquiry of parental involvement in rural China. *British Journal of Sociology of Education, 37*(7), 1014–1033. https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2014.1001061
Xu, F. (2022). Marvelous mothers. *China Daily*. https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202205/12/WS627c565fa310fd2b29e5c1b2_3.html.
Yongkang Municipal Bureau Statistics. (2022). *Statistical yearbook of Yongkang(2021)*. https://zjjcmspublic.oss-cn-hangzhou-zwynet-d01-a.internet.cloud.zj.gov.cn/jcms_files/jcms1/web3586/site/attach/0/74a08e08fa8b4f198048b6069248a21b.pdf.
Yu, H. (2020). The making of 'incompetent parents': Intersectional identity, habitus and Chinese rural migrant's parental educational involvement. *The Australian Educational Researcher, 47*(4), 555–570. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13384-019-00361-z
Zhang, D. (2018). The rural-urban divide, intergroup relations, and social identity formation of rural migrant children in a Chinese urban school. *International Studies in Sociology of Education, 27*(1), 60–77. https://doi.org/10.1080/09620214.2017.1394204
Zhang, D., & Gao, S. (2020). Function evolution and value promotion of modern family education: Also on the modernization of family education. *Journal of the Chinese Society of Education, 1*, 66–71, 1002-4808(2020)01-0066-06.
Zhang, W. (2020). Shadow education in the service of tiger parenting: Strategies used by middle-class families in China. *European Journal of Education, 55*(3), 388–404. https://doi.org/10.1111/ejed.12414
Zhang, Y., & Liu, S. (2015). Home-school cooperation in public schools for children of migrant workers: Motivations, barriers and mechanisms. *Theory and Practice of Education, 35*(20), 12–14, 1004-633X(2015)20-0012-03.
Zhao, T. (2022). The rights boundary, interaction mechnism and educational equity between home and school in parentocracy era. *Modern Education Review, 243*(1), 41–49, 111-112.
Zhong, C. (2023). Seeking balance: Chinese middle-class parents' choice imaginaries under synchronous admission reform. *International Journal of Educational Development, 96*, Article 102699. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2022.102699