

Attitude and Evaluation towards Migrant Workers of Urban Residents

with Perspective of Social Participation

——A Comparative Study of Nanjing and Zhangjiagang

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I Origin of the Problem

We carried out a questionnaire survey in thirteen districts in Nanjing from July to August in 2012. In July to August 2013, we conducted a similar survey in nine towns in Zhangjiagang. Nanjing is the capital city of Jiangsu province and the second largest city in Yangtze River delta and east China. There are more than millions of migrant workers lived and worked here which accounted seventh of the total population of Nanjing. Zhangjiagang is one of the most well-developed county-level cities in China and it has been awarded the first of National Hundred Counties for many years. The total number of the migrant workers is more than 66000 accounting for about 40% of the total population of Zhangjiagang. The great contribution made by migrant workers to the economic construction and social development of cities must not be ignored. We should pay attention to their life and work in cities and keep a watchful eye on the relationship between local residents and migrant workers. In order to see the evaluation and attitude of urban residents towards the migrant workers, we organize these two surveys.

The research on migrant workers in China began in 1990s and there are large amounts of literature and information about them so far. Initially, the focus of the researchers is “the tide of migrant workers” and they studied the cause, main characteristics and influence of this phenomenon (Song Linfei, 1995; Wang Hongchun, 1997; Chi zihua, 1998). Some researchers paid attention to the transformation of the rural labors and discussed the motivation, pattern and results

(Cai Fang, 1997; The research group for "China's rural labor mobility, 1997; Huang Ping, 1998). In this decade, the study of migrant workers spread unceasingly and covered almost all aspects of their work, life and families gradually. Some scholars studied the impact on their families if the workers left hometown (Gong Weibin, 1999). The research issues about migrant workers also included: the differentiation of the migrant workers after they entered cities (Li Qiang, 1999; Tang Can & Feng Xiaoshuang, 2000); migrant workers' regional and industrial gather (Wang Chunguang, 1995; Liu Linping, 2001, 2002); the current situation of their rights and interests (Li Qiang, 2002; Liu Linping, 2010); their mental health (Liu Linping, 2011) and so on. But it is worth noting that the researches about the attitude, evaluation of urban residents towards the migrant workers and the relationship between them were sparse (Lu Guoxian, 2006; Liu Linping, 2008; Wang Jiashun, 2010).

The purpose of these two investigations we organized is to measure the evaluation and the views about migrant workers should have the equal rights and interests with urban residents or not. I will study factors which influence the attitude towards migrant workers of urban residents further. This study is a comparative research based on the data from Nanjing and Zhangjiagang. The factors which had an effect on urban residents' different attitude and evaluation towards migrant workers are multiple. This research will explore the function of urban residents' social participation.

II Literature review and Research Hypothesis

Although social participation is a standing focus in the research field of politics and sociology, the definition of this concept has been controversial. As Teele (1965) pointed out that one of the defects of the present studies of social participation was failure to conceptualize.

Chapin (1924) considered that social participation should be seen as a dimension of social status, that is, as an indicator of the degree to which individuals had status conferred on them by their peers. Queen (1941) thought that this concept was made to include membership and activity in social groups, sharing in a culture

through various media of communication and engaging in "expressional" activities, and "acceptance" by other individuals.

Teele (1965) put forward three standards to measure the social participation on the basis of previous studies: voluntariness, formalism and planned-unplanned. Each of them could be regarded as a separate continuum and they covered the present indicators. Van (2008) divided social participation into four kinds, including: formal involvement in associations, maintenance of informal contacts within the home and outside the home, and distant social contacts.

The discussion about social participation is usually combined with the study of democracy. De Tocqueville (2000) claimed that people have a natural tendency to look for social connectedness. He described accurately that after the freedom to act alone, the most natural to man is that of combining his efforts with the efforts of those like him and acting in common. Thus sufficient social participation was crucial for democracy. Putnam (2000) extended this reasoning and concluded that not only democracy, but also levels of education, safety, economic development and health are served by proper levels of 'social capital'.

Wandersman and Florin (2000) combined the concept of social participation with community. It has been defined as "a process in which individuals take part in decision making in the institutions, programs, and environments that affect them". Social participation takes place within a community context, where people engage in social activities in many formal and informal social networks. Forms of participation are determined by issues arising within a community, a place, and include its culture, norms, values, institutions.

In terms of the function of social participation, it has also been seen as a means for self-fulfillment (Warriner and Prather, 1965), a bulwark of pluralism in mass societies (Nisbet, 1957; Kornhauser, 1959), an agent of political socialization and of dominant belief systems (Warriner and Prather, 1965; Olsen, 1972), and a means for the promotion of social change (Rose, 1967).

This research divide the social participation combining with Chinese urban residents' own characteristics into five levels on the basis of existing studies,

including:

- a. Individual level: mainly refers to the individual's interpersonal communication, such as the number of friends, there are some friends from other cities or not and so on;
- b. Job level: mainly refers to that if individuals have a permanent job or not, the type of the job, the position and so on;
- c. Social organization level: individuals involved in various social organizations or not;
- d. Community level: including individuals took part in various community activities or not, the time lived in the community, the number of familiar neighbors, if quarrel or fight with neighbors or not, participated the community election or not and so on;
- e. Society level: such as religious activity, volunteer activity and speech in the virtual community on the internet etc.

Based on the definition above, I hypothesized that the five levels of urban residents' social participation influenced their attitude and evaluation towards migrant workers. I will explore their relations with regression model in the next space.

III Investigation Process and Sample Information

We use the same sampling method during these two investigations. The sampling design was based on the data from the 2010 census and statistical yearbook of two cities. Firstly, the number of questionnaires which should be sent to each counties and areas was determined by the rate of the household and non-household population. Then we extracted some committees according to the rate of the communities and neighborhood committees. After that we finally choose our survey object in the selected communities and neighborhood committees according to the population ratio. When we selected one people, we would select another four people who lived around him as an alternative. In addition, we had a

special control on the sex and the type of the professions of the survey objects. These two investigations were coordinated well by the local governments, so the replacement rate of the sample is low. The investigators were the students from Nanjing University, Hehai University and Nanjing Normal University and they took part in the special training before the investigation.

According to these surveys, we obtained 479 samples of Nanjing citizens and 302 samples of Zhangjiagang. The basic information of the valid samples are shown in Table 1:

Table 1 Sample Information

	Nanjing	Zhangjiagang
Age	15-88(average age 45.75, standard deviation 13.77)	20-69(average age 41.88, standard deviation 13.15)
Sex	Male 240 (50.10%) Female 239 (49.40%)	Male 154 (51.16%) Female 147 (48.84%)
Nationality	Han 472 (98.54%) Minority 7 (1.46%)	Han 302 (100%) Minority 0 (0.00%)
Household	Urban hukou 325 (58.45%) Rural hukou 154 (27.70%)	Urban and rural areas integration
Marriage	Married 406 (84.76%) Unmarried 73 (15.24%)	Married 272 (90.62%) Unmarried 28 (9.38%)
Education level	Primary school 34 (7.13%) Junior high school 125 (26.21%) Senior middle school 128 (26.83%) Secondary vocational and technical schools 29 (6.08%) Senior college 102 (21.38%) Bachelor 55 (11.53%) Master 4 (0.84%)	Primary school 32 (10.67%) Junior high school 87 (29.00%) Senior middle school 67 (22.33%) Secondary vocational and technical schools 13 (4.33%) Senior college 58 (19.33%) Bachelor 43 (14.33%) Master 0 (0.00%)

Politics Status	member of Communist Party of China 159 (34.27%)	member of Communist Party of China 73 (24.25%)
	Non-party people 305 (65.73%)	Non-party people 228 (75.75%)
Religion	Have religions 66 (14.04%)	Have religions (16.94%)
	Not have religions 404 (85.96%)	Not have religions 250 (83.06%)
Occupation	Work 310 (65.26%)	Work 223 (73.84%)
	Unemployed 28 (5.89%)	Unemployed 24 (7.95%)
	Retirement 87 (18.32%)	Retirement 34 (11.26%)
	House wife/husband 38 (8.00%)	House wife/husband 21 (6.95%)
	Others 12 (2.53%)	Others 0 (0.00%)
Self-assessment of socioeconomic status	Upper class 0 (0.00%)	Upper class 0 (0.00%)
	Upper-middle class 22 (4.63%)	Upper-middle class 8 (2.65%)
	Middle class 186 (39.16%)	Middle class 96 (31.79%)
	Middle-lower class 178 (37.47%)	Middle-lower class 131 (43.38%)
	Lower class 89 (18.74%)	Lower class 67 (22.19%)

IV Evaluation of Migrant Workers of Urban Residents

There were 11 statements in our questionnaires to investigate the evaluation of urban citizens to migrant peasant workers:

- 1 Migrant workers provided convenience for citizens' life;
- 2 Migrant workers provided cheap services and reduce the cost of citizens' life;
- 3 Migrant workers increased the consumption of city and stimulate the market;
- 4 The economic development of cities cannot be separated from migrant workers' endeavor;
- 5 Migrant workers' tasks were dirty, heavy and dangerous which citizens would not to do;
- 6 Migrant workers led to an increase in criminal phenomenon;
- 7 Migrant workers affected the environment and appearance of the city;

8 Migrant workers competed with citizens for jobs;

9 Migrant workers exacerbated traffic congestion;

10 Migrant workers sold fakes and disrupted the market order;

11 Migrant workers corrupted the social atmosphere of the city.

The statements 1-5 are positive evaluation of migrant peasant workers while the statements 6-11 are negative evaluation.

At the same time, we assigned values to Table 2 and Table 3. From “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree”, we assigned 1-5 points successively. Thus we can obtain the scores of 11 statements below.

Table 2: Evaluation of migrant workers of Nanjing citizens

	Agree or disagree (%)					Average
	Strongly Disagree	Not Quite Agree	Generally Agree	Comparatively Agree	Strongly Agree	
1	1.05	2.32	15.82	41.35	39.45	4.16
2	3.14	13.42	16.77	36.90	29.77	3.77
3	2.10	12.18	27.94	30.46	27.31	3.69
4	1.27	3.59	9.70	39.24	46.20	4.26
5	1.68	3.35	9.22	29.77	55.97	4.35
6	17.05	30.53	30.74	16.42	5.26	2.62
7	23.21	32.28	26.16	13.92	4.43	2.44
8	28.03	38.28	20.08	9.00	4.60	2.24
9	27.04	35.64	24.11	10.27	2.94	2.26
10	23.32	30.88	25.42	14.71	5.67	2.49
11	38.16	33.54	20.13	5.03	3.14	2.01
Total average	3.12					

We can found that Nanjing citizens approved “migrant workers’ tasks were dirty, heavy and dangerous which citizens would not to do”, “the economic development of cities cannot be separated from migrant workers’ endeavor” and “migrant workers provided convenience for citizens’ life” mostly from the graph above. Their rating were at least 4 points and there are more than 80% citizens chose “comparatively agree” and “strongly agree”. The score of statements “migrant workers provided cheap services and reduce the cost of citizens’ life” and “migrant workers increased

the consumption of city and stimulate the market” ranges from “generally agree” and “comparatively agree”. There are more than seven probitates citizens chose “strongly disagree” or “not quite agree” for the 11th statement. Besides, Nanjing citizens didn’t agree with these two statements: “migrant workers competed with citizens for jobs” and “migrant workers exacerbated traffic congestion”. It is worth noting that there are still more than twenty percent of the Nanjing citizens agreed the statements “migrant workers led to an increase in criminal phenomenon” and “migrant workers sold fakes and disrupted the market order”. In a word, the scores of Nanjing citizens’ negative statements about migrant workers are relatively lower, and the overall average score of the 11 statements above is 3.12 which show that the evaluation of citizens towards migrant workers is above average.

Table 3: Evaluation of migrant workers of Zhangjiagang citizens

	Agree or Disagree(%)					Average
	Strongly Disagree	Not Quite Agree	Generally Agree	Comparatively Agree	Strongly Agree	
1	0.66	5.63	19.21	48.68	25.83	3.93
2	1.99	13.91	25.50	42.38	16.23	3.57
3	0.66	4.64	22.85	49.34	22.52	3.88
4	0.66	0.66	9.63	42.52	46.51	4.34
5	0.99	9.27	13.25	38.74	37.75	4.03
6	7.02	23.08	28.76	34.11	7.02	3.11
7	5.32	26.25	30.56	29.90	7.97	3.09
8	14.90	38.74	29.47	13.91	2.98	2.51
9	10.93	31.46	31.79	20.86	4.97	2.77
10	10.26	27.15	30.79	23.84	7.95	2.92
11	14.57	34.77	32.12	13.58	4.97	1.05
Total average	3.20					

Zhangjiagang citizens agreed the statement “the economic development of cities cannot be separated from migrant workers’ endeavor” mostly. There are almost 90% citizens chose “comparatively agree” and “strongly agree”. I think this is related to the industrial structure of this city. Zhangjiagang has developed manufacture and developing service industry which attracted large amount of migrant workers. In

addition, there are more than 70% of citizens recognized statements “migrant workers’ tasks were dirty, heavy and dangerous which citizens would not to do” and “migrant workers provided convenience for citizens’ life”. The statement which Zhangjiagang citizens disagreed mostly is that “migrant workers corrupted the social atmosphere of the city” and its score is only 1.05. But it was worth noting that citizens chose “strongly disagree” and “not quite agree” clearly are less than 50%, and the number of citizens expressed “generally agree” is more than 30%. There are more than 40% of citizens agreed migrant workers “led to an increase in criminal phenomenon”, and nearly 40% of citizens approved that “migrant workers affected the environment and appearance of the city”. There are also about 30% of citizens “comparatively agree” or “strongly agree” that “migrant workers sold fakes and disrupted the market order”. The scores of the six negative statements about migrant workers is diversified. The overall average score of 11 statements above is 3.20 which show that the evaluation of Zhangjiagang citizens is similar to Nanjing citizen and is above average.

We also had 9 statements about the rights and interests of migrant workers listed in the questionnaires so as to obtain the level of agreement of citizens:

- 1 Migrant workers should have equal employment opportunity with local citizens;
- 2 Migrant workers should have equal unemployment benefits with local citizens;
- 3 Migrant workers should have equal pension insurance with local citizens;
- 4 Migrant workers should have equal medical insurance with local citizens;
- 5 Migrant workers should have equal subsistence allowance with local citizens
- 6 The children of migrant workers have rights to receive equal compulsory education with the children of local citizens;
- 7 Migrant workers should have equal rights to lease the low-cost housing provided by the government;
- 8 Migrant workers should have rights to take part in the election of neighborhood committees in current residence;
- 9 Migrant workers have rights to participate in the election of National People’s

Congress in cities;

We also assigned values for Table 5. “Strongly agree” was assigned 5 points, and “strongly disagree” was assigned 1 points in descending order. For results, see Table 6.

Table 4 Public views of Nanjing citizens for migrant peasant workers should enjoy the equal rights and interests with themselves

	Agree or disagree (%)					Average
	Strongly Agree	Comparatively Agree	Neutralism	Not Quite Agree	Strongly Disagree	
1	45.93	33.61	13.57	5.64	1.25	4.17
2	42.35	31.66	16.98	7.34	1.68	4.06
3	43.93	37.03	13.81	3.77	1.46	4.18
4	45.61	37.87	11.51	3.35	1.67	4.22
5	37.24	32.64	16.74	10.46	2.93	3.91
6	55.14	32.70	9.01	1.68	1.47	4.38
7	43.07	27.94	18.91	7.14	2.94	4.01
8	37.95	31.03	20.13	9.01	1.89	3.94
9	36.97	28.36	21.43	10.08	3.15	3.86
Total average	4.08					

Should migrant workers have equal rights in jobs, pensions, health care, education, election and so on with urban residents? We can found that Nanjing citizens have a positive attitude towards this from the graph above. The overall average score of the 9 statements above is 4.08 which is between the “comparatively agree” and “strongly agree”. Nanjing citizens agreed statement “the children of migrant workers have rights to receive equal compulsory education with the children of local citizens” mostly. There are only 3% of citizens “not quite agree” or “strongly disagree” this statement. There are more than 80% citizens “comparatively agree” or “strongly agree” that “migrant workers should have equal pension insurance and medical insurance with local citizens”. There are nearly 80% of Zhangjiagang citizens “comparatively agree” and “strongly agree” that “migrant workers should have equal employment opportunity with local citizens”. Scores of the 9th, 5th and 8th statement

(“migrant workers have rights to participate in the election of National People’s Congress in cities”, “migrant workers should have equal subsistence allowance with local citizens”, “migrant workers should have rights to take part in the election of neighborhood committees in current residence”) are lower than 4 point which are between “neutralism” and “comparatively agree”. Specially the statement “migrant workers have rights to participate in the election of National People’s Congress in cities”, more than 10% of citizens denied it.

Table 5 Public views of Zhangjiagang citizens for migrant peasant workers should enjoy the equal rights and interests with themselves

	Agree or disagree (%)					Average
	Strongly Agree	Comparatively Agree	Neutralism	Not Quite Agree	Strongly Disagree	
1	37.42	45.36	14.24	2.98	0.00	4.17
2	31.79	40.07	19.54	6.95	1.66	3.93
3	33.55	45.18	17.28	2.66	1.33	4.07
4	36.09	47.35	15.23	0.99	0.33	4.18
5	27.33	27.33	26.33	16.33	2.67	3.60
6	50.83	37.21	9.97	1.66	0.33	4.37
7	32.89	41.86	19.93	3.99	1.33	4.01
8	22.85	25.50	29.47	17.22	4.97	3.44
9	20.86	29.80	30.46	13.58	5.30	3.47
Total average	3.92					

Zhangjiagang citizens’ opinion of migrant workers should have equal rights with urban citizens or not is between “neutralism” and “comparatively agree”, and is partial to “comparatively agree”. The overall average score is 3.92, which is lower than scores of Nanjing citizen. Similarly, Zhangjiagang citizens support the statement “the children of migrant workers have rights to receive equal compulsory education with the children of local citizens”, the number of citizens who specifically opposed this statement is less than 2% of all the respondents. The numbers of citizens who agreed that migrant workers should have equal employment opportunity and medical insurance with local citizens are all more than 80%. There are also more than 70% citizens who “strongly agree” and “comparatively agree” that migrant workers

should have “equal pension insurance” and “equal rights to lease the low-cost housing provided by the government” with local residents. Similar to Nanjing citizens, scores of Zhangjiagang citizens of 9th, 8th and 5th statement (“migrant workers have rights to participate in the election of National People’s Congress in cities”, “migrant workers should have rights to take part in the election of neighborhood committees in current residence”, “migrant workers should have equal subsistence allowance with local citizens”) are lower than 4, and are lower than Nanjing citizens’ scores. More than 20% citizens “not quite agree” or “strongly disagree” that migrant workers took part in the election of neighborhood committees in current residence. Nearly 20% urban residents disagreed that migrant workers take part in the election of National People’s Congress in cities and have equal subsistence allowance with local citizens. Besides, the opinion of Zhangjiagang citizens of migrant workers should have equal unemployment benefits with local citizens or not is between “neutralism” and “comparatively agree”.

Do migrant workers have rights to settle down in the city? We set up such a question in questionnaire: “Are you in favor of migrant workers settling in city?” We have three options: unconditional support, conditional support and disapproval.

Table 6 Are you in favor of migrant workers settling in city?

	Nanjing (N=475)		Zhangjiagang (N=296)	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
unconditional support	275	57.89	145	48.99
conditional support	144	30.32	128	43.24
disapproval	56	11.79	23	7.77

There are almost 60% of Nanjing citizens supported that migrant workers can settle in Nanjing unconditionally. And the number of Zhangjiagang citizens who supported this opinion unconditionally is nearly 50%. The number of citizens of Nanjing and Zhangjiagang who supported this opinion conditionally is 30.32% and 43.24%. The conditions they put forward generally included: (migrant workers) should worked in cities for several years, have certain economic ability, make

contribution to the local development, purchase some housing estates, observe discipline and obey laws, etc. There are more than 10% of Nanjing citizens disagreed that migrant workers settle in the city, and the number of Zhangjiagang citizens who have similar opinion is 7.77%.

In a word, the attitude and evaluation of citizens of Nanjing and Zhangjiagang is above the average. Next, I will explore the influence factors of citizens' attitude and evaluation by building regression models based on the hypothesis about social participation mentioned above.



I am very sorry that actually my paper has not been completed totally as I am still busy in building the regression model. Besides, I have several questions which I want to discuss with my senior professors:

First, as the definition of social participation is always controversial, is my definition (I divided social participation into 5 parts: individual level, work level, social organization level, community level and society level) reasonable?

Second, I want to explore the relationship between urban residents' social participation and their attitude and evaluation towards migrant workers. I know this relation is very complex. Is social participation the direct influence factors, or is it a kind of moderating variables, or are there any mediating variables between urban residents' social participation and their attitude towards migrant workers?

Third, I want to explore the influence factors of urban residents' attitude and evaluation towards migrant workers by building regression models. But I am not very clear that which model is the most appropriate. I planned to build multiple linear regression model. But I am a bit confused that whether this kind of model is simple.

I will be very grateful if senior professor could give me some advice.

