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Control without Coercion: Public Service Provision for Migrant Workers and Social Control in China

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Control without Coercion:
Public Service Provision for Migrant Workers and Social Control in China

By

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Committee in charge:

Professor Kevin O'Brien, Chair
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Abstract

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This project focuses on the following puzzle: Why have local authorities in China engaged in a distinctive pattern of expanding *and* restricting public services at the same time? What explains the particular pattern of expansion and restriction?

While local officials primarily enact social policy to provide services, they have engaged in a distinctive pattern of expansion and restriction of services to also enhance social stability and control migrant workers. These governments face the daunting challenge of the world's most rapid urbanization: they seek to attract migrant workers and to preserve social stability at the same time. Therefore, they devise an approach to the provision of social services that sometimes gives preference to the state's goals of stability over the migrant workers' actual welfare needs. I define social control as the state's means, both formal and informal, of influencing members of society to make decisions and act in ways that are desired by the state. As local governments channel and contain migrant demands, collective claims of exclusion and discrimination are supplanted by individual bureaucratic battles over eligibility and documentation. At the same time, service provider discretion and migrant agency counter the effects of social control and enable some migrants to gain access to education and healthcare.

My research challenges existing scholarship on authoritarian durability, public service provision, and citizenship in China. Regulation of migrants provides a window into state control and day-to-day authoritarian governance. The literature on authoritarian durability focuses on the institutionalization of elite power transitions and harbingers of regime change, but sometimes forgets that stability maintenance is a pressing daily task never far from rulers' minds. Contrary to some scholars of authoritarian durability who find governments give concessions to avert immediate or visible instability from restive groups, Chinese officials sometimes do the opposite and restrict benefits. Unlike other studies that focus on only whether services are provided (often to maximize efficiency or buy loyalty), I find that how public services are provided is itself a tool of social control. In contrast to the clear bifurcation between rural migrants and urban residents in the past, gradations in second-class citizenship among migrant workers have emerged. My dissertation expands our understanding of how non-democratic states hone their methods of social control.

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Part One

Public Services and Social Control

Chapter One

Public Service Provision and Social Stability

Introduction

In the lead-up to the 2008 Summer Olympics, Beijing suddenly shut down dozens of migrant schools. Thousands of affected rural migrant students could not enroll in public schools as outsiders to the city, and their parents scrambled to decide whether they would have to leave Beijing to ensure their children could continue their education that year. Officials cited concerns over the substandard quality of teachers and facilities in unregistered migrant schools. Critics claimed that the government was intent on encouraging migrant workers to leave the capital city before the international event began. Because the household registration (*hukou*) system ties most migrants' services to their hometown in the countryside and generally excludes them from urban public goods, these students and their families are part of a large, marginalized group of 260 million migrants in China. The closure of migrant schools and other similar campaigns reveal the complex interplay between social policy, state control, and the welfare of ordinary people in China.

Focusing on the on-the-ground experience of the stakeholders in public service provision, I examine how local government officials, frontline service providers, and migrant workers influence how and why some migrants are able to gain access to public healthcare and education services in the city while others cannot. Empirically, this is an account of how local governments in China manage the world's most rapid urbanization. Local governments must decide whether to provide or restrict social services to the massive population of migrant workers in their cities and how to attract necessary labor for the local economy while preserving social stability. As a result, they sometimes use public services for migrants as a tool of social control. Conceptually, this project showcases one way authoritarian states control marginalized social groups without coercion. Instead of using force against migrants or buying them off, local governments manage their demands and bureaucratize conflict.

A Preview of the Argument

This project focuses on the following puzzle: Why have local authorities in China engaged in a distinctive pattern of expanding *and* restricting public services at the same time? What explains the particular pattern of expansion and restriction?

While local officials primarily enact social policy to provide services, they have engaged in a distinctive pattern of expansion and restriction of services to also enhance social stability and control migrant workers. These governments face the daunting challenge of the world's most rapid urbanization: they seek to attract migrant workers and to preserve social stability at the same time. Therefore, they devise an approach to the provision of social services that sometimes gives preference to the state's goals of stability over the migrant workers' actual welfare needs. I define social control as the state's means, both formal and informal, of influencing members of society to make decisions and act in ways that are desired by the state.

In this project, I focus on one component of local citizenship, namely migrants' social citizenship. According to one influential, widely-used typology, there are three types of

citizenship: civil, political, and social (Marshall 1950).[1] Social citizenship entails a right to some level of economic welfare and security and the right to social services available to everyone, such as in education.[2] The expansion of services in cities to migrants grants them the latter element of social citizenship, but it does not give them a right to a certain level of economic security. Nor does it impart full urban citizenship to them, as social service expansion does not grant them civil or political citizenship.

Contrary to some of the literature on authoritarian durability and the welfare state, when local governments want to avert immediate or visible instability from potentially restive groups, officials sometimes restrict benefits instead of give concessions. For example, the Chinese government uses public service provision as a tool of social control to dampen opposition to policies such as land reclamation. The state narrows the set of choices available to migrants and encourages them to make the decisions the authorities wanted them to make. As local governments depoliticize and defuse conflict, collective claims of exclusion and discrimination are supplanted by individual bureaucratic battles over eligibility and documentation. Differences in regional identities between local officials and migrants and career incentives to produce quick, visible results further shape how local governments provide services to migrant workers.

At the same time, service provider discretion and migrant agency counter the effects of social control and enable some migrants to gain access to education and healthcare. Hospital administrators, principals, doctors, and teachers sometimes provide worse or better services than the baseline to their migrant clients. While some frontline service providers who are native urban residents discriminate against migrants, many high-skilled migrants enact co-migrant empathy and provide more discretionary, locally oriented services to low-skilled migrant workers. Not only can service providers influence the quality and quantity of services migrants get, but migrant workers themselves are also able to exercise agency and gain access to services. Though the fragmented system with imperfect coordination between bureaucracies usually prevents them from participating in public services, it also creates some opportunities for migrants to obtain access to healthcare and education by manipulating the system or creating private alternatives to government-sponsored schemes. As a result, frontline service providers and migrants themselves can counter some of the effects of restrictions on their access to urban public services.

Theoretical Contributions

Day-to-Day Authoritarian Durability

Effective public service provision and management of social groups such as migrants also bolster the durability of the Chinese regime. Because many cities need migrant labor to work across the construction, manufacturing, and informal service sectors, they cannot wholesale drive them out of the city. This is true for all stages of urban development, from the construction of apartment buildings in new cities to the staffing of restaurants in well-populated cities. Yet, an unchecked influx of people is no more desirable. Based on the sixth national census in 2010, the Beijing Municipal Bureau of Statistics reported that Beijing's population rose to 19.6 million, up 44.5

[1] Civil citizenship involves rights to individual freedom, including freedom of speech, liberty, and the right to justice. Political citizenship means the right to participate in the exercise of political power.

[2] See (Fong and Murphy 2006) on the citizenship of various marginal groups in China. For a discussion on the development of political citizenship in China, see (K. O'Brien 2001; Goldman and Perry 2002; Goldman 2005).

percent or 6 million people from 2000.[3] During those ten years, Beijing's annual average growth rate was 3.8 percent, more than six times that of the national average of 0.57 percent; the growth was mostly due to migrants. Such steady population growth puts pressure on city infrastructure and services. Migrants are making demands to be eligible to participate in transferrable social insurance programs so they can access healthcare in the urban public hospitals and to enroll their children in public schools in the city. In addition, some local governments fear that low-skilled migrant workers might bring crime and become a large underclass in the city. With this delicate balance between retaining key labor and avoiding a drain on municipal resources, local governments employ public services as a tool of social control.[4]

Chinese leaders are overtly concerned with any threats that might undermine stability, and the government designs specific policies to target certain social groups for their *perceived* threats to social stability. Although the state's favorable of treatment of cities may aid stability in the short run, massive rural-to-urban migration can lead to eventual political upheaval (Wallace 2014). Because of their substantial numbers and often tight-knit communities in close quarters, migrants pose a potential threat to stability if enough of them organize en masse.[5] The restriction and provision of public services is one way to contain and channel the demands of migrants. While it is not the only way to control this population, it is less expensive and less likely to incite escalation than coercion. To deal with such a large and marginalized group, the Chinese state engages in social control.

Social control is but one part of the Chinese state's arsenal to maintain stability. Scholars have found that institutionalization (Nathan 2003; Heberer and Schubert 2006) and managed political participation buttress authoritarian resilience in China (Y. Cai 2008; Stockmann and Gallagher 2011; Xi Chen 2012; Lee and Zhang 2013).[6] Skeptics argue that regime resilience is limited because of inherent weaknesses in the system and ongoing problems such as repression and corruption (Gilley 2003; Pei 2012; C. Li 2012). Advocates of institutionalization tend to concentrate on elite transitions and promotions, but major power shifts only occur every ten years and there is no shortage of corruption or abuse of power.[7] Researchers of managed participation focus on resistors to the regime, yet most ordinary people do not engage in contention. In contrast to the focus on elite-level institutionalization and the management of resistors to the regime, I contend that China also seeks to control marginalized social groups by containing and channeling their demands before resistance and contention. With steep and persistent inequality,[8] economic growth alone is not a sufficient explanation to explain how the Chinese state manages society. Despite the fact that migrant workers are materially better off

[3] (Xinhua News 2011)

[4] I develop this concept more fully in Chapter 3.

[5] The close proximity of migrant workers' living and working quarters and their shared regional identities could serve as the foundation of mobilization structures. See (K. J. O'Brien and Stern 2008) for more on opportunities for and constraints on popular protest in China.

[6] In authoritarian regimes, "leaders are intolerant of people or groups perceived as threatening to the regime's monopoly over the institutions of the state" (Wedeen 1999: 26). Juan Linz defines nondemocratic, non-totalitarian authoritarian regimes as "political systems with limited, not responsible, political pluralism, without elaborate and guiding ideology, but with distinctive mentalities, without extensive nor intensive political mobilization, except at some points in their development, and in which a leader or occasionally a small group exercises power within formally ill-defined limits but actually quite predictable ones" (Linz 1964: p. 255).

[7] See Yan Sun's book for more on corruption and market reform (2004).

[8] (Xie and Zhou 2014) use multiple sources of data to show that China's income inequality since 2005 has reached very high levels with a Gini coefficient of 0.55 in 2012. By comparison, the Gini coefficient was around 0.30 in China in 1980 and 0.45 in the United States in 2010.

than they were during the Maoist Era, their support for the political system is tenuous at best (Wright 2010). Of course, while these are not indications migrants will overthrow the government, migrant workers remain a large and visible marginalized social group. Most dictators do not fall due to mass opposition movements but rather by being replaced by a small group of elites (Geddes 1999). Nonetheless, studying social policy levers for state control helps fill these gaps in our knowledge about authoritarian governance, especially how they function day-to-day rather than only how their rulers come into power or fall.

Scholars have identified several patterns of state-society relations in authoritarian regimes.[9] Some use civil society and contentious politics (Riley 2010; Slater 2010) to explain the origins of authoritarian regimes but say less about the dynamics of how these regimes rule. The management of migrants offers a window into these state-society dynamics in authoritarian China. Many researchers who look at threats from society emphasize direct patronage and the exchange of economic transfers and rents for loyalty. When authoritarian rulers want to induce cooperation and reduce threats from civil society, they share spoils or make policy compromises through the institutional channel of legislatures or parties (Gandhi and Przeworski 2007). Research in this vein tends to focus on institutionalization to bolster support for the regime, whereas I posit that the bureaucratization of conflict in China is about individualizing and containing demands rather than grouping them together through the institutions identified by other scholars.

Extending selectorate theory (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003), some scholars argue that leaders can increase the provision of public goods to improve citizen welfare and lessen their desire for revolutionary change or decrease public goods, such as free press and transparency, to reduce the probability of revolutionary success (Bueno de Mesquita and Smith 2010). In China, I argue that the opposite sometimes happens: local authorities can withdraw services to maintain social order. By taking away services, they can encourage migrants to move away and thereby ease resistance prior to land reclamation projects. At times, local governments reduce access to education and healthcare, examples of public goods which the state could use to buy off potential revolutionaries in Bueno de Mesquita and Smith's model, to fend off discontent by individualizing the issue of access and pass the problem on to the next city or district where the migrant moves. Further, I find that leaders sometimes use a different, mixed strategy where they increase the provision of public services for some migrants while taking it away from others to undermine potential political organization against the state. Instead of treating society as a whole, they deal with threats to social stability by giving to some but not others. Contrary to the literature that focuses on either increasing or decreasing public goods provision, I contend the Chinese state sometimes restricts and expands public service provision at the same time.

One-party regimes, such as China, are the most common type of authoritarian rule, so students of authoritarianism could potentially extend this analysis of social control and day-to-day authoritarian durability to other contexts. These regimes comprise 57% of authoritarian regimes from 1950 to 2006 and 33% of the total number of regimes in the world (Magaloni and Kricheli 2010, p. 124). "The institutional turn in comparative authoritarianism risks privileging research on 'surface' politics at the expense of 'deep' politics…But authoritarian regimes do

[9] Ever since the Third Wave of Democratization, scholars have paid increasing attention to the underpinnings of authoritarian durability as these regimes have withstood challenges to their rule. To explain the persistence of authoritarian regimes around the world, another segment of literature has identified the robustness of the coercive apparatus (Bellin 2004), institutions such as legislatures (Gandhi and Przeworski 2007; Gandhi 2008), and political parties and elections (Magaloni 2008; S. Levitsky and Way 2010; S. R. Levitsky and Way 2012).

many things besides grow/stagnate and survive/collapse" (Pepinsky 2014, p. 20). Indeed, the Chinese government itself has evolved its approach to dealing with social unrest and conflict from stability maintenance (*weiwen*) to social management (*shehui guanli*). The literature on authoritarian resilience focuses on institutionalization of elite power transitions and harbingers of regime change, but sometimes forgets that stability maintenance is a pressing daily task never far from rulers' minds.

Public Service Provision

Another daily task for rulers is the provision of public goods. Some scholars document the positive effect of the presence of social ties, often through lineage groups, on public service provision in the countryside (L. Tsai 2007; J. Chen and Huhe 2013; Xu and Yao 2015).[10] These close social ties between local officials and constituents are far less prevalent in the city. Higher administrative levels provide urban public services, which increase the distance between local officials and constituents compared to that between village cadres and village residents. In the host city, migrants are even less likely to be part of the social network of members of the local government. In the city, I find that social ties among migrants and service providers play a bigger role than close connections between officials and constituents. For example, migrants band together and send their children to private "people-run" migrant schools or participate in informal insurance groups to create services outside the state. This project expands our limited understanding of public goods provision in urban China by examining other factors, such as strategies of social control and migrant agency in a fragmented system.

Looking beyond rural public goods, research on urban public services in China often isolates a single type of service. Sizable reforms of state-owned enterprises (SOE) in the 1990s prompted a restructuring of pension benefits for laid-off workers (Hurst 2009, Frazier 2010). The experiences of laid-off SOE workers may not be generalizable to all social groups since they could make claims on the state as former public sector workers. Another welfare program that has been the subject of frequent study is the Minimum Livelihood Guarantee (*zhuidi shenghuo baozhang*, or *dibao* for short), which the state uses to reduce poverty and keep its target population out of view (M. Wang 2007; D. J. Solinger 2008; D. J. Solinger and Hu 2012). Studies on housing highlight the commercialization process and how the system disadvantages migrants (F. Wu 1996; Youqin Huang 2012), but they do not draw out broader implications beyond housing for other types of services or local policy in general. By comparing healthcare and education services, we can better understand why the state treats migrant workers better in some places and worse in others, whereas conclusions drawn from studies that focus on a single service may be idiosyncratic to the politics and economics of that particular type of social service.[11] By studying two kinds of services, I find that local governments have a general

[10] Much of the extensive literature on local public goods provision in China is situated in the countryside, the mechanisms of which do not usually apply in the city. Accountability through village elections and other incentive structures shape the provision of public goods in villages (X. Zhang et al. 2004; Luo et al. 2007; L. C. Li 2008; Kung, Cai, and Sun 2009; Martinez-bravo et al. 2011; Martinez-bravo et al. 2012; Newland Unpublished Paper). However, this electoral mechanism does not extend beyond the village into the city in China. Instead of leveraging accountability mechanisms, migrants access urban services by following bureaucratic rules over eligibility and documentation, manipulating the system to carve out certain services such as work-injury related insurance, or going to unlicensed health clinics instead of public hospitals.

[11] Another strand of research has focused on the contracting out of services in China (Jing 2008; Simon and Teets 2012; Teets 2012), but most migrant schools and clinics are unofficial and operate illegally.

orientation toward migrants, thereby highlighting the primacy of regional differences over sector- or service-specific variation.

One exception to this singular focus on a type of service is a comprehensive overview of China's social welfare system in which the author argues market forces should play a greater role in service provision (Saich 2008). However, the interplay of state and market forces in service provision is more complicated than meeting societal demand with sufficient supply. Many studies of service provision cite public expenditure numbers and aggregate measures of human development, but these do not provide a full picture. For segments of the population like migrants, they are neither a special class like laid-off SOE workers nor full participants in the urban employee and resident schemes. Much of their ability to access high quality services depends on how they navigate at the point of service delivery in a school or hospital, not at the level of where a formal policy is written in a government office. This reminds scholars of a methodological point that the study of service provision benefits from observing the point of service delivery, as it may differ from what policymakers intended.[12] In urban healthcare and education, I find market-oriented reforms have actually opened space for discretionary delivery of services by doctors and teachers. Migrants sometimes gain more from this discretion and in effect get their demands for services met, but at other times, they may receive less than the baseline because of the consequences of the same marketization.

Looking outside China, research on social policies in developing countries is growing.[13] Scholars who focus on non-OECD countries tend to examine high-level policy formulation and diffusion (J. Wong 2006; Segura-Ubiergo 2007; Haggard and Kaufman 2008; Brooks 2008; Rudra 2008; Weyland 2009; Mares and Carnes 2009; McGuire 2010). In contrast, this project looks at ground-level access to services and how authorities in China actually implement these policies. For Chinese migrants, I find their lived experience of access to healthcare and education shows that on-the-ground implementation often diverges from formal policy due to two separate sets of actors, local government officials and frontline service providers. More recently, scholars of public goods provision in developing countries have identified the common trend of non-state provision of social welfare by non-profit organizations and for-profit firms (Cammett and MacLean 2011; Cammett and MacLean 2014). Whereas they focus on non-state provision of welfare when state capacity is weak in the Global South, I posit that even when the state continues to provide services, state capacity can still be low if they use public service provision as a tool of social control.

Degrees of Second-Class Citizenship

With a few notable exceptions (D. Solinger 1999) migrant workers have been under-studied in research on Chinese politics. Beyond political science, research on migrant workers has predominantly focused on ethnographic studies of the experiences of women migrant workers (C. C. Fan 2004; Jacka 2006; Lee 1998; K. Roberts et al. 2004; Yamanaka and Piper 2005).

[12] This is also not regular misimplementation by local officials. See (K. J. O'Brien and Li 1999) on selective policy implementation in rural China.

[13] In a cross-national context, the preponderance of social science research on welfare states is about advanced industrialized countries (Esping-Andersen 1990; Pierson 1994; Skocpol 1995; Pierson 2001; Huber and Stephens 2001; Mares 2003; Lynch 2006). Much of the literature also characterizes service provision as clientelistic (Cox and McCubbins 1986; Calvo and Murillo 2004; Stokes 2005), but local officials in China who are providing services to migrants are not buying individual political support or votes. Instead, they often share strong regional identities with them or wish to stave off instability.

Other existing literature on workers in China has focused on workers in foreign-invested enterprises or former state sector workers or private entrepreneurs and the business elite (Dickson 2003; Frazier 2005; Hurst and O'Brien 2002; Hurst 2004; Hurst 2009; Lee 2007; Pearson 1997; K. S. Tsai 2007). There is far less research on rank-and-file workers employed in the private sector, who are composed mostly of migrants (Wright 2010). Of these worker subpopulations, migrant workers are among the most vulnerable to exploitation by factory bosses or the local government (A. Chan 2001). Rather than focusing on employers or their home communities, studying the politics of managing migrant workers in China illuminates how non-democratic states hone their methods of control.

While scholars have written a great deal on the reasons for rural-to-urban migration and the effects of migration on rural areas, we know less about how the state manages these migrants inside the host cities. There has been less circular migration, more long-term settlement in cities, and more intraregional migration. Existing research on migration in China has focused on the effects of migration on rural areas or migrants themselves (Rozelle et al. 1999; Murphy 1999; Murphy 2002; Woon 1999; Gaetano and Jacka 2004; Du, Park, and Wang 2005; Jacka 2006; C. C. Fan 2008). Local regulation of migrants becomes all the more important in the context of changing demographic trends and state-driven urbanization that mean more people will become urbanites. Furthermore, in contrast to the dominant focus on economic prospects and labor market demands (Lewis 1954; Sahota 1968; Dang, Goldstein, and McNally 1987; Massey et al. 1993; Davin 1999; Woon 1999; United Nations Development Programme 2009), noneconomic factors, such as the availability of housing and other social services, also affect migration in China (Y. Zhao 1999). Rather than looking at the availability of public services as a push or pull factor in migration, I argue that *how* local urban authorities restrict or expand services influences movement, especially in instances where the withdrawal of services can induce migrants to move away. At the same time, migrants eager to settle in cities carve services out of the existing system or create informal institutions like "people-run" schools and "black" clinics to attain education and healthcare in the city.[14]

Following these new developments, gradations of second-class citizenship among migrants have emerged. Until recently, most rural migrants were second-class citizens compared to urban residents living in the same city (K. W. Chan 1994; D. Solinger 1999; K. W. Chan and Zhang 1999; C. C. Fan 2002; K. W. Chan and Buckingham 2008; K. W. Chan 2009). Since the 1980s, the *hukou* system kept many rural migrants from accessing urban services. However, more migrant workers are now able to access public services in some cities. In contrast to the clear bifurcation between rural migrants and urban residents of the past, I claim that migrant citizenship has become less about complete exclusion and more about partial inclusion for certain migrant workers and not others. Now there are degrees of second-class citizenship among migrants.

Hukou reform and the partial extension of migrant rights and benefits are due to two coinciding trends. First, at the national level, after succeeding to power in 2002, China's President Hu Jintao presented the concept of building a "harmonious society" as a vision for the country's future socioeconomic development. Among its goals was a focus on remedying social disparities and conflicts arising from growing inequality, and suggestions for policy orientations were made in a broad range of issue areas, including education, medicine, and public health (K.-M. Chan 2009). With national regulations as a starting point, migrant worker policies differ in

[14] These "people-run" schools and "black" clinics are reminiscent of the informal finance institutions created by small business owners (K. S. Tsai 2002).

form and implementation across cities in China and change over time depending on local concerns about social stability.

Second, there has been a devolution of responsibility for *hukou* policies to local governments (K. W. Chan and Buckingham 2008). A similar localization of service provision management has followed, leading to the partial extension of rights and benefits in certain places to select migrants. In contrast to these authors' focus on universal second-class citizenship, a broad and abstract national policy orientation, and the relationship between *hukou* changes and service access, I find household registration is no longer the sole determinant of whether migrants get services. It also depends on local officials' approach to social management and their identities, frontline service providers' discretion, and migrant agency.

Alternative Explanations

To understand why public services are a tool of social control and how this can be thwarted at the point of service delivery, it is helpful to examine possible alternative explanations for variation in public services for migrants. The simplest alternative about why the different local governments treat migrant workers differently is financial: wealthier cities can afford to spend more on public services for migrants. To be clear, this does not mean that fiscal resources are irrelevant, only that other factors are also at play. For example, wealth does not explain why Beijing is generally exclusionary, Shanghai has had limited success, and Chengdu is doing especially well in making education accessible to migrant students. Nor does it explain variation over time within these cities or differences between regional cities such as Dongguan and Hangzhou. Local governments often have other, competing policy priorities where they prefer to spend their money. Local officials and urban residents are sometimes reluctant to share resources with rural migrants, whom they see as outsiders and troublemakers.

Labor shortages are another potential alternative explanation for why certain cities treat migrants better. Cities in the Pearl River Delta in Guangdong Province have experienced labor shortages since about 2004 (D. L. Yang 2005), but improvement in services has been more recent and dependent on limited local *hukou* reform. My analysis also suggests that low-skilled labor shortages usually lead to wage increases, not changes in service provision.[15] According to small- and medium-sized factory owners in Guangdong and Sichuan Provinces I interviewed, only the largest factories with tens or hundreds of thousands of workers have enough economic and political sway to try to influence local, never mind national, policy.[16] Furthermore, the 2008 global economic turndown affected businesses across the country, but not all cities have improved services in response. Meanwhile, workers are flocking inland, where services had already been improving. Wages are a more important lever than social policy for attracting migrants to areas experiencing labor shortages.

Likewise, differences between cities in the proportion of first- and second-generation migrants does not appear to influence how the state treats migrants overall. Second-generation migrants are the children of the migrant workers who were part of the initial massive rural-to-urban migration in the 1980s. Many were born and raised in the city, but their household registration status is still tied to that of their parents and they retain their rural registration. Some experience more anger and dissatisfaction than the first generation (Pun and Lu 2010a), and most are more highly educated than their parents. While the identity of second-generation migrants is

[15] Interview 25
[16] Interview 26

different from that of first-generation migrants, the fact that second-generation migrants are younger also means that they are healthier and less likely to have children.[17] They are more concerned about quality of life (e.g., working fewer hours or in less potentially toxic job environments) than about public education or healthcare.[18] Though individual companies may face different demands from first- and second-generation migrants depending on the type of worker most suitable for their business, the overall cohort breakdown in a city does not affect broader government policies. Though migrants did band together to access social services in the city, it was to circumvent rules of exclusion from government-sponsored schemes or form informal institutions to serve as private alternatives.

Methods

I investigate China's distinct approach to migrant services as a form of social control by systematically comparing public service policy and implementation across seven cities in four geographical regions, three economic sectors, and two types of services. I completed about 18 months of fieldwork from August 2010 through January 2011 and September 2011 through August 2012.

I conducted over 130 semi-structured, in-depth interviews with government officials, doctors, teachers, and migrant workers. Because responsibility for managing migrants is spread across multiple bureaucracies, I spoke with provincial, municipal, and district officials representing health and family planning, education, human resources and social security, development, and public security. Conversations with doctors, hospital administrators, teachers, and principals revealed how social policy is implemented at the frontline of service delivery. Finally, I interviewed migrant workers who worked in the construction, manufacturing, and informal sectors of the economy. Migrants make up 70% of the construction labor force and 68% of manufacturing workers.[19] In the informal economy, 69% of rural-to-urban migrants are self-employed or work without a labor contract (F. Cai and Park 2009). These grey economy workers include fruit and vegetable sellers, nannies, and security guards. The structure of each of these sectors affects how long workers stay in a single given city (and therefore how likely they are to bring their families or demand urban services) and their social services eligibility.

In addition to in-depth interviews, I collected observations and ethnographic data in migrant villages, construction sites, factories, dormitories, schools, and hospitals and analyzed documentary sources. In these settings, I was able to observe the interactions between stakeholders and decision-makers, which also enabled me to triangulate information from different sources and reveal the lived experience of power on the ground in China. For documentary sources, I gathered government documents outlining formal policies at the national, provincial, and municipal levels and newspaper reports containing announcements of new regulations.[20] Furthermore, I analyzed informational pamphlets written and distributed by local governments, companies, and migrant NGOs about public service provision for migrants.[21] Last, I include descriptive statistics from Chinese statistical yearbooks and the 2010 National

[17] Interview 18
[18] Interview 19
[19] (Harney 2008)
[20] I collected some of these sources at the Universities Service Centre at the Chinese University of Hong Kong.
[21] Informants handed many of these documents directly to me.

Population Census, the first census that counted migrants who were residing in places other than their official household registration residence.

Understanding Service Provision

Of the services that migrants might seek in the city, I focus on two: healthcare and education. Both are crucial to human development for China's long-term growth prospects and important to migrant workers themselves.[22] According to a 2008 National Bureau of Statistics survey of more than 101,000 households in almost 5,000 communities and villages, the cost of healthcare is people's top concern, followed by social morals, security, education, and rising unemployment.[23] Much of the work that migrants do is physically grinding, such as in construction or manufacturing, so they are sometimes forced to seek healthcare in the city in order to keep working. While younger workers rarely engage in preventative care, almost all workers seek medical attention when they are seriously ill or injured. Otherwise, they cannot work and earn money. Besides differential insurance coverage and healthcare access, there is a disparity between migrant children's and urban resident children's educational attainment and healthcare access (Knight and Song 1999). Education opportunities are extremely important for migrant families, as parents see them as the primary driving force for better lives and the prospect of social mobility for their children.

Measuring actual public service provision can be tricky. My measures of education provision are 1) whether migrant children can attend public school and what kinds of obstacles, if any, there are to attending; 2) whether migrant children can take the college entrance exam (*gaokao*) in the city; and 3) whether the local government allows private migrant schools to stay open. My measures of healthcare provision are 1) whether migrants can access medical care in public hospitals and what obstacles, if any, there are to using their insurance; 2) whether migrants are eligible to buy into urban insurance schemes or if their employer provides coverage and 3) whether the local government permits private clinics to keep operating.

Official statistics on some of these measures are non-existent or do not necessarily reflect actual access for migrants. For example, the Ministry of Health reported that by the end of 2011, 95% of Chinese citizens had health insurance, up from less than a third in 2003.[24] However, numbers like these can be deceiving. Rural-to-urban migrants may be eligible to purchase insurance in their home villages, but their coverage is not transferrable to where they live and work in the city. Though affordable, rural schemes often have scant coverage for catastrophic illness and injury, which is more important for most migrants than coverage for things like over-the-counter medicine. As a result, they often opt out of the system entirely or develop informal insurance schemes. Qualitative accounts of service provision and access allow us to unpack these statistics.

About the Cases

[22] There is a substantial economics literature on human development. See Amartya Sen's pathbreaking book on how, among other things, public expenditures on healthcare, education, and other social services can spur rather than inhibit development (Sen 1999). Also see (Anand and Sen 2000) on the relationship between the development of human capability and economic sustainability.
[23] (M. Fan 2008)
[24] (Yan Zhang et al. 2015)

The cases are cities. The national government sets a general direction for public service policy, but local governments are mostly responsible for designing, administering, and paying for many services. I focus on large first-, second-, and third-tier cities rather than smaller cities. Migrants flock to areas where industrial growth is concentrated in search of higher wages, jobs, and opportunities for their children. Because most migrants prefer larger, more developed cities, it is usually in these more desirable destination cities that social services for them are politically contested.

China's size and immense regional variation allow for subnational comparisons under the same national policy. I started this project with three paired comparisons: Shanghai and Hangzhou, Dongguan and Guangzhou, and Chengdu and Chongqing.[25] The first two pairs are in two river deltas that have historically been destinations for migrants on the coast. The last pair is in southwestern China and represents a new economic hub as industry and migrants have moved inland. As the country's capital city and seat of national government, Beijing deserves separate consideration as a place with higher sensitivity to threats to social stability. It also serves as a telling example since many of the extreme measures in the control of migrants occur there. These seven cities represent four geographical regions in China, the northeast, central coast, southeast, and southwest.

Some of the key variation occurred over time within each city, rather than between cities. To observe how and why healthcare and education provision for migrants changed over time within cities, I conducted within-case analysis in addition to cross-case analysis. Within-case analysis allowed me to observe changes in service provision over time, as local governments enacted social control by tightening or loosening policies governing social services for migrants. These cross-time shifts include, for example, the incorporation of migrant students in public primary and secondary schools in the city and the ability for migrants to receive reimbursements for medical care administered in urban public hospitals. Still, the paired comparisons of cities revealed that there are regional differences in one area, education provision for migrant students. Much of this variation is due to the link between public service provision policies and social control.

Limitations

Because of the intensive fieldwork and various data sources needed to take into account the accounts of three sets of actors (government officials, migrant workers, and doctors and teachers) in two services types (healthcare and education) and three sectors (construction, manufacturing, and informal work) across seven cities in four regions of the country, there remain limitations to this project. First, cases were not drawn from a random sample of cities in China, so they are not necessarily representative of the entire universe of cities. Rather, they are drawn to compare and control for regional differences in histories of migration patterns and development trajectories. The seven cities that constituted the bulk of data collection sites are also places where public service provision for migrant workers is politically contested, though I did collect some information on services in smaller cities from interviews and documents. Nor were the

[25] Chongqing was originally a major case study, but the Bo Xilai incident erupted and unfolded at the same time as the bulk of my fieldwork in the city. Many have referred to it as the biggest scandal since the 1989 Tiananmen Square Protests. Contacts and invitations for casual chats dropped off precipitously as the depth and breadth of the scandal was publicly uncovered. A contact with ties to public security officials also warned me not to interview anyone in Chongqing during the politically sensitive time.

respondents randomly selected from a complete list of each set of actors in each city. Although most interviewees were contacted through snowball sampling, I hedged against singular perspectives by interviewing people across different government bureaus, types of services, and sectors and seeking numerous interview nodes in each city.

Second, the qualitative and in-depth interview data I collected are useful for uncovering mechanisms, semi-causal processes, and the lived experience, but it has some downsides for analysis. It is difficult to measure social control and its effects in two ways. First, without open access to the highest levels of officials in Beijing, intent and coordination remain difficult to assess. Second, for the majority of targets of social control, the absence of action may sometimes be the only sign of successful social control by the state. The politics of inaction are important for understanding outcomes like authoritarian durability, but the source of their behavior is hard to pinpoint. Self-reported accounts in interview data are susceptible to imperfect memory and recall, so when possible, I compared data between different respondents' answers, documentary sources, news reports, and surveys compiled by the National Bureau of Statistics of China.

Roadmap

My dissertation traces public service provision from the center to citizen: the central government (chapter 2), local governments (chapters 3 and 4), frontline service providers (chapter 5), and migrant workers (chapter 6). By providing several perspectives on public services for migrant workers, this approach follows how and why some officials view the purpose of social policy differently than service providers and migrants.

Chapter 2 serves as a background chapter on the central government's policies and guidelines toward migrants. First, I describe national policy in three main areas related to migrant workers: the household registration (*hukou*) system, education, and healthcare. For each of these issue areas, I sketch a brief history of the system and highlight select migrant-related policy changes. Then I discuss how the recent administration is aiming to support state-drive urbanization as an engine of future economic development and how this campaign leads to changes in public service provision for migrants living and working in cities. Last, I explain why the focus of our analysis should be on local governments, since they usually carry the burden of translating broad central directives into concrete policies and then implementing these policies. As many local officials told me, "The center treats; local governments pay."

To build my argument about how public services as a tool of social control shapes the restriction and expansion of healthcare and education for migrants, I start by examining differences in local governments' provision and restriction of services in chapter 3. I first provide an overview of the state's social control toolbox and conceptualize this particular form of social regulation. Then, I proceed to examine three strategies by which local governments channel and contain migrant demands. First, local authorities prefer to provide contingent rather than universal benefits because this allows them to control costs, to selectively allocate benefits to some migrants and not others, and to leverage their discretion as a source of power. Second, authorities restrict access to healthcare and education in urban areas to discourage migrants from using those services and to encourage them to use these services in their home jurisdictions. Third, authorities sometimes withdraw services to migrants to encourage them to move away, thereby easing resistance prior to land reclamation projects. Finally, I discuss why the state perceives migrants as a potential threat to social stability and why public service provision in education and healthcare was one area in which they sought to control them.

In chapter 4, I focus on local governments' regulation of private "people-run" (*minban*) schools for migrant children. I investigate how and why local governments regulated these schools differently. First, I provide a primer on migrant schools and lay out the puzzling pattern of regional variation in migrant school regulation. Next, I describe the three strategies local governments in Beijing, Shanghai, and Chengdu adopted to regulate private alternative schools and integrate migrants into public institutions: 1) suppression and exclusion, 2) selective absorption and segregated inclusion, and 3) certification and full inclusion. Following the list of strategies, I explain how local government orientations toward migrant education depend on whether local officials shared a regional identity with the migrants they serve and whether they can get credit for visible results and avoid blame and criticism for bad outcomes.

Next, in chapter 5, I turn to the point of service delivery and investigate how and why doctors and teachers, the people who directly interact with and provide services for migrants, use their discretion to give better or worse health and education services to different clients. In the first half of this chapter, I discuss how market-oriented reforms lead some hospital administrators and principals to prioritize high-paying clients over low-income migrants, while others see the gap in services as an opportunity for moneymaking business ventures. In the second half, I explain why some doctors and teachers provide different care to migrant patients and students because of urban discrimination against migrants or co-migrant empathy. Many doctors and teachers' identities relative to their clients influence their treatment of migrant workers. Doctors and teachers' discretion enable some migrant workers to access additional services over the baseline even as other providers restrict other migrants' level and quality of care.

I turn to the other set of actors at the front lines of social service delivery, migrant workers, in chapter 6. Getting services is usually a practical necessity for maintaining a livelihood in the city, but these strategies also showcase how they are able to exercise some agency. In this chapter, I analyze the imaginative ways migrant workers access public services within and outside the system. First, I lay out how and why some carve out social services within the system set up by the government, which they sometimes do by operating in the space between compliance and contention. Second, I describe how and why some migrant workers rely on other strategies to create informal healthcare or education options beyond the public system. Furthermore, I relate how these strategies are often adaptive reactions to the social control dimensions of public services and regional differences in service provision.

Finally, in the conclusion, chapter 7, I examine the implications of the state using public services as a tool of social control for the study of Chinese politics and authoritarian regimes as well as real-world policy. I also specify hypotheses that arise out of these findings and suggest directions for future research. A study of social control of migrants shows that authoritarian states do not have to only extinguish demands; they can channel them. They do not always have to deal with conflict; they can avoid having it happen. Differences between formal policy and implementation need not be signs of misimplementation, but instead of discretion by frontline service providers. And even as relatively powerless actors in a fragmented system, migrant workers can gain access to public services, thereby limiting the effects of social control.

Chapter Two

National Policy

Introduction

In the introductory chapter, I described the puzzle of public service provision for migrant workers: Why have Chinese local authorities engaged in a distinctive pattern of expanding *and* restricting social services at the same time? What explains the particular pattern of expansion and restriction? After providing a preview my argument and describing the theoretical contributions, alternative explanations, and research methodology of this project, I provided a roadmap of the dissertation. To trace healthcare and education services provision from center to citizen, we start at the level of national policy.

This chapter serves to provide background for the proceeding chapters and introduce why we need to focus on local governments to understand why some rural-to-urban migrants have more access to public services than others. What is the history of national policy toward rural-to-urban migrants in the areas of household registration, healthcare, and education? National policy has set broad guidelines for increases in public services and decreases in barriers to access, while localization of the *hukou* system and social service provision has left local governments responsible for implementation of these policies

Central government policies in three main areas shape public service access for migrants: the *hukou* system, education policy, and healthcare policy. In this chapter, I first provide a brief history of each of these systems and an overview of some recent migrant policy-related reform efforts. Next, I explain how the state's latest push to make state-driven urbanization the basis for China's future economic growth has placed new pressures on local governments to extend social services to migrant workers. Finally, although the central government issues broad directives and guidelines for expanding urban public services to include rural migrants, much of the responsibility to formulate concrete policies and carry them out falls on local governments.

The *Hukou* System

Scholars have extensively mapped the household registration (*hukou* or *huji*) system (K. W. Chan 1994; K. W. Chan and Zhang 1999; K. W. Chan 2009; T. Cheng and Selden 1994; F. Wang 2005). The Chinese government instituted the *hukou* system during the Maoist Era.[26] On January 9, 1958, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC) promulgated *Regulations on Household Registration in the People's Republic of China*, which offered the rationale of "maintaining social order, protecting citizens' rights and interests and serving socialist construction" (Cheng and Selden 1994: p. 662). Together with the *Regulation on Resident's Personal Identification Card in the People's Republic of China* adopted on September 6, 1985, these regulations form the main legal basis for the *hukou* system (F. Wang 2005). With the intention of keeping rural farmers cultivating land while urban development progressed, the system required anyone who wanted to migrate from rural to urban China to obtain permission

[26] The elaborateness of the *hukou* system is unique to China, but a system that regulates the internal migration of citizens is not. The *propiska* (internal passport) system in the former USSR, the *ho khua* system in Vietnam, *hoju* system in present-day North Korea (K. W. Chan 2009), Parish System in England, and old settlement laws in the United States all bear resemblance to the *hukou* system.

from both officials at their origins and destinations to do so. Since then, the state has relaxed these restrictions on migration, but people registered as rural migrants have varying access to urban government social services.

Every citizen is legally required to register with local *hukou* authorities and to acquire a *hukou* certification. The Ministry of Public Security creates most of the policies that shape how the *hukou* system operates, and local public security bureaus and police stations administer the system.[27] In the cities, a police station constitutes a *hukou* management zone, and its rural counterpart is a township. This system of residency permits ties a person's public services to their hometown, and for migrant children, to their parents' hometown.

Though this state socialist institution was not dismantled after Mao and the ensuing marketization of China's economy, the system has undergone some reforms. In 1997, the State Council initiated a limited, experimental program (later extended in 2001) that directed small cities and towns to grant local *hukou* to rural *hukou* holders with both a fixed place of residence for two years in the town and a stable source of income. Some local city governments have issued temporary residence permits that are less restrictive than a rural *hukou* but more restrictive than an urban *hukou*. In 2010, the State Council announced it would gradually roll out a national residence permit system (State Council 2010).

In 2014, the State Council released guidelines that some promised would overhaul the *hukou* system by eliminating the distinction between rural and urban residents and granting access to urban services for migrants. However, cities would continue to have ample leeway to determine their own residency requirements, such as proof of steady employment and continuous residence, and implement policies oriented to local conditions and capacity (State Council 2014). I will show that these eligibility and documentation requirements for household registration and public services have themselves become a tool of social control for local governments. Moreover, these guidelines include exemptions for large cities, especially those whose populations exceed five million. These are the same major cities where migrants prefer to go and where their rights to social services are contested.

Despite talk of comprehensive changes, much *hukou* reforms continue to be modest and, according to many migrants, mostly at the margins. Indeed, Chinese migrants are not the only people interested in and calling for *hukou* reform. On March 1, 2010, in an unusual stunt, thirteen Chinese newspapers jointly published an editorial by Zhang Hong, a top editor at *The Economic Observer*, calling on legislative representatives to hasten reform of the household registration system. The editorials were censored within hours, and Zhang was later fired. The Chinese state's response to this incident indicates a level of political sensitivity around *hukou* system reform and public mobilization to support it. The cumulative effect of these reforms has been the devolution of power to local governments rather than the abolition of the system, and many cities and towns can now set their own admission criteria, most of which ordinary migrants will never meet (K. W. Chan and Buckingham 2008). The persistence of this sticky institution must serve state interests, including ongoing population management. Similarly, local governments set their own criteria for providing public services to migrants. While the localization of service provision means that migrant workers may be able to access social services within certain cities which grant these rights, many urban authorities simply erect local barriers to entry and provide contingent rather than universal benefits to rural migrants.

National Education Policy

[27] Refer to chapter 3 of (F. Wang 2005) for more on the structural and operational features of the system.

In 1978, the Chinese government allocated 7 billion RMB (6.3 percent of its annual spending) to education, a budget amount which grew twice as fast as total state expenditures over the next ten years (Kwong 1996). Before decentralization reforms in the 1980s, the central government collected revenues and distributed funding. Since the promulgation of the *Compulsory Education Law of the People's Republic of China* in 1986, the Chinese state education system has offered nine years of compulsory education for children starting at age six. Under the State Council's central authority, the Ministry of Education is responsible for setting general guidelines, while provincial, municipal, and county governments administer education and carry out policies. In 1991, provincial or lower level governments were responsible for 88 percent of total education expenditures (K.-M. Cheng 1994).

However, funding was insufficient for schools. The state only paid teachers who were on the government payroll, while other expenditures were covered by an educational surcharge on local taxes, revenues, donations, student fees, and school-generated revenues (K.-M. Cheng 1994). To generate revenue, educational entrepreneurs provided outreach education programs, served as consultants, manufactured goods in school-run factories, rented out school facilities, and solicited money from alumni (Kwong 1996; Tsang 1996). These same market-oriented reforms eventually opened space for frontline service providers to exercise some discretion in how they deliver services to their clients, including migrants.

The 2003 *Instructions on Further Improving Compulsory Education Provision to Migrant Children in Urban Areas* stipulated that urban governments should regulate migrant students' tuition fees and set the principle that local urban governments were responsible for providing education to migrant children.[28] Twenty years after the *Compulsory Education Law* was introduced, it was amended to allow migrant children to pursue compulsory education where their parents live and work. Article 12 states,

> *For school-age children and adolescents whose parents or other statutory guardians work or reside in places other than the places of their registered residence and who have to receive compulsory education in the places where their parents or other statutory guardians work or reside, the local people's governments shall provide equal conditions for them to receive compulsory education. The specific measures in this regard shall be formulated by provinces, autonomous regions, and municipalities directly under the Central Government.*[29]

Another key feature of China's education system for migrant workers' pursuit of education is the college entrance exam (*gaokao*). Standardized testing is required throughout compulsory education, which is important for understanding why local governments and schools can use entrance exams to block migrant enrollment in public schools and teachers face incentives to favor urban resident students over migrant students. The *gaokao* entirely determines students' university placement, and parents and teachers start a path of preparation early. Exam curriculum, grading, and university quotas vary by province, so urban residents and migrants sometimes have to compete for the same spots. Subsequently, *gaokao* rules have trickle down effects for where parents enroll their children for school and how teachers teach migrant students versus native urban resident students. These are among the many obstacles migrant students face in attaining the compulsory education promised to them through national policy.

[28] Cited in (UNICEF 2005; Dong 2010).
[29] Available at http://www.npc.gov.cn/englishnpc/Law/Frameset-index.html

There is public support for education reform to allow migrant students to take entrance exams in the city where they live. In 2012, a 15-year old migrant student, whose parents are from Jiangxi Province, named Zhan Haite demanded eligibility to register for the high entrance exam in Shanghai, where she had attended primary and secondary school.[30] She organized protests in front of the Shanghai education bureau and posted messages online, and her story quickly spread among Chinese internet users. Her family was briefly evicted. Zhang Quanxi, her father, was detained for several day after protesting for education rights in Shanghai, but criminal charges were dropped. Native urban residents of Shanghai criticized his online posts. Zhan's story gained the attention of the national media, and the *China Daily* newspaper invited her to write an op-ed piece.[31] Nonetheless, the issue of migrant access to public education in the city remains politically thorny, or at least organized resistance pushing for it does. The Central Propaganda Department issued the following censorship instructions: "No media will report or comment on Zhan Quanxi and Zhan Haite in Shanghai engaging in so-called 'rights defense' in the name of equal participation in the high school entrance exam and getting involved in conflicts with personnel."[32]

The Chinese government has recently been investing in education. In 2012, public expenditures on education reached 2.2 trillion RMB (approximately $357 billion) its target of four percent of gross domestic product (GDP), albeit 12 years past the government's original deadline.[33] Yet, many migrant children continue to be blocked from enrolling in public school in their host cities, and private migrant schools have sprung up in many cities.

National Healthcare Policy

Similar to education, the national healthcare system has undergone substantial reform since the Maoist Era. By the 1970s, trained rural healthcare workers known as "barefoot doctors" and clinics were established in nearly all villages. They provided basic services to most residents in the countryside. Since the end of the planned economy, healthcare has undergone decentralization. The cooperative medical system and the free medical care it provided disappeared with the collapse of the collective agricultural system (Hesketh and Zhu 1997). The percentage of the government's health budget for public health decreased from 12.4 percent in 1980 to 9.1 percent in 1990 (Hufeng Wang, Gusmano, and Cao 2011). Consequently, the urban healthcare system depends in part on user-paid fees, with the share of out-of-pocket expenses in medical care for China rising from 16 percent in 1980 to more than twice that at 38 percent in 1988, and then increasing further to 61 percent in 2001 (Xiaobo Zhang and Kanbur 2005; C. K. Wong, Tang, and Lo 2007). Decentralization has put more pressure on local governments and healthcare facilities to generate revenue and on patients to pay for medical services.

Health insurance is an important component of the contemporary healthcare system, though insurance coverage does not automatically entail access to care. China's social insurance scheme includes five kinds of insurance: basic medical insurance, work-related injury insurance, pension, unemployment compensation, and maternity insurance. Employers and employees must

[30] For an example of a news report on her story, visit http://finance.ifeng.com/news/people/20121130/7372246.shtml.
[31] Available in English at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/cndy/2012-12/07/content_15993912.htm.
[32] China Digital Times collected this directive and posted it at http://chinadigitaltimes.net/2012/12/ministry-of-truth-high-schooler-fights-for-rights/.
[33] (China Daily 2013)

contribute monthly to basic medical insurance, pension, and unemployment compensation funds, but only employees must pay into work-related injury and maternity insurance. Unsurprisingly, certain social groups, such as state sector employees, enjoy better benefits than others, including migrant workers (X. Huang 2013; X. Huang 2014).

Officials have sought to improve migrant access to insurance through several policies. In 2004, the central government made effective the *Regulation for Work-Related Injury Insurance* that extended coverage for industrial injury insurance to migrant workers and specified their rights, including the amount of compensation they could receive. Three years later, the State Council guidelines *Some Opinions on Resolving the Problems Faced by Migrant Workers* which delineated local governments' responsibilities in healthcare for migrants to "(i) establish a system regulating occupational safety and sanitation; (ii) provide industrial injury insurance coverage to migrants; (iii) implement sickness protection for migrants and provide immunization service to migrants' children;…" (Zhu, Ngok, and Li 2014). Later, the 2011 *Social Insurance Law of the People's Republic of China* set a principle to make it easier for people to transfer basic medical insurance and pension when they move for work. The lifting of restrictions on transfers would be ideal for migrant workers, except they continue to face obstacles in obtaining insurance they can use and have difficulty transferring accounts when they do participate in these government schemes.

Specifically in medical insurance (one of the five kinds of social insurance), there are three main types: the Urban Employee Basic Medical Insurance Program (UEBMI), the Urban Resident Basic Medical Insurance Program (URBMI), and the New Cooperative Medical Scheme (NCMS). As their names suggest, each is intended to provide coverage to a different group of people. The UEBMI should include migrant workers, but many, such as those who work in the informal economy, are not covered. The second, URMBI, was originally piloted in 79 cities in 2007 and is intended generally for unemployed urban residents with local *hukou*. Local governments have autonomy in determining their local plans and financing levels, and the majority of cities' URMBI plans do not include migrant workers (Lin, Liu, and Chen 2009). Both the UEMBI and the URMBI are focused on the urban population.

The NCMS, the third, is designated to cover the rural population and is expected be the main source of insurance coverage for rural migrants. Since the launch of the NCMS in 2003, affordable coverage for rural residents has increased dramatically. In the beginning, participants enrolled in the program by paying approximately $1.50 to their county health bureau, a fee which only increased to $4.50 per month by 2010, while the central and local governments contributed $36 total (Ma, Zhang, and Chen 2012). A study that evaluated the impact of the NCMS found that it did not decrease out-of-pocket expenditure, increase utilization of formal medical services, or improve individuals' health status (Lei and Lin 2009). Like out-of-pocket expenditures, co-payments and deductibles continue to be high. In 2010, the government paid for 53.6 percent of the China's total expenditures on health, while 46.4 percent was private spending.[34] Moreover, use of the insurance is impractical for many of the migrant workers who do not live in their home village and therefore do not frequent their village-level clinic or county-level hospital. With migrants' mobile livelihoods and a fragmented medical insurance system, none of these effectively serve migrant workers. This drives many migrants to seek out clinics in the city and only resort to visiting urban public hospitals when there is an emergency.

State-Led Urbanization as the Next Engine of Growth

[34] (World Health Organization 2010)

Reforms in the household registration, education, and healthcare systems that affect migrant workers are especially relevant today as the Chinese state turns toward state-driven urbanization as development. China's latest endeavor in central planning aims to replace industrialization with urbanization as its engine of economic growth. By 2030, China will move 350 million rural migrants, roughly equivalent to the entire U.S. population, into its cities.

Having excluded many migrants in the past, some find it surprising that urban governments provide any services to migrants at all. As part of their plan for building a "harmonious society," beginning in 2003, the Hu-Wen administration placed a greater emphasis on social policy and balancing out some of the costs of rapid economic growth for ordinary people. In turn, the State Council and other central government offices issued guidelines or directives for expanding services in cities to include rural migrants.

In 2014, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council issued the National Plan on New Urbanization for 2014 to 2020.[35] The plan aims to improve and accelerate urbanization by settling migrants into cities, optimizing urbanization, and increasing the sustainability of cities. Some characterize this state-driven urbanization as akin to another Great Leap Forward into modernization.[36] Perhaps noting the tremendous human cost in past forays into central planning, the Chinese government emphasizes what they term "people-centered" urbanization, but what this means in practice was unclear. In addition to the expense, a campaign on this scale presents new challenges for governance. National officials in Beijing seek to regulate economic conditions and labor mobility to facilitate urbanization in newly developed cities.

Premier Li Keqiang linked urbanization with the unlocking of domestic consumer demand for China's future economic growth.[37] Li cited reports that showed urban residents spent 3.6 times more than rural dwellers in 2010 and estimated that each rural resident who moved to the city would increase consumption by more than 10,000 RMB (about $1,600).[38] The rural migrant workers who manufactured the goods shipped overseas for China's export-led growth are now expected to become the urban consumers who will drive China's next decade of development. Li Wei, head of the Development Research Center of the State Council, China's Cabinet, encapsulated the government's plan, "Though faced with a series of challenges including an aging population, rising labor costs and looming financial risks, China still boasts huge growth potential as consumer demand will expand steadily with advancing urbanization and increasing residents' incomes."[39] Creating domestic consumer demand would help move China away from an economy dependent on labor-intensive, low-wage production and toward more sustainable development.

Just as local governments shouldered more of the burden of social service provision after decentralizing reforms, state-driven urbanization policies place additional pressures on municipal governments. The dilemma city governments face with respect to migrant workers is similar across China. For the labor force, they seek to attract cheap labor with specific skills for sectors that need more workers. In terms of practical governance issues, many migrant workers become

[35] A transcript of the press conference is available here: http://china.org.cn/china/2014-03/19/content_31836248.htm.
[36] For example, see a column by Xue Lan, Dean of the Public Policy and Management School at Tsinghua University, entitled, "China's Urbanization: A Great Leap Forward?"
[37] (K. Li, He, and Chen 2013)
[38] (K. Li, He, and Chen 2013)
[39] (Jiang 2013)

de facto permanent residents in these cities and begin to make demands on public services. As local economies change with rising wages and industrial upgrading, new migrants arrive and put pressures on already underfunded services.

Subnational governments bear the main fiscal responsibility for education, healthcare, social security, housing, and infrastructure. The 1994 tax reform decentralized revenues without cutting local expenditures. A 2002 report found that local governments took on nearly 70 percent of financial costs for the provision of public goods and services.[40] Two years later in 2004, subnational governments financed 90 percent of education expenditures and 95 percent of healthcare spending, and the system of intergovernmental transfers failed to address local public services spending and regional fiscal disparities.[41] According to a National Audit Office report, by 2013, local government debt had risen to 17.7 trillion RMB (about $2.9 billion), up 70 percent from three years ago.[42] The result is that many local governments' spending requirements far outstrip their financial resources.

Demographic pressures accelerated migrant demands on urban social services and exacerbated the gap between local expenditures and resources. According to the 2010 Population Census, over 260 million citizens (almost 1 in 5) lived in places different from where their household registration system record said they resided.[43] In 1980, China's urbanization rate was 19.6%;[44] by the end of 2011, it surpassed half of the population for the first time and reached 51.3%.[45] The emergence of the second generation of migrant workers led to migrants' longer term settlement in cities. Before, migrants would only venture out to the cities for a few years in their late teens and early twenties. After earning some money, they would return to their rural hometowns to marry and have children. Now, more migrants stay in the cities and raise their families there. According to a National Health and Family Planning Commission report, 67% of migrant households were families (including parents and their children), and 70% of migrant parents brought their children with them to the cities.[46] In 2010, there were 28.8 million rural migrant children living in cities, who combined with the 7 million urban migrant children account for an increase of 41 since 2005.[47] Some members of the second generation of rural migrants have never seen their parents' hometown in the countryside and do not know how to farm.

Not only is there a new cohort of city-dwelling migrants, but migration is increasingly intraregional, local, and westward. According to the 2013 National Monitoring Survey Report for Rural Migrant Workers, the number of short-distance, intraregional (*bendi*) migrants increased by 21% from 85 million to 103 million between 2008 and 2013. From 2012 to 2013, the number of interregional (*waichu*, or long-distance) migrants increased by 1.8% from 163 million to 166 million migrants. In contrast, the number of intraregional migrants jumped at double the rate of increase, 3.6%, from 99 million to 103 million.[48] The Ministry of Human

[40] (The World Bank 2002)
[41] (Shen and Zou 2006)
[42] (BBC News 2013)
[43] (National Bureau of Statistics of China 2011)
[44] (Yusuf and Nabeshima 2008)
[45] (Xinhua News and An 2012). This is in line with the global urbanization trend: In 1950, 30 percent of the world's population was urban, and 54 percent of the world's population resided in urban areas in 2014. By 2050, it is projected that 66 percent of the world's population will be urban (United Nations 2014).
[46] (National Health and Family Planning Commission of China 2010)
[47] Cited in (China Labour Bulletin 2013).
[48] (National Bureau of Statistics of China 2014)

Resources and Social Security reported the number of migrants working on the eastern coast of China decreased by 0.2% in 2013. More striking, the number of rural migrant workers increased by 9.4% in central part of the country and 3.3% in the western part in the same year.[49] Even as some migrant workers make demands on public services in the coastal cities where they have historically gone, many others are making demands on services in inland cities.

The combination of state-supported urbanization and demographic shifts increases the pressure on city governments. The Chinese Academy of Social Sciences estimated it will cost 650 billion RMB (about $106 billion) per year to ensure rural migrants enjoy the same benefits and services as urban residents.[50] Officials at the provincial and local levels try to squeeze migrant workers into overstretched public services and infrastructure while keeping out the unsavory elements of a massive underclass settling in as their neighbors and constituents.

The central government seems intent on doubling down on state-driven urban growth. In 2015, President Xi Jinxing approved plans to build a supercity named Jing-Jin-Ji that would integrate Beijing, Tianjin, and Hebei Province. It would span over 82,000 square miles and connect more than 100 million people by high-speed rail. Under the current taxation system, Chinese cities do not have property taxes, are not allowed to keep other locally raised taxes, and rely on public land sales for tax revenue. Beijing will not share revenue with these newly populated towns with much smaller tax bases, so the lack of schools, hospitals, and other services will likely only become more severe.[51] In such a megalopolis, we could reasonably expect social control to remain an important tool for policymakers seeking to ease Beijing's congestion and encourage people to settle in Jing-Jin-Ji. Chinese cities are getting bigger, not smaller, and will require innovative methods of social management.

Conclusion

While the central government sets broad guidelines and principles to expand services to migrant workers, their logistical and financial support for local governments is limited. Since 1978, the household registration, education, and healthcare systems have undergone decentralization and marketizing reforms. These often began with the central government issuing broad guidelines, some of which expanded public services to migrant workers in the city. Ultimately though, local governments are mainly responsible for formulating, funding, and implementing concrete policies and providing public services for migrants. This amounts to a version of an unfunded mandate wherein "the center treats; local governments pay" (*zhongyang qingke, dangdi maidan*), as many of the government officials I interviewed liked to remind me. The explosion of China's local government debt since 2008 has only added to these financial pressures. Therefore, an analysis of public services provision for migrants requires a focus on local government policies and regulations.

In chapter 3, I move the analysis from the central government's directives to local governments' provision and restriction of education and healthcare services to migrant workers in their cities. I posit that the state uses public service provision for migrants as a tool of social control. I do so by first providing an overview of the state's social control toolbox and conceptualizing the particular form of social regulation where local governments channel and contain migrant demands. They provide contingent rather than universal benefits, restrict access

[49] (China News 2014)
[50] (Shao and Standing 2013)
[51] (Johnson 2015)

to healthcare and education in urban areas, and sometimes withdraw services to migrants to encourage them to move away. Finally, I discuss why the state perceives migrants as a potential threat to social stability and why public service provision in education and healthcare was one area in which they sought to control them.

Chapter Three

Local Governments and Public Services

Introduction

In Chapter 2, I outlined how the central government maintains the household registration system and sets broad directives for migrant policy. Moving down a level, in this chapter I focus on how local governments turn these guidelines into concrete policies and systems for public service provision. Local governments are largely responsible for implementing and funding services for migrant workers. They face the daunting challenge of the world's most rapid urbanization: they must attract migrant workers and preserve social stability at the same time. As a result, they devise a distinctive approach to the provision of social services that sometimes gives preference to the state's goals of stability over the migrant workers' actual welfare needs. The state narrows the set of choices available to migrants and encourages them to make the decisions the authorities want them to make. As service access is contingent, collective claims of exclusion and discrimination are supplanted by individual bureaucratic battles over eligibility and documentation.

This chapter examines how the Chinese state controlled migrants through the provision and restriction of education and healthcare. I first provide an overview of the state's social control toolbox and conceptualize this particular form of social regulation. Next I focus on the following question: How and why do local governments channel and contain individual migrant workers' demands for public services in healthcare and education? Local governments use three strategies. They 1) provide contingent rather than universal benefits because this allows them to control costs, selectively allocate benefits to some migrants and not others, and leverage their discretion as a source of power; 2) restrict access to services in urban areas and encourage migrants to use these services in their home jurisdiction; and 3) withdraw services to encourage migrants to move away, thereby easing resistance prior to land reclamation projects. Finally, I discuss why the state perceives migrants as a potential threat to social stability and why public service provision in education and healthcare is one area in which they sought to control them.

The Social Control Toolbox

In order to deal with large social groups such as migrant workers, the state has several tools in its social control toolbox: it can coerce them when they are problematic, provide services to appease them, or channel and contain their demands. In the first chapter, I defined social control as the state's means, both formal and informal, of influencing members of society to make decisions and act in ways that are desired by the state.

Coercion is one way the state can control marginalized social groups. As China reemerges on the global stage, many officials think migrants disrupt the cosmopolitan image cities try to convey. Major cities routinely clear streets of migrants and beggars ahead of international events like the 2008 Beijing Olympics and the 2010 Shanghai World Expo. During the Olympics, the practice of "sealed management" (*fengbi guanli*) and locking entrance gates to reduce crime was born in Laosanyu village in Daxing District, Beijing.[52] Even when everyday

[52] Between 11:00pm and 6:00am, gates to entrances and alleyways in migrant villages were locked, and police officers or security guards checked the identification papers of anyone wishing to enter. During the day, guards

life resumed after these international events, "the ticking bomb of China's urban para-police" from the City Urban Administrative and Law Enforcement Bureau (*chengguan*) uses extreme violence to disperse migrant street vendors.[53]

However, state coercion sometimes backfires and induces a violent backlash. When authoritarian states engage in repression, collective action can become radicalized amid latent solidarity and mobilization (Tarrow 1998; K. J. O'Brien and Deng 2014). What migrant workers lack in power and wealth as resources for resistance, they make up for in numbers. This poses a problem for officials when migrants with urban ties (Becker 2012) or strong regional identities participate in collective action, especially mass protests. In June 2011, a scuffle in which local security personnel pushed a pregnant migrant street vendor ignited several days of protests in Xintang Township, Zengcheng County, Guangdong Province. Thousands of migrant protestors smashed windows, set fire to government buildings, and overturned police cars.[54] Police fired teargas and arrested twenty-five protesters.[55] Perhaps having learned from this and similar incidents, the state had a strong-armed response to a more recent migrant protest. In what was reported to be one of the largest protests in Beijing against authorities in the last decade, migrants staged a mass protest on May 8, 2013.[56] Migrants from Anhui Province gathered to protest the death of a fellow migrant, whose deadly fall from the top of the building where she worked was ruled a suicide. Police and paramilitary swarmed the southern part of Beijing where the protest took place as helicopters, a relatively rare sight, flew overhead.[57] These events catalyzed already simmering hostility between migrants and the state to boil over onto the streets.

Not only can coercion escalate into more violence, but it is also expensive. In 2013, the internal security budget rose to 769 billion RMB ($130 billion), a cost officials said urgently needed to be reduced.[58] The report called for achieving social stability via the protection of rights, including specifically for migrant workers, and the resolution of conflict through the establishment of institutions and rules. In other words, the way to reduce the skyrocketing costs of stability maintenance was to move conflict to the state's domain.

In addition to dealing with protest, another element of stability maintenance is reducing migrant crime in urban areas. The Chinese Academy of Social Sciences 2011 Blue Book on the Rule of Law reported that migrants committed a third of crimes in the year before,[59] and news reports frequently cite that migrant juvenile crime was on the rise in migrant-heavy areas.[60] Most migrant crime involves theft, robbery, burglary, and begging.[61] Violent crime, a particular problem for social stability, is rising as a proportion of juvenile offenses, and rural migrants

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patrolled the streets and kept watch via closed circuit cameras. Another 92 villages were expected to follow suit with implementation of sealed management by the end of 2010 (Yanling Zhang 2010).

[53] (Lubman 2013)

[54] (Pomfret 2011)

[55] (Branigan 2011)

[56] (M. Chan, Chi-yuk, and Choi 2013)

[57] A photo gallery of the events is available at http://chinadigitaltimes.net/2013/05/sensitive-words-beijing-protest-after-suicide/.

[58] (Qinghua University 2010; Martina 2014). This cost included spending by the central, provincial, and regional governments.

[59] (Huazhong Wang 2011)

[60] For instance, the Shunyi Court in Beijing said that young migrant workers accounted for 39% of the total crime in the first 10 months of 2010, up 60.7% from the previous year (Y. Wang and Huang 2010).

[61] Interview 21

accounted for as much as 90% of juvenile offenders in bigger cities.[62] Aware of the sensitivity of these numbers, the government shut down NGO efforts to simply estimate migrant crime, saying such research was only under the purview of government rather than any non-state entities.[63]

The regime's approach to regulating migrants has, in the eyes of many, overemphasized crime prevention and underemphasized service provision (S. Zhao and Kipnis 2000). Instead of costly coercion, the state could provide services that satisfy migrant demands. Current literature focuses on leaders making concessions to segments of society when they pose a threat to the regime. Building on selectorate theory (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003), some scholars argue that leaders could increase the provision of public goods to improve citizen welfare and lessen their desire for revolutionary change or decrease public goods to reduce the probability of revolutionary success (Bueno de Mesquita and Smith 2010). In China, the opposite sometimes happens. Building on previous research on welfare states in developed countries,[64] scholars turned their attention to social policy in developing countries and authoritarian regimes (Berman 1998; Wood and Gough 2006; Wood 2004; Haggard and Kaufman 2008). In the Global South and China, non-state actors increasingly shape public goods delivery (L. Tsai 2007; Cammett and MacLean 2011; Teets 2012; Cammett and MacLean 2014). Meanwhile, the dismantling of the Iron Rice Bowl system of benefits and services and more recent welfare reform dramatically changed the welfare state in China. The Ministry of Health reported that by the end of 2011, 95% of Chinese citizens had health insurance, up from 30% in 2003.

However, public service reforms also generate increased demand for services, which officials seek to channel and contain instead of meet. After the expansion of health insurance coverage, hospital bed utilization jumped from 36% to 88% between 2003 and 2011.[65] The integration of tens of millions of migrant workers into urban hospitals and schools where they had previously been excluded is expensive, difficult, and often unpopular for underfunded, overburdened local governments. By channeling and containing demands for services using strategies of social control, they are able to retain critical labor for local economic development without having to provide services to every rural migrant worker living in their city.

Conceptualizing Social Control

Beyond coercing migrants or providing services, the state can also channel and contain demands of the target population so that they act in ways desired by authorities.[66] The rules and guidelines that shape incentives can be formal or informal. Unlike clumsy totalitarian regimes that only have thumbs, the Chinese government has grown fingers and become more adept at controlling groups of people with less coercive, more nuanced tactics.[67]

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[62] (The Economist 2013)
[63] Ibid
[64] See the foundational work by (Esping-Andersen 1990).
[65] Cited in (Yanzhong Huang 2014).
[66] Other groups in China besides migrants have been the targets of social control, including lawyers, journalists, NGOs, and protesters. For example, control parables push lawyers and journalists to self-censor and, often, retreat from politically sensitive areas (Stern and Hassid 2012). These forms of control are softer than conventional repression and exemplify the increasing nuance and multiplicity of ways in which the Chinese government enacts state control.
[67] (Lindblom 1977) used the image of a government with "strong thumbs, no fingers" to describe centralized authority systems which can do repetitive tasks well but cannot adapt to local conditions.

Channeling and containing demands is less forceful than coercion. Instead of a fear of sanctions or punishments, the incentives to act depend on the state making certain decisions more desirable than others. Some everyday examples are carpool toll discounts or government subsidies that reduce the price of public transportation to encourage people to use subways and buses. Through this narrowing of available choices, the channeling and containment of demands is more nuanced and more intrusive in daily life than outright coercion. The exercise of power in this form of social control is more covert and requires subtle seduction of the target. The targets of social control often consent to the process by picking a particular channel to make a claim or try to access a service. Migrant agency and choice are curtailed but not eliminated.

Strategies for Channeling and Containing Demands

The Chinese state engages in social control to channel and contain migrant demands through three strategies. They 1) provide contingent rather than universal benefits because this allows them to control costs, selectively allocate benefits to some migrants and not others, and leverage their discretion as a source of power; 2) restrict access to services in urban areas and encourage migrants to use these services in their home jurisdiction; and 3) withdraw services to encourage migrants to move away, thereby easing resistance prior to land reclamation projects

Strategy 1: Providing Contingent Benefits

Providing contingent rather than universal benefits allows officials to control costs, to selectively allocate benefits to some migrants and not others, and to leverage their discretion as a source of power. Channeling demands toward individual responsibility, the government isolates migrants, ties them up in paperwork, and makes them blame themselves for not being eligible for services. To do so, local governments establish unattainable eligibility requirements for urban services and set unrealistic requirements for residence permits. Bureaucratic exclusion strands migrants between moral and legal claims. Conflict becomes bureaucratized rather than spilling onto the streets as protests that draw the ire of higher levels of government. Compelling claims of exclusion and discrimination are supplanted by bureaucratic battles following the state's rules over eligibility and documentation.

First, cities establish nearly unattainable eligibility requirements for public services to make access a bureaucratic obstacle and channel for potential conflict. These relatively new local policies come in lieu of national *hukou* reform and do not require a person to change their household registration. In principle, they open services up to all migrants regardless of where they are from and where they live. However, in many cities, such as Beijing, the eligibility requirements specifically for migrants to attend public schools or buy health insurance are unrealistic. Unattainable eligibility requirements include required documents that are difficult to obtain, stacked requirements where access to one service required participation in another service, and periods of employment and residency that few meet.

Local governments generally require five documents (*wuzheng*) for migrants to be eligible to enroll in public school or buy insurance. Typically, the document package consists of a household registration booklet, proof of hometown permanent residency, a temporary residence permit, proof of local address, and proof of employment. Some cities, such as Chengdu, require up to seven documents.[68]

[68] Interview 88

Even when migrants can meet the onerous documentation and stacked service requirements, they often cannot meet periods of employment and residency to be eligible to send their children to school or buy social insurance. In late 2012, the Beijing Municipal Commission of Education announced that migrant children would have access to secondary vocational school entrance exams if they meet eligibility. Their parents must have had full-time jobs for three years and contributed social insurance for three consecutive years, and the students must have completed three years of middle school in Beijing. To apply for higher level vocational schools, their parents must have had full-time jobs for six years and have contributed social insurance for six consecutive years. Their children must have completed three years of high school in Beijing.[69] Migrants move around, so consecutive years are problematic. Among the more permanent settlers, staying for three or six years is plausible. Still, the requirement of keeping the same full-time job conflicts with the reality of high turnover in migrant employment, making it near impossible for migrants to go to public school or buy social insurance.

Second, although they may be eligible based on the requirements, they may not be able to present the paperwork that served as proof of their eligibility. From the migrant point of view, the temporary residence permit, proof of local address, and proof of employment are difficult to obtain. Because local governments seek to control migrants in urban settings, it is fitting that the most difficult to obtain documents are those they must get in the city. For example, not everyone has a temporary residence permit since it necessitates registering with the local public security bureau. Acquiring proof of local address is tricky, too. As the shortage in affordable housing for migrants grows, migrants share temporary housing and are not always offered leases they can present as proof of residence. "Many, many single-room apartments are crowded with over 20 migrant children living together unsupervised. Their parents sent them to the city alone so they can take advantage of our better schools. Maybe there's one adult name on the lease,…but there's no one to take care of them," said a Beijing government official about her perspective on eligibility requirements and what she thought was the way most migrant children came to the city.[70]

Moreover, many migrants who work do not have labor contracts they can present as proof of employment. Low-skilled migrants are least likely to be on contract. In small businesses or the informal sector, written labor contracts are rare. Informal economy workers like fruit and vegetable sellers, nannies, and repairmen do not have *danwei* (work units) and therefore do not have contracts. Even those who do have a *danwei* are hired as temporary workers even though their positions are permanent, so they do not have the contracts or benefits like health insurance that full-time workers had.[71] Big factories that ought to be ideal employment for accessing public benefits use high turnover rates of workers as an excuse not to buy insurance. Although they were told they would have benefits as soon as they started working and insurance could be purchased on a monthly basis, Foxconn workers reported that they were classified as temporary workers or only became eligible to purchase insurance after 4 to 6 months straight of working there.[72]

Third, besides providing contingent access service by service, local governments use new residence classifications to tie migrants up in bureaucratic procedures without providing full urban citizenship and the services that go with it. Several provinces and cities introduced new

[69] (Reuters 2012)
[70] Interview 42
[71] Interview 124
[72] Interview 119, Interview 107

residence permit and points systems to entice migrants with services to settle in small and medium-sized cities instead of the provincial capital. In 2010, Guangdong Province replaced the temporary residence permit with a residence permit.[73] Applicants' points are based on their skills, education, social security records, criminal records, and other factors.[74] High school degrees count for 20 points, university degrees count for 80, and criminal records result in a subtraction of points.[75] Migrants need 60 points to qualify to apply for an urban household registration, and the threshold is even higher (85 points) for a highly desired Guangzhou registration in the provincial capital (Guangdong Province Public Security 2009). The scoring system determines who can acquire a residence permit (*juzhu zheng*) and thereby gain access to urban public services.

The points system provides a facade of inclusion and transparency, but it continues to exclude the average migrant worker. Based on personal experience, migrants in Guangdong Province are skeptical about the residence permit reforms. A factory manager and government liaison who employed 160 migrant workers in the city of Dongguan explained, "The temporary residence permit and *hukou* reforms don't mean anything. It's still too hard to change your *hukou*. For example, you need to have permanent employment and buy a house."[76] Most of those employed at the factory were from Hunan, Henan, and Sichuan Provinces, and the workers I met scoffed incredulously at the mention of *hukou* reform. Many had heard the buzz, but they said it would be impossible to accumulate enough points. Most migrants can only afford to rent cheap rundown places like shared rooms in basement apartments, never mind purchase a house. Permanent employment is also difficult. Those who work in the service industry, such as waiters and nannies, do not qualify. Many migrants change jobs every few years, owing to high turnover in factories or the project-specific nature of construction jobs. The few that should qualify might not be able to provide the documentation. After the promulgation of the 2008 Labor Contract Law, a feisty migrant worker in Guangzhou took his boss to court for not complying with the new law. The court sided with the employer and ultimately blamed the worker for not signing a contract, even though the company refused to offer one to him after he specifically asked for it when he was hired.[77]

In spite of government statements claiming the opposite, these points systems raise the bar for residence permit status for the average low-skilled migrant worker. High-skilled, professional migrants can already apply for an urban *hukou* during their time at university or get health insurance through their urban employers and pay their children's way into local schools. "High-skilled senior personnel are encouraged to come and have no problem accessing services," said one Chengdu official working in the development bureau.[78] Similar to the reforms in Guangdong, Shanghai announced a new points system in 2013. Non-Shanghai residents can apply for a residence permit after being a temporary resident for seven years and accumulating 120 points.[79] A doctor's degree counts for 110 points, and falsified documents and criminal

[73] Application materials include 1) degree certificates or certificates of professional qualification, 2) valid identification, 3) proof of residence in Guangdong Province, 4) a martial status certificate, 5) a health certificate, and 6) an already signed employment contract (Guangdong Province Public Security 2009).
[74] The system is similar to points systems used by countries for immigrants (Interview 75).
[75] (Y. Wang and Huang 2010)
[76] Interview 26
[77] Interview 24
[78] Interview 84
[79] (Shanghai Daily 2013)

records count for a 150 point deduction.[80] Although the government made it easier on paper to qualify for a residence permit and urban services in small cities, the results of their efforts are mixed. Ultimately, migrants continue to go to the developed mega-cities where their social networks and jobs are. In these cities where their service access are contested, bureaucratization channels their demands into disputes over eligibility and documentation.

Strategy 2: Restricting Access to Urban Services

For those who can meet eligibility, local governments still restrict their actual access to and use of urban services. Restricting access in urban areas discourages migrants from using those services in the city and to encourages them to use them in their home jurisdictions. Diverting migrant demands through rules depoliticizes claims and makes it impossible for migrants to assign responsibility to a specific official or bureau without the local government having to fully provide services. Relying on existing but previously un-enforced rules conveniently makes it harder for migrants to allege discrimination or exclusion since the rules pre-dated their claims. Much of the diversion of demands pushes migrants away from using urban schools and hospitals and toward rural schools and clinics.

First, local governments use tiered pricing and reimbursement rates to encourage migrants to use rural services instead of urban services. Though migrants are supposedly eligible to purchase health insurance any city where they work, it is usually unaffordable. In Beijing where many of the country's top hospitals are located, a migrant trying to buy one year of individual insurance coverage has to pay 700 RMB (110 USD).[81] By comparison, away from the national capital in Hangzhou, individual migrant insurance can cost 100 RMB per month (15 USD).[82] As a Beijing doctor quipped, "People either have money and have insurance, or they don't have money and they don't have insurance."[83]

In general, urban hospitals and schools provide better medical care and education than their rural counterparts, and local governments seek to curb use of these better urban services.[84] Although official figures state that 95% of China's population have some form of insurance coverage, coverage and risk protection remain quite shallow, especially for rural residents and migrants. Healthcare is notoriously worse in rural areas, where primary care and adequate coverage for serious or chronic illness are difficult to access. Those who can afford it tend to flock to urban centers for higher quality medical attention. For instance, wealthier, high-skilled migrants working in Zhejiang Province prefer to go to Shanghai for advanced medical care since it is known to have the best facilities, even though it is not convenient since it requires taking time off work for traveling.[85] To counterbalance the draw of these better services in the city, local governments set up systems that promote rural services instead.

Reimbursement rates are usually higher, premiums tend to be lower, and the procedures to get reimbursement are less complicated for rural healthcare than urban healthcare.[86] These differences have real-life health consequences. For migrant mothers and children, women do not have access to enough anti- and post-natal checkups because they cannot afford to pay full price

[80] Ibid
[81] Interview 15
[82] Interview 77
[83] Interview 100
[84] Interview 64
[85] Interview 81
[86] Interview 100

without any reimbursements.[87] Migrant children suffer from malnutrition with common ailments such as anemia, stunted growth, and worms.[88]

For a lucky few, networks between urban hospitals and rural insurance cropped up, enabling them to at least seek healthcare in the city. However, higher reimbursement rates and lower premiums for visits to rural clinic encourage migrants to return to their home villages for medical care. Moreover, these networks are rare and depend on individually established partnerships.[89] Two migrants from the same village who work in different cities or even districts of the same city may not have the same option; the same is true for two migrants from different villages working in the same place. For example, when a construction labor subcontractor and site manager from Sichuan Province in his early 40s fell sick, he was able to go to a private hospital in Beijing and take his receipts home to be reimbursed by the NCMS. (He also lamented the dearth of public hospitals available to migrant patients.) For his first visit, insurance paid 70% of the bill; they covered 40% of his second visit and 30% of his third stay.[90] In contrast, some of his own workers from other villages had never been able to get any reimbursement from their rural insurance. A construction worker from Anhui Province on the same construction site had always avoided going to the hospital in Beijing. When his illness was minor, he rested in his shared dormitory room adjacent to the construction site. If he were to become seriously ill and was in too poor a condition to return to his home county for care, his plan would be to bring several thousands of RMB in cash with him to the city hospital and pay out of pocket.[91] In Shanghai, there are comparatively fewer rural-urban networks available for medical treatment in one province (or city-province) and reimbursement from another province.[92]

Still, the existence of partnerships alone is not enough to ensure that one's rural insurance would accept receipts from urban hospital visits. Within these partnerships, intercity migrants are favored over rural-to-urban migrants. At a hospital in Beijing, one doctor's mother who had urban insurance from the city of Wuhan in Hubei Province could get reimbursed for hospital stays in Beijing, but her friend's mother from a rural area in Shaanxi Province could not get reimbursed for the same treatment.[93] In another telling example, one doctor (a migrant herself from outside Qingdao) needed immediate care when delivering her baby and sought specialists at a Shanghai hospital. She said, "There were no guarantees. Sometimes my hometown required me to get permission in advance."[94] This was an especially tricky proposition when she needed emergency medical attention and could not endure a train ride home and wait for care.

Tiered pricing within networks not only influences where migrants seek care but also what type of medical care they receive. Within cities, reimbursement rates directed rural migrants into less advanced, less expensive kinds of care. For medical care in Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, rural cooperatives covered 30% of care at elite level 3 hospitals (they offered the most advanced care) and 60% of care at lower-tier level 2 hospitals.[95] Though there has not been any policy change in the past two years, migrants working in Dongguan, Guangdong Province had increasingly been able to take their receipts home for rural insurance

[87] Interview 13
[88] Ibid
[89] Interview 29
[90] Interview 17
[91] Interview 20
[92] Interview 132
[93] Interview 104
[94] Interview 133
[95] Interview 77

reimbursement.[96] For a migrant from nearby Wenzhou working in Hangzhou, his insurance would only reimburse him 10% for costs in a Hangzhou hospital.[97] He planned to wait until he returned to his hometown to have surgery.

One notable exception is in Sichuan Province, where as of 2002, migrants from within the province working in the provincial capital Chengdu are supposed to be able to use their rural insurance in the city.[98] The level of reimbursement, however, varies between rural and urban hospitals. In a county-level hospital near their home village, insurance can cover overnight hospital stays (which include per night bed charges) and treatment, whereas it might only cover the bed but not treatment in city hospitals.[99] Yet, a number of migrants in one of the city's open-air labor markets said they had never heard of this policy or known anyone who had taken advantage of it.[100]

Second, even for those migrants willing to pay extra to use urban services instead of rural services, local governments limit their use of services by other means. Diversion allows officials to say they are hemmed in by rules they must follow, thereby removing any room for accusatory claims to be made about their discretion or discrimination against migrants.

Enforcing dormant rules removes the basis for claims of outright exclusion, even if the rules are only used to curb migrant use of services but not urban natives' participation. For example, classroom size limits restrict the number of spots available to migrants without being outright discriminatory. In the past, as class sizes grew, schools happily collected the additional fees and crowded more desks into classrooms. As more migrant students enrolled, local officials relied on classroom size restrictions to exclude them. In Beijing, local governments suddenly restricted class sizes to 30 students,[101] and Chengdu cut class sizes down to 45 even though they had long been hovering around 55 to 65 when the extra students were urban natives. "We are strictly enforcing the limit of 45 students per class, so we now require parents' *hukou* registration. This is enforcement of a policy that always existed but was not carried out before, because now there are too many migrant students," said a local government official.[102]

Restricting class size works because schools first fill their classes with registered urban resident students before opening any remaining spots to migrants. Migrant students must take a number to get in line and maintain high enough test grades in the mean time; when they move from elementary to middle school, they must take another number.[103] She explained further that this got around the controversy of excluding migrants by making it an issue of rule enforcement and classroom management and capacity instead of discrimination. "[The school] said they were full, rather than that they were not allowing my daughter to enroll," said one migrant.[104]

Local officials also enforce enrollment procedures that had previously been ignored to restrict migrant children. These migrants meet eligibility requirements and have the correct paperwork to theoretically access services, but they are still blocked from actually using services. For instance, officials stepped up enforcement of document checking since around 2006-2007.[105]

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[96] Interview 26
[97] Interview 81
[98] Interview 28
[99] Interview 120
[100] Interview 108, Interview 109
[101] Interview 66, Interview 68
[102] Interview 90
[103] Interview 120
[104] Interview 35
[105] Interview 66, Interview 67

Though these policies existed before, more migrants were trying to enroll their children in public schools, and officials needed to curtail their numbers without incident. Before, the process was more informal, and parents could simply bring their documents to schools for administrative clearance when they registered and paid fees. In the last five years, local governments stepped in and sent migrants on wild goose chases. The school instructed parents to bring their package of documents to local government for inspection and another certificate verifying their full documentation. "According to formal policy, this was supposed to always be the way, but now enforcement is strict this year," said a principal in Beijing.[106] A migrant who tried to follow the new procedures was given the runaround: "At the local government office, they told me to take the documents straight to the school. By the time they cleared up the document approval, it was too late. The school year had started and I was told to try enrolling my child again next year."[107] This method of control puts migrants in approval limbo between reaching eligibility and getting services, thereby undermining claims of exclusion.

Strategy 3: Withdrawing Services

Besides providing contingent services and restricting access to healthcare and education in urban areas, local officials withdraw services. In so doing, they encourage migrants to move away, thereby easing resistance prior to land reclamation projects. Local officials avoid direct confrontation and make it harder for the potentially aggrieved to organize and mobilize. By hiding from or delaying contention, they can forestall unrest at times when a critical mass of protestors is most likely to form. Recent and sometimes prolonged land reclamation disputes intensified the ire of protestors, drew the attention of media, and brought unwanted criticism from higher officials.

Some local governments defuse conflict to dampen opposition to land reclamation. As China's cities grew and expanded outward into formerly suburban and rural areas, local governments were demolishing migrant villages and evicting residents to make way for more profitable development zones, luxury malls, and residential high rise buildings. Land disputes accounted for 65% of "mass incidents," or protests, according to Chinese scholars.[108] As a Ministry of Education official recounted reasons why migrant schools in Chengdu were allowed to remain open or are forced to close, she said, "A migrant school would never be demolished per se. Rather, if there is an issue, it's a question of land being bought for development."[109]

Closing schools prior to land seizures convinces migrants to leave before a scheduled demolition in Beijing. In Fengtai District, local officials put up barriers around four migrant schools and posted signs demolition would begin in one year.[110] There were no other announcements or neighborhood meetings about the discussion, forestalling the possibility of any discussion or confrontation. Residents did not have the option of sending their children to public school since there were none nearby. Families in Fengtai decided it would be easier to make plans for relocation as soon as possible. Elsewhere, land expropriation incidents had turned violent to the point where residents faced off with hired thugs.[111] If they waited the full year,

[106] Interview 99
[107] Interview 33
[108] Cited in (Economy 2012)
[109] Interview 90
[110] Interview 36
[111] (Wines and Ansfield 2010)

they might lose in a battle with the local government and be forced to move without prearranged new jobs, housing, or schools for their children. Throughout the year since the signs were posted, residents moved to other parts of Beijing, relocated to new cities, or returned to their home villages. With such limited options, relocation was one of the decisions they could make on their own terms. "The government is trying to restrict and control migrants, both newly incoming and existing, in Beijing. Fewer parents are willing to just send their children to live in the countryside with their grandparents while they work in the city, so many move their whole families back," said a migrant activist when describing how these closures would encourage migrants to move out early on their own.

Officials elsewhere caught onto the effectiveness of this tactic and did the same. Migrant schools in Chengdu were often "relocated," polite code for demolished, as more neighborhoods undergo gentrification.[112] Prior to an upcoming land grab in Shanghai, one migrant school was closed one year before the surrounding area was to officially become an economic development zone. They too hoped to defuse conflict by encouraging migrants living there to move away on their own without having to be forcibly removed. An NGO staff member who had placed volunteers in the school for several years said, "One year from now, the whole neighborhood will be demolished. Most families have already moved out."[113]

Why the State Regulates Migrants

The state utilizes these methods of social control because they perceive migrants to be a potential threat to social stability. Past migrant protests that began over a scuffle between individuals spiraled into days-long riots. Officials and native urban residents also assume migrants bring crime with them to the city. After a long day spent with officials from several different bureaus at a teahouse in Chengdu, an official from the local public security bureau waited until his colleagues descended the stairs to use the restroom or go for an after-dinner smoke. In hushed tones as we approached the lobby, he said, "In the next few years, the question of how to manage migrants will only become more important. It will be one of, if not the most, important issue for public security."[114] While political and demographic shifts put more pressure on officials to expand services to migrants who are here to stay, officials also seek to avoid being blamed for injuries or tragedies in private migrant schools and clinics.

Public services have become one useful venue for the state to engage in social control of migrants after they have arrived in the city. Wages and benefits are not bundled, so companies and the state can use them separately to regulate labor. Service provision is more malleable for the state than wages. Minimum wages may have rise over time help to alleviate labor shortages, but they are not an effective way for the state to manage migrants that are already in the city. Services are not a strong pull factor alone either. Most migrants do not move to a city solely to access more services, but they will ask for them once they are there. In the face of this pressure on public services, local governments e access, divert use, or take services away in attempts to isolate individuals, diffuse blame, and sometimes even forestall unrest.

Isolating Individuals

[112] Interview 88
[113] Interview 92
[114] Interview 85

By providing contingent benefits (strategy 1), local governments can control costs, selectively allocate benefits to some migrants and not others, and leverage their discretion as a source of power. They are able to isolate migrants and make the issue of public service access an individual issue rather than a group issue. Announcing reform and making it seem underway removes some of the basis of migrant claims against the state and leaves migrants stranded between moral and legal claims. Since most people laud migrants for their hard work and sacrifice, migrants use the language of "deserving" rights to the city on a moral basis. As national policies dictate that migrants can get equal access to services, they push local governments to reform their social policies. However, local governments are still under-resourced and wary of opening the floodgates to migrants seeking services. Having dragged their feet for as long as they could, they are now turning to making reform seem underway and extending very limited benefits. By setting up unattainable eligibility requirements or bureaucratic channels that keep migrants from getting services, they bring migrants into the fold and curtail their basis for legal claims.

The contingency of benefits and isolation of individuals move the battleground for education and healthcare access on to the state's turf. Conflict over access to services becomes about eligibility, documentation, and channels for making claims rather than over the gap between promises made and promises delivered.[115] "To get health insurance in Chengdu, it's very easy. [Migrants] just need proof of residence. Without this, they are considered short-term stay only. And proof of work, a signed contract…If they don't have proof of employment and residence, then they do not have access to services," said a government official.[116] Yet, the experience of migrants on the ground reveals that these requirements are merely new obstacles to public services rather than gateways. Some migrants end up blaming themselves for not being able to gather the right paperwork in time or having the savvy to navigate the complicated, fragmented urban and rural service systems.

Furthermore, giving services to a select few helps divide and conquer contentious migrants. Opening services to all migrants would be too expensive and invite what the state sees as threats to social stability, but migrant claims against the state about discrimination and exclusion could be quite powerful. To blunt the effectiveness of these complaints and break up solidarity among potential resistors, the state gives services to a few migrants, but not everyone. This follows a broader trend in which the Chinese state has individualized the response to discontent (Lee and Zhang 2013; Chuang 2014). Discursively, this is framed as a situation in which the few who got services were the ones who fulfilled the bureaucratic requirements. In reality, these requirements are in flux, and there is no fixed set which migrants could meet and guarantee their access to services. The sequence is flipped. Local officials decide which individual migrants they will give services to and enforce or waive eligibility and documentation standards to get them in. For migrants deemed unworthy, officials find justifications for excluding them.

Diffusing Blame

The restriction of access to urban services (strategy 2) discourages migrants from using healthcare and education in urban areas and encourages them to use these services in their home jurisdictions. This contributes to the diffusion and avoidance of blame for why most migrants

[115] This gap can become the basis for rightful resistance (K. J. O'Brien and Li 2006).
[116] Interview 84

still cannot use hospitals and schools in the city. The reliance on following rules, even those that were previously unenforced, depoliticizes the process and makes it plausible for school and hospital officials to steer blame away from them for excluding migrant workers.

The diffusion of blame makes it hard for migrants to know whom to blame when they have trouble getting services. Conflicting signals about what services migrants have the right to in the city originate between central and local policies, between different bureaus, and between local bureaus and service providers. Consequently, when implementation falls short of formal policy, it is difficult for migrants to identify a specific bureau, level of government, or person to blame. The more specific their blame attribution, the more likely it is that people protest (Javeline 2003). In this case, the diffusion of blame makes it harder for migrants to know whom to target in order to get education and healthcare. After another round of protests from migrant parents, newspapers reported that migrant children in Beijing would be able to take the college entrance exam in the city. Digging into the articles and policy announcements reveals that this policy would be slow to roll out and involved eligibility requirements that almost no one would be able to meet. Down the line, contradictory information about rights and procedures compel migrants to believe news about services being opened up to them to pacify them, not give them services.

Governments not only diffuse blame, but local officials also seek to avoid blame. Officials in China often look to avoid being blamed for bad things that happen within their jurisdictions, so officials seek to reduce the possibility of tragedies occurring in private migrant schools and health clinics. In a place where Beijing attributes corruption to a few bad apples instead of the system, they sack individual officials supposedly responsible for the debacle and reinforce the claim that they broader system remains intact. It is tempting to assume that officials can ignore migrant alternatives like migrant schools and clinics. However, concerns about being blamed for unsafe makeshift, dilapidated school buildings or fake pharmaceutical drugs dispensed at underground clinics, even though they are private enterprises, urges local officials to pay attention to them. To avoid being blamed for something that might happen, especially after the collapse of "tofu dreg" school buildings during the 2008 Sichuan earthquake, officials emphasize the physical safety of buildings in shutting down migrant schools. While regulating the private alternatives, they are forced to confront the possibility of bringing migrants into public schools and hospitals as another way to avoiding bearing the political costs of unsafe migrant schools and clinics.

Forestalling Unrest

In addition to controlling costs, selectively allocating benefits, leveraging their discretion as a source of power, and discouraging migrants from using urban services and encouraging them to use services in their home jurisdiction, local governments sometimes withdraw services to migrants (strategy 3). By withdrawing services, local authorities encourage migrants to move away, thereby easing resistance prior to land reclamation projects. Much has been written about the dynamics and outcomes of contention, but we know less about what happens before contention. By narrowing the set of available choices and manipulating incentives, the state channels migrants into consensually making the decision the state want them to make.

In addition to striking over labor issues, migrants have protested over inadequate and unequal social services in the city. Protests over discriminatory education policies, especially regarding the college entrance exam, have mounted in recent years.[117] When migrants petitioning

[117] (W. Luo and Jin 2013)

for their children's equal rights to education gathered outside the gates of the Ministry of Education offices in Beijing, officials refused to meet with parents. Police warned them to stop petitioning, and at times they dispersed and detained them. In October 2012, a group of counter-protestors made up of native Beijing residents with local *hukou* swore at migrant parents during a four-hour standoff.[118]

The state keeps a watchful eye on smaller gatherings of migrants and tries to head off organization among unhappy migrants. Groups of migrant parent activists who connect online occasionally meet in person to iron out plans to call for college entrance exam reform for their children. At one meeting I attended, the location was changed multiple times, even though they were all in private homes or offices. In the days leading up to the meeting, building security guards asked them to move their meeting because they had received pressure from local administrative staff to not permit them to meet. I received the text message about the final meeting location and time less than an hour before the meeting. In the room, the leaders of the group were meticulous about identifying and verifying who was in the room, triple-checking with the main organizer who had invited me about who I was and why I was there. They repeatedly asked with heavy suspicion, "You're not a government official or foreign journalist, right?" They knew that the Beijing government was worried they might use their meeting to organize a protest.

To avoid large protests over land expropriation, local officials sometimes shut down social services, like schools, one year before demolition and eviction or turn off public utilities. Some local governments cut off water and electricity when migrants were away from their homes for the day in an effort to persuade them to relocate sooner rather than later. Taking away services makes life more difficult for migrants, so they make their own decision to move away before being physically wrestled from their homes. This method of dampening opposition to land expropriation is less volatile than forced eviction. Only a stalwart few migrant residents are left when demolition begins, thereby forestalling unrest by the entire migrant village at once.

Conclusion

Local governments are responsible for dealing with rural migrant workers, often accounting for around 40% of residents, who settle in their cities. Not only do governments perceive them to be potential criminals and protestors, but migrants exert pressure on over-crowded schools and hospitals. Instead of coercing them or fully providing services, local officials channel and contain demands by providing contingent rather than universal benefits, restricting access to healthcare and education in urban areas, and withdrawing services. In turn, these strategies allow officials to control costs, selectively allocate benefits, leverage their discretion as a source of power, discourage migrants from using services in urban areas and encourage them to use these services in their home jurisdiction, and encourage migrants to move away to ease resistance prior to land reclamation projects.

From the perspective of local governments, they are responding to practical pressures to expand services for migrants while they are overburdened and under-resourced. Many in mega-cities are especially wary of encouraging more migrants to come as they struggle with urban sprawl and increased pressure on the public service system. At the same time, they acknowledge that migrant labor is essential to the construction industry that builds the infrastructure for future growth and to the city's regional manufacturing and service industries. Some of the public

[118] (The Economist 2012b)

service provision policies are ad hoc, some are guided by central directives, and some are learned from other cities. The end result of many of these policies is to contain and channel migrant demands, which results in addressing the welfare needs of a few migrants while not providing for most.

In contrast to the notion that opening access to services always increased migrant integration, the provision of services can be a tool of social control. When only a few migrants gain access to services, this is not necessarily a sign that all migrants will be integrated. In cases where the government offers services to a few to undermine claims of exclusion and divide and conquer cohesive migrant groups, an increase in services forestalls unrest rather than expands services to all migrants. States do not have to only extinguish demands; they can channel them. They do not always have to deal with conflict; they can avoid having it happen.

In this chapter, I described how local governments channel and contain individual migrant workers' demands. Because of these obstacles, migrants turn to private "people-run" schools and health clinics to meet their need for services in the city. In chapter 4, I investigate how and why local governments regulate these private schools differently and sometimes integrate rural migrants into their urban education systems in unexpected ways.

Chapter Four

Local Governments and Private Services

Introduction

In chapter 3, I examined how local governments use public services in healthcare and education as a tool of social control. In this chapter, I focus on local governments' regulation of "people-run" (*minban*) schools for migrant children. As more and more migrants settle long-term into cities, they circumvent the lack of access to public schools by establishing their own private schools. However, these schools are often in dilapidated buildings with unsafe conditions and unqualified teachers. While some local governments begin to integrate rural migrants into urban public services, they simultaneously attempt to regulate the private alternatives to address safety issues before they become public relations problems and cause social unrest.

How and why do local governments regulate private migrant schools and public school integration differently? Local governments have adopted three strategies to regulate private alternative schools and integrate migrants into public institutions: 1) suppression and exclusion, 2) selective absorption and segregated inclusion, and 3) certification and full inclusion. Their orientations toward migrant education depend on whether local officials share a regional identity with the migrants they serve and whether they can get credit for visible results and avoid blame and criticism for bad outcomes.

A Primer on Migrant Schools

As I entered the principal's office, which also served as the vice principal's office and faculty meeting room, he motioned for me to wait at the conference table while he tended to a teacher's request in another room. "Have a seat. Sorry for the chairs. They were donated," he sheepishly apologized as he grabbed a folder off his desk in the corner before heading down the hall. As I sat down in the closest chair at the table in the center of the room, I nearly fell to the cold concrete floor. I looked more closely and realized that the chair, like the other 23 in the room, was only about six inches from the ground. The tabletop was at my neck level. When the principal returned for our conversation and sat down across from me, the table at least reached his armpits. The chairs had been donated to the school because all of the pump mechanisms were broken, rendering the chairs essentially useless in typical office settings.

Private, makeshift "people-run" migrant schools like this one I visited popped up in the mid-1990s in Beijing and multiplied elsewhere as more migrants brought their children to the cities.[119] From the start, most of these people-run schools were deemed illegal. The local government in Beijing excluded migrant children from public schools and neither recognized nor supported private migrant schools (Kwong 2004).[120] Since then, the government's role in

[119] "People-run" schools began as popular, voluntary village institutions during the Yan'an Period in the mid-1940s (Robinson 1986). Throughout the Maoist Era, they served as vehicles for inculcating political and educational values (C. Wang 2002). This form of education became hyperpoliticized during the Great Leap Forward in 1958 and the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976. In contemporary China, the term "people-run" schools usually refers to private migrant schools set up to provide education for migrant children living in cities where they are barred from enrolling in public school.

[120] See the chapter by (D. Chan, Mok, and Tang 2004) in (L. Wong, White, and Gui 2004) for a case study of education reform in Shanghai.

migrant education has become more proactive as it contracted out and regulated private social services.

These migrant schools are more accessible than public schools for migrant students. These alternative schools are conveniently located a short walk or bike ride away from the homes of migrant families in concentrated pockets of the city limits where they live. In general, the schools' funding comes from student fees. Short-term sponsorships from Chinese companies' corporate social responsibility programs support a lucky few. Student fees range from 350 to 1,000 RMB ($56 to 160) per semester, and teacher salaries start at 1,500 RMB ($240) per month.[121]

While these migrant schools are more affordable than public schools, many cannot offer a high-quality education. Many teachers at migrant schools are enthusiastic but under-qualified, since their better trained and more highly educated counterparts have local *hukou* (household registrations) and teach in public schools for higher salaries. There is high turnover among these teachers, many of whom are migrants themselves. One teacher I spoke with was hired as a gym instructor, but became an English or math teacher depending on what the school needed each year. Enrollment numbers and standardized test performance reflect barriers to high-quality education for migrant students in the city. Rural children who do not migrate with their parents, known as "left behind children," are more likely to enroll in school than children who migrate to the city with their families (J. Yang and Duan 2008), suggesting that these students continue to encounter roadblocks to enrolling in urban schools. Migrant students who attend the poorest Beijing public schools still significantly outperform students in migrant schools (Lai et al. 2014). Surprisingly, left behind children in rural schools in Shaanxi Province outperformed migrant students in Beijing migrant schools on standardized tests for a 2008-2009 school survey (C. Liu 2010). Though rural schools are notoriously poorer than urban schools, their students still did better than students in urban migrant schools.

Besides their financing and staffing, migrant school facilities are also makeshift. They are often in converted buildings with relatively low rent payments and rely on donated furniture and materials as much as they can. One school I visited in Chengdu was located in a former restaurant building. Rooms that previously served as elegant private dining areas meant to seat eight to ten people were converted into classrooms. Some rooms were L-shaped or more like parallelograms than squares or rectangles. While this was an architectural feature of the restaurant, it made for difficult classroom management, cluttered seating arrangements, and awkward chalkboard viewing angles. Without heating in the buildings, students and teachers bundled up in the winter. Schools that receive company donations or sponsorships tend to be in better shape. Though conditions were poor and proper teaching materials were in short supply, principals reported that basic building safety was not an issue in the schools I visited.

Patterns of School Regulation in Beijing, Shanghai, and Chengdu

In 2011, Beijing launched a second, widely criticized wave of closures of migrant schools. Meanwhile, Shanghai announced it would provide free public education to all migrant children, and Chengdu certified the quickly growing number of private migrant schools. Chengdu also more openly welcomed migrants into public schools than Beijing and Shanghai. Why did wealthier coastal cities that relied on migrant workers the longest and were experiencing labor shortages provide worse services than a poorer inland city?

[121] Interview 36

Providing public services (especially when extending them to citizens who were not previously included) is expensive, and the most desired services were in China's most developed cities. In 2010, Beijing's GDP per capita was $11,218.[122] Many of the country's top hospitals and universities are in the capital city, and it is 16 times easier for a Beijing student to earn admission to top-ranked Tsinghua University than a student from Hunan Province.[123] Moreover, a Beijing *hukou* is among the most sought-after in China, another indication of the substantial benefits registered Beijing residents receive. Despite these numerous advantages bestowed on Beijing residents, migrants in Beijing do not fare so well. The city launched a major crackdown on private migrant schools in 2006 and 2011. Without alternatives for their children to attend public school, migrant parents withdrew their children from school or moved out of Beijing. The percentage of migrant children who do not go to school is higher in Beijing and Shanghai than the national average.[124]

Shanghai is a desirable, long-standing migrant destination like Beijing, but migrants in Shanghai have more access to education. According to Chinese and international news coverage, Shanghai is leading the way in providing services for migrants.[125] Like Beijing, it is a cosmopolitan first-tier city on China's prosperous coast. State-owned enterprises in Beijing and Shanghai lure the best and brightest students from other parts of China with the promise of a local *hukou*, showing how desired the benefits that accompany one of these registrations are. As the financial center of China, Shanghai's 2010 GDP per capita amounted to $11,238, slightly higher than Beijing's.[126] In early 2010, Shanghai announced it would provide free education to all migrant children. Though Shanghai is generally perceived to be more welcoming to migrants than other cities, some integrated migrant and public schools actually operate as segregated schools with different hours, curriculum, and teachers for migrant and local children.[127] The policy also only covers compulsory education and excludes high school admission for migrant children.

Compared to Beijing and Shanghai, Chengdu is less developed, yet migrants have the most access to education in this city. In 2010, Chengdu's GDP per capita was $6,466, just over half that of Beijing and Shanghai.[128] The capital of Sichuan Province in southwestern China, Chengdu is home to a growing number of migrants. Though Chengdu is poorer and further inland, migrant children have long had an easier time enrolling in public schools, and the number of migrant schools is increasing.[129] Not only can migrant schools remain open, but the local government also certify them. Migrant children who graduated from certified schools can at least present a certificate verifying that they have finished middle school, which employers often require.

Chengdu, the capital of a province better known as a migrant sending location than a destination, has fewer resources than Beijing and Shanghai; it also faces a rapidly growing

[122] For comparison, China's national GDP per capita was $4.375.40 in 2010 (United Nations).
[123] (The Economist 2012a)
[124] This was according to a 2012 report by the National Population and Family Planning Commission and was likely a conservative number (Xin Chen 2012).
[125] For example, one frequently cited news article began, "Shanghai will this year become the first Chinese city to provide free education to all school-age children of migrant workers, through more government investment in facilities and teachers" (Zhi 2010).
[126] (Cao 2012; J. Zhang 2012)
[127] Interview 13, Interview 82, and Interview 91
[128] (Chengdu Statistics Bureau 2011)
[129] Interview 88, Interview 89

demand on its public services from migrants as factories chasing cheaper labor costs move inland in China and toward Southeast Asia. Its treatment of registered urban residents is not notable compared to Beijing or Shanghai, and yet they treat migrants quite well compared to other cities. How and why does Chengdu provide better education services to migrants than Beijing and Shanghai?[130]

Modes of Private School Regulation and Public School Integration

To understand why Chengdu treats migrants so well, we first need to look deeply into what comparatively less welcoming approaches encompass. Cities adopted three strategies for regulating private migrant schools and integrating migrant students into public schools: 1) suppression and exclusion, 2) selective absorption and segregated inclusion, and 3) certification and full inclusion. In suppression and exclusion, local governments close and demolish private schools and block migrants from enrolling in public school. Through a more segmented approach, selective absorption and segregated inclusion involves closing down small, unlicensed schools and taking over the rest while allowing some migrants into public schools but segregates them from urban students. Certification and full inclusion is an innovative tactic that best preserves existing access channels that are convenient for migrants to get to by legalizing and certifying private schools and also allowing migrants to attend public school.

Shut Them Down

Suppression: Shutting Down Private Migrant Schools in Beijing

In 2006, Beijing launched a major campaign to crack down on illegal migrant schools in Chaoyang, Daxing, Fentgai, and Haidian districts under the auspices of "The City of Beijing School Board Notification Regarding Strengthening the Management of Schools Operated by the Floating Population." Another wave of closures followed in 2011, garnering much international attention.

The government cited concerns about physical safety and poor education quality for shutting down these schools.[131] In particular, they were wary of possible injury to children in schools located in unsafe buildings. According to formal policy, "there is a list of criteria for migrant schools to meet. If schools meet them, then the government gives a per student subsidy. Otherwise, they shut the school down. This has been good for ensuring the physical safety of schools and their facilities, but teaching and education quality remain poor," said one NGO staff person who worked with migrant schools in Beijing and Shanghai.[132]

The severity of migrant school crackdowns in Beijing varied by district each year. In 2009 and earlier years, Daxing District had the reputation of being stringent in shutting down

[130] Chengdu's comparatively better service provision for migrant workers extends beyond the substantive policy area of education. According to the 2010 *Population Research* report on the "Current Living Situation of Migrant Population in China" by the Department of Floating Population Service and Management of National Population and Family Planning Commission of China, 57.3% of migrants in Beijing and 49.3% of migrants in Shanghai participated in health insurance. In contrast, the participation rate in Chengdu was much higher at 83.7% (Department of Floating Population Service and Management of the National Population and Family Planning Commission of China 2010).

[131] Interview 13, Interview 92

[132] Interview 13

migrant schools, especially kindergartens. In 2010, Haidian District was especially tough.[133] At the time, only 64 schools out of approximately 400 had been able to obtain legal licenses.[134] District discretion is high in this fragmented environment of policy implementation. When I asked to revisit one migrant school in Fengtai District in Beijing that I had gone to two years prior in 2010, the school administrator said the school had been demolished. A year before the closures, officials quietly put walls and signs indicating the school would be shut down. He also reported that the local government closed down three other migrant schools in the same neighborhood within a year.

Exclusion: Keeping Migrants out of Public Schools in Beijing

To compensate for the closures of private migrant schools, Beijing public schools are supposed to allow displaced children to enroll. The reality of migrant children being able to attend public school falls far short of this goal, and most migrants continue to be excluded.

In order to enroll their children in public school, migrant parents first have to find a public school within the educational district where they live. Many migrants in Beijing reside in outlying migrant villages far from the city center. Housing, food, and other living expenses are much cheaper outside the Fifth and Sixth Ring Roads away from the city center. However, there are few or no public schools nearby to accommodate migrant children. The few public schools that are near districts where migrants congregated are especially under-resourced compared to their counterparts in the city center, yet they are also supposed to carry the heaviest burden in absorbing students from migrant schools. A Beijing education official said, "The good schools keep getting better. They have better students, better teachers, etc. the poor schools keep falling behind."[135] Moreover, local officials are reluctant to take on the cost of building entirely new schools in migrant neighborhoods to serve these migrant students.

Even when migrant parents find a public school that should accept their child based on where they live, migrants report being shut out of these schools in Beijing. Many migrant parents are unable to pay for the registration fees or gather the required documentation in time.[136] Enrollment in public school requires the presentation of five documents (*wuzheng*), consisting of a temporary residence permit, proof of a Beijing address, proof of employment and hometown permanent residency, and a notice from authorities in their place of origin stating that there is no one to care of their children back home. Proof of employment is especially difficult to acquire for some migrants, because their bosses do not provide employment contracts or they work in the informal economy. When a representative of a Haidian District educators' organization was asked why the district's officials did not approve or register more migrants in schools, she said, "Because it brings down the overall quality of education in Haidian. Urban parents don't want their kids to go to school with migrants."[137]

In addition to burdensome documentation, many schools ask for extra fees in the form of required donations.[138] Such fees have been banned since 2005.[139] Nonetheless, one migrant from

[133] Ibid
[134] (Canaves and Feng 2010), Interview 13
[135] Interview 64
[136] Interview 33, Interview 35
[137] Interview 13
[138] Interview 21, Interview 66
[139] The 2006 policy of abolishing school fees significantly increased citizens' (especially rural residents) demands for greater government responsibility for financing compulsory education (Lü 2014).

Henan Province reported that the local private migrant school cost 500 RMB ($80) per semester, whereas the local public school she wanted to send her daughter to charged ten times as much, not including hundreds more that would be required in "additional fees."[140] In Beijing, one migrant mother from Hebei Province paid a so-called "voluntary donation" of $4,800 to enroll her daughter in a Beijing elementary school; school officials made her sign a document stating the fee was a voluntary donation.[141] According to a National Bureau of Statistics study on migrants' quality of life, 49% of respondents who brought their children with them to the cities had to pay an average registration fee of 1,226 RMB ($200) in addition to regular tuition. Finally, sometimes public schools claim that there are no openings left for additional students in order to exclude migrant children, though separate spots are reserved for local urban students.[142] "With more local economic development in our district, migrant children enrollment has steadily increased in recent years. Because of this, we have had to reserve spots for local students in public schools. Otherwise, urban resident parents complain to us," explained a government official in Beijing.[143]

Although many migrants are banned from enrolling their children or face insurmountable obstacles in the form of documentation and extra fees, a few migrants said that in recent years their children have been able to attend public schools for free.[144] However, this appears to be the exception and not the rule.[145] Several public school principals and administrators stated that the central government paid the tuition and fees for migrant students via the school, though this only worked if migrants were able to enroll in the first place.[146] Each year, school staff count the number of migrant students they had enrolled and apply for per capita support from the government for books and other supplies.[147] Even in the few cases where children are able to enroll in public school, migrant families often live too far from public schools, which are closer to the city center. As a result, migrant families are forced to let their children transfer three to four public buses to get to school or else uproot.[148] When students' private migrant schools are closed and their designated public schools are out of reach, some families ultimately leave Beijing and return to their home villages in order to secure some form of education for their children.

Take Them Over

Selective Absorption: Taking Over Some Private Migrant Schools in Shanghai

In 2010, Shanghai's announcement that it would provide free education to all migrant children made newspaper headlines inside and outside China. They sought to first close down private schools that were unlicensed or deemed too small, and then they would take over the remaining migrant schools. Unlike in Beijing, the plan included several further steps to ensure migrant access to education after the policy change. The formal plan was to integrate migrant children

[140] Interview 15, Interview 35
[141] (Levin 2012)
[142] Interview 91
[143] Interview 39
[144] Interview 65
[145] Interview 12, Interview 22
[146] Interview 59, Interview 66, Interview 60, Interview 61, Interview 67,and Interview 68
[147] Interview 98
[148] Interview 32, Interview 93

into existing public schools and waive their fees, build new public schools in outlying (predominantly migrant) neighborhoods where previously there were no public schools, and renovate some of the better migrant schools. After the policy change, three types of schools were available for migrant children in Shanghai: schools where migrant and local children were fully integrated, schools where they were segregated, and migrant-only schools.

Many private schools taken over by Shanghai became migrant-only schools, which tended to be poorest in quality compared to other schools.[149] This is in part a product of the fact that these schools were located in further flung areas of the city, where migrants lived. To improve migrant schools, Shanghai gives subsidies and sends principals or vice principals to turn these ostensibly private schools into people-run, government-subsidized (*minban gongzhu*) schools.[150] Unlike Beijing where schools report that the central government pays for migrant student subsidies, the Shanghai municipal government foot the bulk of the bill. In one district, schools receive subsidies ranged from 2,000 to 4,000 RMB ($320 to 640) per migrant student.[151] Teacher salaries sometimes come from district budgets.[152] Although their tuition is subsidized, migrant parents are responsible for paying their children's fees for books, lunches, and activities.

Segregated Inclusion: Separating Migrants in Public Schools in Shanghai

After the overhaul and reorganization of people-run schools, more migrant children in Shanghai than in Beijing are able to attend public school, and some public schools are fully integrated, but caveats and problems abound. Some teachers favor local students, in part because they want to prepare students for the all-important college entrance exam (*gaokao*), the score of which determined where they would go to university and future job prospects. Migrant students cannot take the exam in the city, so teachers are reluctant to devote tutoring or other resources to them. The curriculum for the exam differed by location, so migrants who have to take the test elsewhere need to study different materials than Shanghai students. The effect is not only seen in high school when the college entrance exam are taken, but also in middle schools since that is where teachers prepared students for the high school exam (*zhongkao*). One migrant cigarette seller lived apart in a different province from his son because significant differences in exam materials precluded him from accompanying his father going to school in the city. He said, "[My son and I] live apart so he can graduate high school and hopefully go to college…My son goes to school in Henan [Province], while I work here [in Beijing]. He is currently in his second year of high school and will take the college entrance exam there in two years."[153]

When migrant children are integrated en masse into public schools, some districts and schools segregate schools.[154] "In Shanghai, there are segregated schools which separated migrant and local student. They went to school at different hours and had different lunch times. They even had different teachers and studied different curricula."[155] Moreover, they are spatially separated into different classrooms (Lan 2014). Migrant children are technically allowed to attend school, per the law, but their education is subpar compared to that offered to local children in the classroom down the hall. "Shanghai has a figurative 'door card' which restricts migrants

[149] Interview 82
[150] Interview 92
[151] Interview 76
[152] Interview 82, Interview 92
[153] Interview 34
[154] Interview 91
[155] Interview 13

from fully entering public schools and wants to preserve its higher level of culture and moral quality," said a teacher.[156]

The discourse offered by school administrators around the segregation emphasizes the interests of migrant students, and government officials defend the practice as a temporary solution without giving a timeline for lifting the practice of segregation. Principals and teachers justify the segregation by saying that since only students with local *hukou* can take the entrance exams, their schooling and preparation should be different from migrant children's.[157] Because local children's test scores determine the school's ranking and reputation, school staff and teachers channel more resources to local students than migrant students.[158] What was an ad hoc response by some public schools to figure out a way to include migrant children became a sticky solution that has continued. Although media coverage has portrayed Shanghai as a leader in integrating migrants into public education, "Shanghai is like Beijing. They both represent cities that are stricter toward migrants and provide worse services."[159]

Certify Them

Certification: Legalizing Private Migrant Schools in Chengdu

"We are legal," proclaimed the principal as he proudly beamed. When entering the office of his migrant school in Chengdu, the first thing visitors saw was the prominently posted certificate from the local government. It was framed, complete with official stamps and seals certifying the school. Established in 2004, the school started with around 200 to 300 students and eight years later grew to include over 1,200 students.[160] Unlike in Beijing and Shanghai where migrant schools are being eliminated, the number of migrant schools in Chengdu increases each year. In 2012, there were more than 50 migrant schools in Chengdu, and the number was climbing.[161] Rather than deeming them illegal or demolishing them, the local government is certifying private migrant schools.

Certifying existing migrant schools increases accessibility and welfare for migrants. With the certification, schools can grant diplomas that students can present to future employers as proof of having finished middle or high school.[162] These schools are already operating in neighborhoods where migrants live, so they are highly accessible. Parents do not have to move their families to find an open spot in an existing public school in the city, and students can easily commute to and from school safely without having to travel to a faraway district. Although they are still private schools, the quality of education is relatively better than migrant schools in other cities. Partly, this is because teacher wages and school fees are higher in Chengdu than places like Beijing; school fees range from 1,000 to 1,800 RMB ($160 to 290) per semester.[163]

The certification of migrant schools is not only beneficial for migrants; it is also good for the local economy and the agendas of government officials who work in development. The ability of young people to earn diplomas that serve as proof of education level is increasingly

[156] Interview 69
[157] Interview 13, Interview 41, Interview 70, Interview 82
[158] Interview 82
[159] Interview 73
[160] Interview 89
[161] Interview 88
[162] Interview 89, Interview 90
[163] Interview 88

important as more and more employers require proof of education to determine eligibility to work and wage level. As Chengdu and other inland cities and provinces continue to develop and attract more industry, they need workers who have the right skills and are willing to stay in the region to work. Furthermore, government officials do not have to worry about building new public schools or squeezing migrant children into existing public schools that are fully enrolled. Instead, they follow the natural development of the schools and their proximity to migrants, which contribute to migrant welfare, local service provision, and labor development.

Full Inclusion: Incorporating Migrants into Public Schools in Chengdu

In 2005, migrant children began to be allowed to enroll in public school in Chengdu. As of a few years ago, all migrant children were supposed to be allowed to attend public schools free of charge.[164] According to the Chengdu government, unlike in Shanghai, "migrant children go to public schools, with the same teachers, curriculum, and so forth as local students."[165] Funding is even more decentralized than in Beijing or Shanghai; the district government subsidizes public schools that enroll migrant students.[166]

Not every migrant has been incorporated, but many have and access continues to increase. A female migrant worker who recently arrived in Chengdu was in an open-air labor market looking for a job that involved cooking or doing housework. Without stable work or any knowledge about the integration of migrant children into education services in Chengdu, she decided not to bring her children with her to the city and left them in the care of their grandparents in her home village.[167] For her and others in the same situation, the incorporation would allow them to keep their families together as they pursued employment in the city. "Although not all migrant children can go to public school here yet, approximately 90% can attend right now," said one government official in Chengdu.[168]

Not only are more migrant students eligible to go to public schools, but the barriers to enrollment are lower than in other major cities. "The public schools around here have many migrant students, especially in elementary and middle school. If they live in the district, they simply take a number and earn good enough test grades to get into the school," said a GONGO staff member whose organization served a resource for the district and neighborhood to connect residents with services.[169] Parents take a number once to get line to enroll in elementary school and a second time later to attend middle school. If nearby public schools are full, the government sometimes allowed migrant children to attend schools outside their district.[170] This stands in stark contrast to the demolition of migrant schools coupled with de facto exclusion from public schools in Beijing or the segregated inclusion of migrant students in Shanghai. Chengdu provides migrants with the most access to education services compared to these other cities.

Explaining Variation in Migrant School Regulation

[164] Interview 87, Interview 119
[165] Interview 84
[166] Interview 88
[167] Interview 109
[168] Interview 87
[169] Interview 120
[170] Interview 102

In sum, local governments use three strategies for regulating private migrant schools and then integrating migrants into public institutions: 1) suppression and exclusion, 2) selective absorption and segregated inclusion, and 3) certification and full inclusion. Why cities employed such different approaches to migrant education depends on whether local government officials shared a regional identity with the migrant workers and how they push the visible results of their policies while avoiding blame for bad outcomes.

Shared Regional Identities

Local government officials who share a regional identity with migrant workers are more likely to provide better public services than officials who do not identify with migrants. This regional identity is often based on the province where officials and migrants are from. In provinces like Sichuan (where Chengdu is located), Zhejiang, and Jiangsu, they share cultures, traditions, and languages. Elsewhere, such as in Guangdong Province, Beijing, and Shanghai, they do not speak the same dialect or even have the same style of cooking as many migrant workers who live there. Native Beijingers and Shanghainese have strong local identities and view rural migrant workers as outsiders impinging on their lifestyle as native urban residents of the nation's political, cultural, and financial capitals.

In places where the native urban identity is stronger, such as Beijing and Shanghai, local policy is more exclusionary toward migrants. In these cities, many local officials self-identify as native Beijingers or Shanghainese. Alluding to a fixed pie of resources to be split between urban residents and migrant workers, a researcher said, "Shanghai's Local People's Congress protects local interests. There is still only free migrant education for elementary and middle school because 1) they want to limit college entrance exam opportunities to local residents only and 2) [there are] limited education resources."[171] These local officials' duty is first to native urban residents and second to migrant workers.

Some officials draw a clear line between who are and who are not their constituents, and they openly discriminate against migrant workers. Though many recognize that migrants provide necessary labor across the sectors in construction, manufacturing, and services, many do not want to share public services with them. While it is a social faux pas to speak condescendingly about migrant workers or openly discriminate against them, many government officials are prejudiced in practice. These officials see migrants as rural outsiders who have come from the countryside to take advantage of urban services without contributing to the local economy. To them, migrants deserve no social services. When asked about the migrant families who were excluded from public schools, a Beijing official answered, "Then they should go back to their hometown. I bet they don't even have jobs!"[172]

In contrast, officials in Chengdu generally see less distance between themselves and the rural migrants living and working in their city. Though they considered themselves bona fide native residents of Chengdu, many informants spoke of how their grandparents or friends were migrants from Sichuan Province. "Chengdu is a different kind of city. It is unlike Beijing or Shenzhen. Chengdu has always had people from the village," said a researcher of urban planning.[173] Seeing themselves as simply further along an almost inevitable trajectory of rural migrant to urban resident, they are more open to including migrants in public services. A person

[171] Interview 76
[172] Interview 39
[173] Interview 23

who worked closely with government officials to connect new migrants with public services encapsulated the shared identity, "In Chengdu, there is no local/insider versus outsider. We are all Sichuanese."[174]

Furthermore, these migrants remain in the same political jurisdiction, Sichuan Province, so officials have an incentive to make their access to public services more seamless. Local officials are more sympathetic toward them and see them as counterparts who deserved equal access to services. Explaining why cities like Chengdu provide better services to migrant workers than places like Beijing, a researcher of public administration said, "Municipal and local-level cadres, as compared to provincial-level cadres, are local people. They have local sentiments."[175]As intraprovincial migration increases, the influence of shared regional identity on public service provision is likely to continue.

Pushing Visible Results and Avoiding Blame and Criticism

In addition to their shared identity, local officials are motivated by a push to get credit for positive, visible results and avoid blame and criticism for bad outcomes in the regulation of migrant education. In each of these cities, officials' different orientations toward migrants shape what constitutes tangible results and ways to avoid blame. Unlike politicians in other countries with electoral motivations who sometimes avoided blame for unpopular actions rather than claim credit for popular ones (Weaver 1986), these Chinese officials want to claim credit for good changes and avoid blame for problems for the benefit of higher level officials. Higher level officials are in a position of power to decide their future promotions within government.

Local officials are interested in positive changes, especially policies that can yield results quickly. They are inclined to implement policies better and faster when highly visible results can be seen soon, since good outcomes that cannot be seen within the official's tenure will not benefit their performance review in time. An official in city management said, "The question is incentives—for the government and for local people…when results can be seen almost immediately, within a year…officials can report good results."[176] He contrasted this with attempts at social security reform, which had stalled because it involved long-term planning and required time for high-level officials to see progress and for ordinary people to reap benefits from the system. A well-designed social security system will not be evident until a couple decades of people paying into the system had passed. Leading up to international events in Beijing and Shanghai (cities less open to migrants), visible results meant shutting down and taking over migrant schools, respectively, to remove many from sight. In more welcoming Chengdu, these quick, visible results include newly certified schools that are newly painted and adorned with official certificates.

Besides trying to get credit for visible results, local officials also seek to avoid blame for bad outcomes. School building safety became a nationally politicized issue after the 2008 Sichuan Earthquake. According to official figures, 4,700 students died when more than 7,000 school buildings collapsed in the earthquake disaster zone.[177] Some parents argued that twice that number of children died. Grieving parents alleged that local governments and construction companies used substandard materials and took cost-saving shortcuts to pocket the difference.

[174] Interview 120
[175] Interview 75
[176] Interview 87
[177] (Choi 2013)

An official 700-member taskforce found that substandard construction had caused the buildings to fall.[178] The corruption scandal sparked public outrage over the collapse of the "tofu-dreg schoolhouses" (referring to the shoddy construction). Local governments suppressed dissent as parents' protests targeted higher levels of government and gained more media attention within China and abroad.[179]

After the corruption allegations and ensuing unrest over tofu schools, the regulation of migrant school safety gained prominence as the state did not want to risk being blamed again for the deaths of any school children. Local officials and principals admitted that this policy came down from higher-ups, and it became tied to their prospects of promotion.[180] They realized that if any children got hurt in any of the unregulated private migrant schools, the local government would be blamed.[181] As possible further evidence that the regulation of private schools was a reaction to politics rather than part of broader social policy reform, migrant school closures came before there were real alternatives for migrant children to attend public school. Even in areas where earthquakes were not common, no calamities involving school children could occur under local governments' watch. In more restrictive Beijing, they shut down migrant schools altogether. An NGO staff member who worked closely with local officials in slightly more open Shanghai confirmed, "Shanghai built the new public schools for migrant children to standard. They had learned their lesson from the Sichuan earthquake."[182] In Chengdu where migrant integration was better, building checks were part of the certification process.

Local officials do not only seek to avoid blame for the deaths of school children,[183] but they also want to avoid public criticism from the central government. When the media picked up the demolition of one principal's migrant school in Beijing during the annual "two meetings" (*lianghui*) of the National People's Congress and Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, a period of political sensitivity, the central government criticized the local government for closing the school. With this critical momentum and support, the school administrators sued and won their legal case and were able to reopen the school. However, later, when outside attention about the demolition subsided, the local government resumed hassling the principal.[184] They waited only long enough to avoiding additional public blame and criticism from the central government. In contrast, migrant schools in Chengdu grew in number in recent years.

Conclusion

As migrants have settled long-term and the second generation of migrants is born in cities, they have relied on "people-run" schools to substitute for public education. Local governments adopted three strategies for regulating these private schools and then incorporating migrant children into public schools: 1) shut them down: suppression and exclusion, 2) take them over: selective absorption and segregated inclusion, and 3) certify them: certification and full

[178] Ibid
[179] See the 2009 documentary film *China's Unnatural Disaster: The Tears of Sichuan Province* directed by Jon Alpert and Matthew O'Neill.
[180] Interview 86
[181] Interview 82, Interview 86
[182] Interview 82
[183] A string of uncoordinated knife attacks in Chinese schools from 2010 to 2012 also put the issue of school safety in the forefront of government officials' agendas.
[184] Interview 88

inclusion. Policies in Beijing and Shanghai exemplify the first two strategies, respectively, whereas Chengdu uses the third strategy to be more inclusive of migrant students. Local governments' approaches to regulating migrant education are shaped by whether they share a regional identity with the migrants they served and whether they could get credit for visible results and avoid blame and criticism for bad outcomes.

In this chapter, I focused on how local governments regulate private "people-run" schools and integrate migrant children into public education. Local governments make policies that control access to public services, but once migrants stepped inside schools and hospitals, teachers and doctors determine the level and quality of schooling their migrant clients receive. In chapter 5, I turn to examine the discretion these street-level bureaucrats, including principals, teachers, hospital administrators and doctors, have over the services they provide and how their identity molds their interactions with migrant patients and the services they provide as frontline bureaucrats.

Part Two

The Limits of Social Control

Chapter Five

Frontline Service Delivery

Introduction

Local governments regulate public services for migrant workers at the policy level, but doctors and teachers deliver healthcare and education on the ground. In Chapters 3 and 4, I laid out how and why local governments control access to services and monitor migrant schools. I now turn to the point of service delivery and investigate how and why doctors and teachers, the people who directly interact with and provide services to migrants, use their discretion to give better or worse health and education services to different clients. Front line service providers are the faces of the fragmented public service system for migrants. Like street-level bureaucrats elsewhere, they operate in the space between organizational guidelines and client needs and demands (Lipsky 1980).

How and why does the discretion of frontline service providers, including doctors and teachers, affect the level of access and quality osf services for migrants? Market-oriented reforms lead some hospital administrators and principals to prioritize high-paying clients over low-income migrants, while others see the gap in services as an opportunity for moneymaking business ventures. In the second half, I explain why some doctors and teachers provide different care to migrant patients and students because of urban discrimination against migrants or co-migrant empathy. On top of sometimes using moral judgments in their provision of services (Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2003), many doctors and teachers' identities relative to their clients influence their treatment of migrant workers. Doctors and teachers' discretion enables some migrant workers to access additional services over the baseline even as other providers restricted others' level and quality of care.

The Post-Socialist Public Sector

Since the 1980s, healthcare and education services have undergone market-oriented reforms as part of China's economic transition. Before reform, the finances for public health and public education institutions were highly centralized. The decentralization of funding and fragmentation of provision changed the political economy of the public sector in China and the priorities of service providers, including hospital administrators, doctors, principals, and teachers. The post-socialist public sector led to more inequality in services and cracked open some space for frontline provider to exercise discretion in their delivery of services.

In the post-socialist public sector, many hospital administrators and principals prioritize finding new revenue streams over maintaining quality of care. With less state support, the focus on financial viability and emerging market competition results in some hospitals and schools turning away low-income migrants, who cannot afford extra fees. Yet, at the same time, other entrepreneurial administrators see an opportunity to provide private services to migrants through money-making business ventures, filling the gap between too expensive public services and no services at all in the city. At the point of service delivery, these reforms also affect doctors and teachers. Many are underpaid, find other ways to support their incomes, and learn to exercise what discretion they have in providing services to their clients.

Pricing and Profits in the Healthcare Industry

When reform of the healthcare system began, the Chinese government reduced funding for public hospitals while still maintaining a foothold in its pricing structure. Before 1985, Chinese hospitals enjoyed full funding from the government. The early phases of reform in the 1980s and 1990s were marked by less reliance on state funding, decentralization of public health services, more autonomy for health facilities, increased freedom of movement for health workers, and decreased political control (Bloom and Gu 1997). The Central Pricing Commission set the general guidelines for pricing policy for providers for political reasons; they kept prices for most health services low and based on historical fees set in the 1950s instead of on economic considerations such as cost (Hsiao 1995). These policies were aimed at promoting social equality and affordability, and, consequently, hospitals provided these services at cost or a net loss.

As of the 1990s, government subsidies accounted for a mere 10% of public health facilities' total revenue, forcing hospitals to generate 90% of their budget from other revenue-generating activities (Yip and Hsiao 2009). Due to market-oriented reforms, Chinese hospitals relied on fees for medical services, especially high technology tests, and profits from pharmaceutical drug sales. In 1992, the Ministry of Health granted financial autonomy to hospitals to charge fees, keep income, and sell drugs for profit. At the same time, the government also set prices for new, high-tech diagnostic services above cost and allowed a 15% profit margin on pharmaceutical drugs, which hospital administrators took advantage of to increase revenues.

Decentralization of public services and changes in funding structures resulted in unintended consequences. Market-oriented financial reforms led to the overprovision of unnecessary services and the under-provision of socially desirable services, such as the reduction of communicable disease transmission (X. Liu and Mills 2002; Blumenthal and Hsiao 2005). Doctors often earn 30% in kickbacks for prescribing certain companies' medicines (Ling Li, Chen, and Powers 2012), and they earn bonuses according to how much revenue they generate for the hospital. By 2008, drug revenue accounted for an average of 40% of the gross income of hospitals, much higher than the 15 to 25% common in most OECD countries.[185] Moreover, the combination of profit-driven hospitals and fee-for-service schemes led to the overuse of various diagnostic tests and procedures. In 2009, Chinese hospitals administered an average of eight intra-venous drips per person, more than twice the world average rate at 2.5 to 3.3 annually.[186] The focus on generating revenue is necessary but sometimes distorts incentives away from socially desirable outcomes for public goods provision.

In addition to over-testing and over-provision of expensive procedures, China's healthcare delivery system is extremely fragmented, which contributes further to inequality. There is little coordination of care among providers, and healthcare providers repeat tests unnecessarily or keep patients who should have been transferred (Yip and Hsiao 2009). For rural migrants, there is an additional level of fragmentation between their rural health insurance providers and public urban hospital caregivers. Out-of-pocket payments for health services as a percentage of annual household consumption has risen between 2000 and 2011 (Long et al. 2013).

After devoting a significant number of years to acquiring medical knowledge and training, many Chinese doctors work long hours and feel they are underpaid. Doctors' low base salaries are set according to a government workers' pay scale. Hospitals can pay bonuses, but

[185] (The World Bank 2010)
[186] (The World Bank 2010)

few do since they are underfunded. A doctor fresh out of medical school in Beijing makes about the same as a taxi driver, 3,000 RMB ($490) per month including bonuses.[187] An experienced doctor at a prestigious first-tier Beijing hospital earns 10,000 RMB per month ($1,600 per month).[188] As is typical elsewhere, many doctors in a Hangzhou hospital work seven days straight on duty, and they have to remain within five minutes of travel time to the hospital. Unless they are lucky enough to live nearby, they spend much of their time in their offices or hospital sleeping quarters waiting for patients.[189]

With little time available for moonlighting in second jobs or private clinics, doctors squeeze out any supplemental income they could while on the job. Like hospital administrators, they face incentives to over-test and over-treat to charge more fees for each additional medical service and prescription. Furthermore, patients often give gifts and red envelopes filled with cash to gently urge doctors to pay more attention to them or allow them to jump long lines. A doctor in Beijing explained, "The informal system of giving gifts and red envelopes to doctors to get appointments sooner or better treatment further disadvantages migrants, who cannot afford these extra costs."[190] Besides the usual hospital gurneys and waiting chairs, duty-free airport shopping bags packed with bottles of imported whiskey, foreign chocolates, and high-end perfumes and skincare are common sights in hospital halls. By putting the focus on generating revenue, market-oriented reforms of the public healthcare sector inadvertently create new spaces for doctors' discretion over the medical services they provide.

The Business of Education

Healthcare is not the only public sector to undergo market-oriented reforms. The education system also met with financial decentralization and the subsequent need to diversify revenue bases. New sources of revenue included enterprises, NGOs, and schools themselves (Tsang 1996). Public schools are to rely more on a local tax base. It is common in cities for district governments to administer and fund primary education while city governments administer and fund secondary schools. Despite initiatives to hire more teachers, teacher salaries remain low. Moreover, schools collect additional fees from parents to offset rising costs.

Chinese families place a high value on education for their children, and they spend money to support their schooling. In a competitive environment where many believe college entrance exam scores can determine a person's entire career and, therefore, life trajectory, they vie for educational advantages for their children. A National Bureau of Statistics survey found that more than 60% of Chinese families spent one third of their income on their children's education, second only to food in their household budget.[191] Migrant parents with aspirations for greater socioeconomic mobility and financial stability for their children believe education is key for their futures. According to a Euromonitor survey, per capita annual disposable income in China rose by 63.3% from 2007 to 2012, while consumer expenditure on education jumped by nearly 94%.[192] After financial reforms of the education system, there is a bigger market for

[187] (Takada 2013)
[188] Interview 104
[189] Interview 77
[190] Interview 104
[191] (Xiao Zhang 2001)
[192] (Sharma 2013)

consumer spending in education and additional pressure on school administrators and teachers to increase their school's rankings.

In public schools, this increased competition in education means that administrators push teachers to raise test scores and outperform other schools. Many teachers earn relatively low incomes but report that they feel education is important and find their work gratifying, but they are frustrated by the emphasis on standardized test scores and lack of opportunities to advance their careers.[193] However, they also encounter professional constraints and requirements that tie promotions and school funding to student test performance. Schools compete for reputations and are ranked according to the previous year's student test performance. Teachers face resource constraints that limit the time and energy they have to distribute among students, which induces them to focus more on local students' and less on migrant students' trajectories. Because migrant students come in with poorer backgrounds and are less likely to score highly on standardized tests, teachers concentrated in-class help and after-school tutoring on the students who are more likely to earn higher grades—native urban resident students.

For private schools, high demand for migrant education in the city and low supply opened a market for private schools as money-making business ventures. Profit-seeking principals take advantage of these opportunities and establish schools that employ low-cost, vulnerable teachers who cannot find work in other schools because of their rural household registration status. Profiteers make private education available to migrant parents who want their children to go to school (both for the education and for a place to send their children while they went to work) but cannot enroll them in public schools. Private school founders and principals open private schools for migrant children who are excluded from public schools. Wealthy migrant parents, such as one family from Jiangsu Province, pay as much as 400,000 RMB ($64,000 USD) over three years for their children's schooling in Beijing so that they can test into the country's top schools, Beijing University or Tsinghua University.[194] "Non-native outsiders parents are a source of revenue for principals and education officials…so it's difficult to reform," said an NGO representative.[195] Principals attract students by allowing migrant children to enroll and charging fees that are lower than those of high-end private schools (e.g., international schools).

While collecting thousands of dollars in fees from students, this subgroup of profiteering principals hire teachers at a pittance to keep profits high. These teachers are usually under-qualified, leaving a teacher who did not speak any English to instruct the English language class.[196] Teachers in migrant schools make 800 to 1,200 RMB/month ($125 to $190), five times less than public schools teachers' salaries of 4,000 to 6,000 RMB/month.[197] Private migrant schools charge around 1,000 to 1,500 RMB per semester for each student, depending on the grade level. At a school in Chengdu, elementary school costs 1,300 RMB per semester and middle school cost 1,550 RMB per semester.[198] Though many of these schools' principals have substantially higher standards of living than their teachers and owned cars, some teachers are so poor that they resort to selling vegetables by the roadside or under bridges on nights and

[193] Interview 43, Interview 44, Interview 45
[194] Interview 15
[195] Interview 13
[196] Interview 93, Interview 94, Interview 95
[197] Interview 15
[198] Interview 89

weekends to supplement their incomes.[199] Much of education, like other public sectors in China, had become a business.

Frontline Delivery and Discretion

Market-oriented reforms in China's post-socialist public sector created opportunities for frontline service providers to exercise discretion. Some doctors and teachers shirk their responsibilities or provide less than the standard minimum of services, especially when providing for low-income clients who are unlikely to bring in substantial revenue. At the same time, other doctors and teachers work to provide additional services on top of the clinical or professional minimum as they feel empathy for their clients. In this section, I first describe the areas of discretion that doctors and teachers generally have and then explain why some service providers deliver worse healthcare and education to migrant workers and others provide better services to them.

In healthcare, doctors have discretion over tests, referrals, diagnoses, and treatments for patients. From the moment patients enter a hospital, doctors and patients can make various medical decisions that affected the final billed amount. At each step, doctors use their expertise to decide what is medically appropriate, but often there were several options. First, a patient chooses traditional Chinese or Western medicine. According to some doctors, traditional Chinese medicine is cheaper per visit and is more suitable for treatment of chronic conditions, whereas Western medicine is more expensive, high-tech, and appropriate for short-term illness or emergency situations.[200] Doctors in one area can also recommend a doctor who practices the other type of medicine. Patients can then see a general physician or someone they think is in the appropriate specialty (for instance, orthopedics for a suspected broken arm), either of whom can refer them to another doctor with a sub-specialty who often charges more money. How each of these physicians test, diagnose, and treat patients is not always a pre-determined outcome based on a checklist of symptoms. Rather, there is some leeway in how thorough an exam is and whether they treat the symptoms or underlying conditions.[201] Many migrants prefer cheaper private clinics (most of which are not certified), where there are fewer gatekeepers and clinicians quickly dispense medicine.[202]

Like doctors, teachers have some discretion over services they provide. They control the general level and content of their daily curriculum, classroom management, and after-school tutoring. In their daily curriculum, teachers often teach to the top of the class in order to push high achievers toward better grades in standardized tests that are used to measure teacher effectiveness and determine their bonuses and reputations. Therefore, the curriculum closely tracks the local high school and college entrance exams (*zhongkao* and *gaokao*) content with little regard for the students' actual backgrounds, levels, and previous content studied. Likewise, while managing classrooms, teachers can favor certain students and pay particular attention to them by gearing review and answers to questions toward them. Using a more selective tactic, teachers can choose to tutor some students after school and not others. These regular tutoring sessions can be the deciding factor in a competitive education system where students compete for limited spots in top high schools and universities. The standardized test system that was supposed to open the playing field for entry to all students regardless of background breeds a

[199] Interview 96, Interview 97
[200] Interview 100
[201] Interview 104
[202] Interview 17, Interview 133

practice in which the majority of students take after-school tutoring to remain competitive with their classmates who are doing the same.

Frontline service providers confront the intersection of class and migration status. Low-skilled migrants make up the marginalized class of migrant workers who some characterize as uncultured farmers and country bumpkins. High-skilled, educated migrants comprise a different social class and are not typically called "migrant workers," though many are not originally from the city where they live and work. For native urban residents who discriminate against rural migrants, these two social markers of class and migration status are denotations of second-class citizenship. However, many service providers who are themselves high-skilled, educated migrants do not draw such a sharp distinction between themselves and their clients who are low-skilled migrants. Those who hail from the same province or region as their migrant clients often pay even more attention to them. This differentiation in service provision to various clients exemplifies the degree to which street-level bureaucrats can sometimes expand or restrict migrant services.[203]

Urban Discrimination Against Migrants

Previous research has confirmed ingroup biases against outgroup members (Tajfel et al. 1971) and shown that social discrimination by local officials against ethnic minorities in China.[204] In this section, I highlight another form of social discrimination based on class and migration status, which can also be characterized as a political status since it is under the auspices of a state socialist institution (the household registration system). While tensions between ordinary urbanites and migrants flare up occasionally, we know less about how and why insider-outsider dynamics might affect certain areas of governance, such as public service provision. In big cities, it is common for public hospital doctors and public school teachers to be native residents of the metropolis. Here, native urban residents refer to people who were born and raised in a particular city and whose household registration has always been in that city. Usually, their families have been long-time residents of the city, and in coveted places like the capital city, Beijingers often prefer to marry other Beijingers. Many migrants not only speak dialects different than standard Mandarin, but there are also several visual markers that make it immediately apparent to their doctor or teacher that they are from the countryside. For example, "you can tell who are migrant workers by their tan skin, ripped or worn clothes, etc."[205] Teenage "factory workers tend to look young and skinny" compared to their peers living in the city.[206] In the city of Dongguan in Guangdong, some residents travelled on roads reportedly segregated between local natives (*bendi*) and outsiders (*waidi)*.[207]

Discriminatory native urban resident service providers make two general types of judgments in their prejudicial treatment of migrants: moral and financial. Moral judgments are about the migrant workers' quality of character (*suzhi*), and the doctors and teachers who reference it explain that migrants were less educated, less cultured, and generally inferior in ability to do things like follow up on medical treatments and have the discipline to study for

[203] In the U.S., some public service bureaucrats incorporated immigrants and provided greater substantive responsiveness to their needs than local politicians (Marrow 2009).
[204] See pages 206-207 in (Distelhorst and Hou 2014) for a discussion of research on social discrimination against Muslim minorities in China.
[205] Interview 104
[206] Interview 119
[207] Interview 24

tests. Out of fashion, sometimes tattered, clothes are seen as being backwards and from the country, rather than as signs of hard physical work or sacrificed wages sent home to support children and grandparents who remained behind in the village. They blame lower migrants' socioeconomic status on their moral shortcomings, as opposed to the possibility of deep-rooted systemic disadvantages or limited opportunities for upward social mobility. Some native urban residents describe migrants as lazy leeches who do not have jobs and are hoping to access social services from the city, and they attribute their motivation to relocate to the city as a single-minded ploy to enroll their children in better urban schools without having done the hard work of going to college, becoming employed in the city, and earning a sponsored household registration change to the city.

Besides moral judgments, some providers also make assumptions about migrant workers' ability to pay for services and dispense care accordingly. They assume that migrant clients would prefer the cheapest option at the moment in their office and that they will not want to or be able to pay for supplementary services down the line. Even if the cheaper care is against the best clinical or professional advice they can give for long-term health maintenance or education goals, these doctors sometimes do not bother to present the more expensive alternative.

In public hospitals, discriminatory doctors treat migrant patients as if they will not be interested in long-term care or have the ability to come for a follow-up visit. While migrants' mobile livelihoods mean that some might only be in town for a temporary construction project or factory work, these native urban resident doctors focus on what they believed are faults in their character. A Beijing doctor criticized migrant patients, "Migrants' character and morality are unacceptably low. They need more education."[208] Over the course of three hours, two patients entered his office with similar ankle injuries but vastly different appearances. One was a young man dressed in name-brand athletic wear who hopped into the office on one foot with the aid of his friends, one of whom cradled a basketball while the other held his injured friend's shoe. The doctor sat him down, joked about their basketball playing skills, and palled around with the patient's friends. Then he proceeded to slowly examine the patient's foot and ankle, pressing on different areas to assess pain levels and whether the injury was in the bone, tendon, or ligament. Afterwards, he offered to send the patient to have his ankle x-rayed and discussed various options for treatment from resting the ankle to setting it in a hard cast until they settled on an air cast.

Later that day, another young man hobbled into the room with what looked an injured ankle, but he received noticeably different medical treatment from the same doctor. Unlike the first patient, he wore torn, slightly dirty clothes, and an older man (the labor sub-contractor who had hired the worker) accompanied him. His companion clutched a stack of cash in his pocket in anticipation of paying for tests and treatment. The doctor asked a few curt questions before suggesting applying ice or heat and staying off his foot for a few weeks. The patient inquired about a cast, but the doctor dismissed it as an expensive procedure that required follow-up care. After the patient left, the doctor turned to me to explain the difference in treatment for the same injury and said succinctly and disparagingly, "You can tell who's a migrant." As was typical of justifications I heard for this differentiated treatment, he couched his advice as being in the best interest of the client and said he was actually doing the patient a favor because he could not afford the pricier options.

Not only are some native urban resident doctors wary of migrant patients' ability to pay or follow through with medical care, discriminatory hospital administrators are reluctant to treat

[208] Interview 100

migrant patients because they believe work-related injury disputes are common to their cases and that even the migrants' employers will not pay. Hospital administrators worry about non-payment when there is a dispute about whether an injury was sustained on or off the job. A doctor at a Beijing hospital said, "If the hospital provides treatment and the patient runs away without paying because they cannot afford it, the hospital has no way of chasing them down."[209] Regardless of their personal stance on the workers' compensation case, they think the battleground should be in the company or local government's office, not in the medical facility. In addition, workers' compensation cases are complicated by the fact that construction and factory workers often live in company trailers or dorms, where it is less clear if injuries in these buildings count as on the job. These administrators would rather forgo beginning intake and treatment for a patient if it seems likely that a protracted battle over payment or fairness may ensue.

Besides concerns about nonpayment for services performed, many hospital administrators and doctors thought workers' compensation disputes are disruptive to hospital operation. Based on their experience, more and more activist NGOs and patients' relatives are making ruckuses at hospitals. Many had found success disputing workers' compensation cases in hospitals, where the need for expedient resolution encouraged hospital administrators to settle payment issues with migrants more quickly than if the argument played out at the construction site, factory, or local government office. When an injury could become a worker's compensation case, migrant NGOs in Guangzhou and Dongguan warned, "Sometimes employers do not want their workers to go the hospital. And sometimes the hospital, public or private, does not allow legal aid providers to enter the hospital because they are in cahoots with the factory or company to keep migrant patients and compensation disputes out."[210] As a result, these organizations purposely accompany migrant patients to hospitals to ensure they receive treatment and to fend off any possible employer intrusion. As hospitals become the site of contention for migrant NGOs, many hospital administrators and doctors are more likely to perceive some migrant patient cases to be potential nuisances and disturbances to the orderly functioning of the hospital.

It is not only in hospitals where some native urban resident service providers discriminate against migrant patients; some native urban resident teachers also treat migrant students worse than their urban counterparts in schools. Some principals are loath to admit migrant students, since they assume migrants are less likely to be able to pay the fees and more likely to drop out within a few years. When offered the chance to participate in a national teacher exchange program, some native urban teachers are reluctant because they perceive the countryside and the people living there to be a dangerous, a characterization which they extend to their rural migrant students.[211] Other teachers see migrant children as more likely to have poor study habits and behavioral and truancy problems in the classroom. They assume migrant parents would be absent from any attempts to work with educators to help their children succeed in school because they are too busy working long hours or were lazy and disinterested.[212] "Parents themselves are not well-educated, so they don't encourage their kids to study in school," said a teacher.[213] Comparing the amount of work needed to monitor an urban student versus a migrant student, another teacher said, "We must tell migrant students when to study, when to rest, etc. We must

[209] Interview 100
[210] Interview 24
[211] Interview 40
[212] Interview 54
[213] Interview 92

tell them what to do by the hour in the lead-up to a test."[214] Commenting on what he believed was migrant parents' low character and the difficulty of teaching migrant students, a teacher said, "A significant problem occurs when migrant parents don't pay attention to their kids' education. It's hopeless."[215]

Among teachers who are not predisposed to assume migrant children were poor students, competition for school rankings still encourage urbanite teachers to support urban students over migrant children. Many teachers face pressure from native urban resident parents to keep migrant students out of the school. When asked about allowing more migrant children to pursue education in the city, an organization of retired teachers in in Beijing answered, "Because it brings down the overall quality of education in Haidian District. Urban parents don't want their kids to go to school with migrants."[216] This is more common in middle school and high school than elementary school, when competition between schools for high test scores and district rank become more intense. Since it is common for migrant students to have studied different curricula as they moved between schools, most struggle in their studies. Many public school principals and teachers are anxious that migrant students' grades will bring down the overall average for their schools, which could tank their ratings in comparison to other schools. "Average grades are their only measure of how the school is doing," said a principal justifying the greater attention paid to high-performing urban students.[217]

Even when teachers have high-achieving migrant students in their classrooms, they have little incentive to support, tutor, or mentor them. Because college entrance exam eligibility is geographically limited for migrant students, the system produces a perverse outcome in which the proportion of low-achieving students increases as their cohort of students graduate from middle to high school. The best migrant students tend to return to their home villages, where they are eligible to take the college entrance exam, in hopes they can continue onto higher education. One teacher explained, "If a migrant student's grades are high, parents tend to send them back to their *laojia* [hometown] because their expectations are higher for this child to succeed in school…Sometimes we [teachers] even suggest parents of migrant students with higher grades to go back."[218] Meanwhile, teachers' jobs become harder as the percentage of struggling migrant students in their classroom grow with each passing grade level. "Students with poor grades tend to stay in Beijing, so the average grades of classes drop, and classroom management gets harder each year," said teachers in a public school in Chaoyang District, Beijing.[219] For teachers, this drains their energy and motivation to invest in migrant students since the best of them will likely leave the school district before long. Due to moral or financial judgments and public service system designs, many native urban resident doctors and teachers discriminate against migrant clients when delivering healthcare and education services.

Co-Migrant Empathy

Though some frontline service providers discriminate against migrant workers, others treat them well precisely because of their outsider status in the city. Doctors and teachers who are migrants

[214] Interview 63
[215] Interview 66
[216] Interview 13
[217] Interview 72
[218] Interview 66
[219] Interview 69, Interview 70

themselves often identify with their migrant patients and students. In acts of co-migrant empathy, many providers provide these clients with medical care or education services above the bare minimum. They do not have to come from the same region to feel empathy, so as long as they and their client both hail from some place different than the city they were in at the moment. Nor do the street-level bureaucrat and migrant client have to be part of the same social network. Often, the same cities that low-skilled migrant workers flock to for the highest wages and best prospects for setting the foundation of a better life for their children are the same cities where highly educated, high-skilled professionals from smaller cities or less developed provinces are also likely to settle with similar hopes and dreams. In other words, many of these street-level bureaucrats see versions of their same struggle and sacrifice in migrant workers.

Even though doctors and teachers are separated by class, socioeconomic level, and educational attainment from their migrant patients and students, the bond of also being someone who moved to a new and unfamiliar city remains. They understand that they have common struggles to adapt to in a new location and that accessing services is difficult for outsiders. In particular, as administrators and providers within the system, doctors and teachers know that the system discriminated against those who do not have local household registrations. High-skilled and low-skilled migrants face similar restrictions, but the former can buy access to services, procure them through their employers, or change their household registration to the city where they now live and work. Those who act on co-migrant empathy feel a sense of camaraderie in which they said "we" are all deserving of healthcare and education, dissolving the insider-outsider line that more sharply divides native urban residents and rural migrants. In Chengdu, a GONGO is responsible for connecting migrant workers and other newcomers with public services in the city. A staff member, who herself is from Sichuan Province but is not a native of Chengdu, described her position as migrants' advocate in the system. She said, "Migrant workers move around a lot, so it's hard to give them services. By the time I get all the information and resources, the migrant client has moved out of the district."[220] Despite the fact that clients who move away are no longer in her jurisdiction, she takes extra efforts beyond her job responsibilities to develop personal relationships with these migrant clients and retain their personal cell phone numbers to ensure they are able to access urban social services even after they move away. Although public service providers are agents of the state, they negotiate the overlap of their identity with migrants such that it is them plus the migrant workers together against the system.

In public hospitals, healthcare providers are sometimes more willing to squeeze in an additional patient if they are also migrants like themselves. This is in the context of a system where it is not unusual for people to use their personal networks or give gifts and cash to get a timely appointment or more attentive medical treatment from a doctor in a public hospital. A doctor originally from Hubei Province practicing in Beijing said, "The informal system of giving gifts and *hongbao* [red envelopes] to doctors to get better, faster treatment and appointments further disadvantages migrants, who cannot afford to this." As a fellow outsider to Beijing, she tries to compensate for most migrants' inability to give expensive gifts or cash by noting who is a migrant worker and keeping their place in line for appointments even if they do not have enough cash for a deposit on their person when they initially visit to the hospital.

Whereas native urban resident doctors who discriminate against migrants are less attentive to long-term care options for these patients, many migrant doctors seek to provide additional care on the spot because they fear migrant workers might not have insurance or access

[220] Interview 120

to advanced care in the future. A doctor in Shanghai went out of his way to remind his migrant patients that they could "pay a deposit first. If that turns out not to be enough, then they can get an allowance and pay more later."[221] Some of his previous patients assumed they always needed to pay the full bill up front for medical services and therefore avoided seeking treatment until their injury or illness became severe or they had collected enough cash to cover the cost of any contingencies.

After migrant patients make it into the doctor's office, doctors whose service delivery include acts of co-migrant empathy incorporate migrants' mobile lifestyle into their medical care. For example, in a hospital in Hangzhou, a doctor from Hunan Province advised her migrant patient to borrow the money necessary to undergo surgery at her current hospital rather than at a rural clinic in her home province of Anhui. The patient was reluctant to agree to surgery, since it would cost 5,000 RMB (approximately $800), 60% of which would have to be paid as a deposit immediately to reserve a 20 RMB per night (about $3 per night) spot in a shared three-bed hospital room that night.[222] Her husband, who worked in the informal economy nearby, lamented the cost and said, "Anhui is too far to go home for surgery while I am on the job [and] my wife doesn't work."[223] They inquired whether surgery was necessary and if she could heal on her own by resting at home. The doctor responded, "No…the quality of this hospital is better, which is why you came here. Here, the surgery will be complete and clean. At places where the surgical competence is lower, you may have to go in for surgery again."[224] Because her patient was a migrant worker, she encouraged them to seek care here and offered to speak with hospital administrators about different payment plans. Knowing that the patient would need surgery at some point, she was concerned a botched surgery in a less advanced facility could lead to more procedures that would cost the patient more in the long run.[225]

Like migrant doctors, other frontline service providers such as teachers practice co-migrant empathy when they teach migrant students. Though some native urban residents are fearful of going to the countryside or teaching rural students, teachers who are migrants themselves feel more comfortable in these settings. More importantly, they feel an obligation to extend educational opportunities to migrant students to improve their future prospects of employment and upward socioeconomic mobility. When nominated for a program to work with rural students, some teachers need to be incentivized with an extra 300 RMB/month (about $50/month) in salary.[226] In contrast, a participant who is an outsider to Beijing said, "I volunteered on my own. I myself come from the countryside."[227]

Other migrant teachers provide extra tutoring to their migrant students. Teachers see themselves as allies of rural students in overcoming the additional obstacles they face as migrants. One teacher said, "College entrance exam problems have increased in the last few years. Teachers need to stay to help students prepare for two years."[228] She felt an obligation to provide extra help to migrant students to study for the important exam, especially since their

[221] Interview 132
[222] For comparison, the doctor noted that a room with a view overlooking a famous landmark would cost 600 RMB/night (almost $100/night).
[223] Interview 78
[224] Interview 77
[225] This doctor was referring the patient for surgery, so she would not directly benefit financially from encouraging the migrant worker to be admitted for surgery in her hospital that day.
[226] Interview 46
[227] Interview 55
[228] Interview 41

parents were unlikely to be able to afford the fees for cram schools that were popular among urban residents. While "other teachers often left to develop their own careers in better schools," one teacher who taught in a neighborhood dominated by migrant students said, "I came from a rural school…I am still in touch with them."[229] For teachers who enact co-migrant empathy, education is the best opportunity for migrant students to propel themselves into a better life as they themselves are able to become teachers instead of joining the factory production line as many of their hometown peers did.

Social Identities and Stalled Reform

In a setting where public goods are not tied to electoral outcomes, accountability and access to services can sometimes become tied to social identities. The process of who got what services at the level closest to the ground are not between local politician and citizen, but between local service provider and client. Even when migrants are not part of the same social network as these street-level bureaucrats, social identities can influence the quality of healthcare and education services they receive in the city.

The insider-outsider dynamic between service providers and migrants is neither a straightforward class distinction nor only migrant versus non-migrant. The group cleavages can be divided between native urban resident and migrant, skilled and unskilled migrants, and skilled and unskilled migrants from the same region. Class and regional identities intersect and overlap, so some migrants are able to get more than the baseline of treatment from doctors and teachers. Frontline service providers can use what discretion they have to provide better or worse treatment to their clients.

The politics around household registration reform and opening public services to a large underclass make socially salient identities relevant. While stalled, step-by-step reform of the national system frequently locks more gates than it opens entry points, migrants continue to settle in cities for work and need access to healthcare and education services. Local governments are hesitant to take on the responsibility and additional spending to provide services as the central government continues to push for urbanization and greater integration at the local level. This leaves the practical problem of students and patients at the literal doorsteps of school and hospital administrators. Thus, some street-level bureaucrats make decisions that deny or extend services to migrant workers and determine the quality of care they receive. These frontline service providers are the faces of public services for migrants.

Conclusion

Market-oriented reforms of the public sector, such as in healthcare and education, moved the onus of financial responsibility from the state to hospitals and schools. While this empowered many hospital administrators and principals to improve their services, it also created competition between institutions and incentivized many service providers to prioritize the fiscal ramifications of their interactions with clients. This led to an opportunity for doctors and teachers to exercise more discretion in the exam room and classroom. When providing services for their migrant clients, they confront the intersection of class and migration status. Some street-level bureaucrats who are native urban residents discriminate against migrant workers based on moral and financial justifications, while other frontline service providers who are high-skilled migrants

[229] Interview 48

enact co-migrant empathy and provide additional treatment to their low-skilled migrant worker clients with whom they identify. Doctors and teachers are not only gatekeepers to services, but they also determine the quality of care they provide to different patients and students. In this way, socially salient identities shape at least one facet of governance, public service provision for a marginalized social group.

In this chapter, I analyze the political economy of the post-socialist public sector and its effect on street-level bureaucrats' provision of healthcare and education services. At the frontlines of service delivery, in addition to the hospital administrators, doctors, principals, and teachers, there is one additional set of actors: migrant workers. In the following chapter (chapter 6), I focus on how migrants, who are usually relatively powerless compared to the state, have some agency in this process and are able to carve out social services not only in spite of but sometimes because of the fragmented system.

Chapter Six

Migrant Agency in a Fragmented System

Introduction

Migrants are usually powerless vis-à-vis the state, especially as outsiders to the city. However, some manage to access healthcare or education services in spite of and sometimes because of the fragmented system that excluded them. In Chapter 5, I examined how and why street-level bureaucrats exercised discretion in their delivery of services after market-oriented reforms of public services. In this chapter, I look at the other set of actors at the front lines of social service delivery: migrant workers themselves. Getting services is usually a practical necessity for maintaining a livelihood in the city, but these strategies also showcase how they are able to exercise some agency.

In this chapter, I analyze the imaginative ways migrant workers accessed public services within and outside the system. What strategies do migrant workers use to gain access to services in a fragmented system? Migrant workers carve out social services within the system or create informal alternatives to access healthcare and education. Many of these strategies are migrants' responses to the state strategies in previous chapters.

Carving out Services Within the System

Although most scholarly accounts detail how migrant workers are excluded from public services, some migrants find ways to access healthcare and education for their children. Working within the constraints of the system, they are selective in where they moved for work, how they seek medical care, and how they keep large amounts of cash on hand for emergencies. Furthermore, they sometimes game the fragmented system by take advantage of loopholes or break the rules of service access. This is a response to 1) the state strategies of providing contingent benefits and discouraging migrants from using services in the city and encouraging them to use them in their home jurisdictions and 2) the interregional differences between regulation of private migrant and public school integration.

For some migrants, it is possible to continue using the rural public services, which they are encouraged to use by the state, if they are strategic in choosing their job location. Consistent with the recent trend of growing intraregional and local migration, these workers stay within a one or two hour-long bus ride of their hometowns. By working in a city close to their home village, they can go home for medical care on their day off from work without having to take any days of unpaid leave and risk losing their jobs. Other migrant workers with families who bring their children to the city can live and work in the furthest outskirts of the city,[230] where they can be within commuting distance of a rural school. A teacher who is a migrant herself transferred jobs and "moved schools to live closer" to her hometown outside Beijing where her family was covered by insurance; she said, "I moved because I wanted to be closer to my child since he was sick."[231] A factory manager who employed 44 migrants out of 56 total workers confirmed, "Many migrants from Sichuan who work in the provincial capital Chengdu try to keep and use

[230] Interview 23
[231] Interview 47

their rural health insurance by not venturing too far away.[232]" A GONGO staff member described these migrants who worked near their home villages, "They are all close to their hometown, so if there's an issue, they can talk to the boss and go home if someone's injured in the family, etc. There are two kinds of migrants: the first who go far away from home. The second stay near their home [and] go home frequently."[233]

Unlike migrants who work close to home, other migrant workers venture farther to another province or the opposite side of the country and rely on paying for medicine with cash on hand. Some of them forego insurance coverage or cannot use their rural cooperative care and rely on cheaper traditional Chinese medicine instead of more expensive Western medicine when they have health problems. Herbs, pills, and other traditional Chinese medicine typically cost less than extensive contemporary medical tests, procedures, and surgery.[234] As other migrants in the day labor market nodded in resigned agreement, a mother and daughter pair described what they did when they got sick while working in Chengdu, "When you don't have insurance, you hope it's not serious and go the clinic or pharmacy."[235]

Migrant workers who participate in the medical system not only pay for pills from clinics out of pocket, but some also keep larger amounts of cash hidden at home. Without insurance, they can still get care at the public hospital if they can pay for treatment in cash. Cash enabled migrants to use urban public services, even when they were discouraged by the state from taking advantage of them. "If I get a little sick, I rest at home. If I get very sick and must go to the hospital, I bring several thousands of RMB in cash to pay," said a migrant who worked in construction in Guangzhou and Beijing.[236] He continued, " Since I can only use my rural health insurance in my home county, I save cash for emergencies in the city so I do not have to request time off work and possibly lose my job." At many of the hospitals I visited, a sign for "Pricing Cashier" hung over a wall of glass barriers between cashiers and clients where patients paid for their tests and procedures before anything could be done for their medical care at the hospital. Clutching slips of paper and doctors' referrals detailing their ailment and the treatment, up to twenty people were in a haphazard line snaking through the waiting area and hallway. The majority knew the importance of paying as soon as possible when the cashiers' windows were open and had brought their own colorful folding stools and snacks from home to make the long wait more comfortable and ensure they did not miss their spot in line.

Because many migrants share apartments or dorms to save money, some store emergency cash with the labor subcontractors for whom they worked. Subcontractors handle their wages anyway, and trust is a prerequisite for their relationship. In the construction industry, the hierarchal layers go from workers at the bottom to the "small" subcontractor, "middle" subcontractor, "big" subcontractor, and finally the company.[237] Because the workers often follow subcontractors and headhunters from their village to city, "trust matters a lot for getting work."[238] State-owned construction companies function similarly to private industry; pay goes from the company to subcontractors, not directly to workers.[239] Moreover, subcontractors usually only pay

[232] Interview 28
[233] Interview 119
[234] Interview 100, Interview 104
[235] Interview 110, Interview 111
[236] Interview 20
[237] Interview 3
[238] Interview 4
[239] Interview 29. The construction manager added that this multi-layered system of subcontractors sometimes led to problems when a subcontractor absconded with wages instead of paying their workers.

their workers once a year, just before Chinese New Year or when the project is finished. When I spent the day celebrating Mid-Autumn Festival at a construction site, it was the labor subcontractor who let his workers off one hour early, distributed a bottle of beer per person from the company, and gave everyone an extra 50 RMB (approximately $8) as a bonus for the holiday.[240] Because migrants trust their subcontractors, already rely on them for cash flow, and often sleep in next bed over or the bunk above in the same dorm room as them, subcontractors sometimes function as depositories of makeshift health savings accounts for their workers in the city. By paying out of pocket for public hospital care, these migrants are accessing services within the existing system of care.

Taking Advantage of Fragmentation

Though the fragmented nature of public services usually disadvantages people with mobile livelihoods, migrant workers sometimes take advantage of it to gain access to services. Some strategies are within the bounds of prevailing rules and regulations, while others are illegal.

With five kinds of social insurance available, many migrant workers are inclined to only buy workers' compensation. By doing so, they can avoid paying into schemes for other kinds of insurance that they will likely not be able to use when they moved to another city for their next job. According to an annual report on migrant workers compiled by the National Bureau of Statistics, in 2014, 26.2 percent of migrant workers had work-related injury insurance, whereas only 17.6 percent had medical insurance.[241] With an increase of 0.98 million over the previous year, this amounted to 73.6 million migrant workers who had work-related injury insurance in 2014.[242] There has been a consistent gap between coverage for work accident insurance and medical insurance coverage since at least 2008.[243] Often, migrants who have this kind of insurance have employers who routinely pay for it or can be convinced to take on the expense. "I had work injury-related insurance before through my company, but I don't anymore. I do not plan to buy any on my own, either in the countryside or in the city," said a migrant worker about the advantage of workers' compensation being paid by her boss when she worked at a factory.[244]

Not every employer provides insurance, and some workers purchase it on their own with financial assistance from their company. Although some are barred from participating in urban insurance, others can buy workers' compensation, especially since an injury on the job in the city that requires emergency care is likely serious and expensive to treat. A factory worker in Chengdu who made about 1,000 to 1,500 RMB per month including a couple hundred for overtime work said, "I decided to buy insurance for myself, although it's voluntary and not required by anyone. I pay about 50 RMB per month, and I think my company puts in another 100 RMB per month…I must go to a pre-determined hospital in this district that works with my insurance company."[245] A study of migrant workers' willingness to pay for basic health insurance in Wuhan concluded that they were willing to pay about 30 to 51 RMB per month for insurance, especially if it protected against less common but substantial financial losses due to

[240] See (Pun and Lu 2010b) for an account of how the labor subcontracting system generates a culture of violence and frequent wage arrears.
[241] (National Bureau of Statistics of China 2015a)
[242] (National Bureau of Statistics of China 2015b)
[243] See (National Bureau of Statistics of China 2014; National Bureau of Statistics of China 2015a) for the breakdown of insurance coverage by insurance types.
[244] Interview 108
[245] Interview 121

catastrophic care rather than as a way to recover from smaller reimbursements for care for common illnesses (Bärnighausen et al. 2007). Migrants prefer insurance coverage for catastrophic medical issues, precisely the kind best treated at advanced urban public hospitals.

Migrant workers also get access to insurance through their employers by negotiating insurance, housing, and food costs separate from wages. In construction and factory jobs where workers live in dormitories on site, employers often quote payment amounts that bundle all of these together. "There are many misleading or false ads. For example, I saw an ad that said wages were 3,000 to 5,000 [RMB] per month. In reality, they deducted 2,000 for housing, 10 per meal, etc. In the end, your total wage would only be about 1,000 per month…Now I know to check and negotiate," said a construction worker in Chengdu.[246] By discussing deductions for benefits like insurance separately, workers can choose to pay only for workers' compensation or decline location-dependent insurance from the company and earn higher wages which they could put toward other services.

If companies are unwilling or unable to provide insurance or pay for medical care, vocational schools provide insurance while their students and recent graduates work in factories. A group of workers I met at a factory were not allowed to buy insurance from the company where they worked but were able to have their old school purchase it for them.[247] Although they were working full time, the company called them "interns" instead of employees so they would not have to provide benefits. Many complained about the company's buck-passing for insurance coverage, but one intern agreed with the company line that put her in a separate category from other migrant workers even though she was a non-local who performed the same tasks on the same production line as them. She said, "I am not a common worker. I am not an ordinary migrant worker like those others who work on the factory line."[248] Other researchers found similar practices being used at Foxconn factories, where they cut labor costs by employing student workers at sub-minimum wages and without having to pay into government-run insurance schemes for them (Pun and Chan 2012).

While migrants follow the rules using the aforementioned methods of accessing services, others take advantage of the fragmented bureaucratic system through illegal means. While post-socialist market reforms of healthcare insurance and delivery left some peasants in the lurch, it also afforded migrants the opportunity to take advantage of the same incentive system set up to marketize the industry. One such practice is to share social insurance cards. As one migrant explained, "You can lend your card to a friend. Hospitals are happy to take any card because they can make money off patients."[249] A Chinese researcher confirmed the prevalence and success of this strategy, "If they don't have rural insurance, they can borrow their family or friend's cards…A few clinics can event accept insurance cards."[250] Migrants who had passed off friends' cards as their own were open about the practice, claiming that it was a small pushback

[246] Our conversation prompted about two dozen construction workers who overheard to gather in a circle around me and lodge various complaints about the unfairness of the construction industry across the various provinces, from Sichuan to Henan, where these men had worked. Lured in by high advertised wages, many faced wage arrears without any recourse. Those who had been paid complained about the unclear accounting of deductions from their monthly wages and were often unsure whether they could ever benefit from supposed monthly deductions for insurance and other living expenses. Because they lived on the construction site in dorms provided by the company, they had few options unless they could manage to negotiate wages separate from these costs up front at hiring.
[247] Interview 124, Interview 125
[248] Interview 126
[249] Interview 15
[250] Interview 83

on a system that excluded them. According to them, the doctors who treated them did not check too closely or turned the other way as long as someone paid for the services. "It's not that hospitals care whether you have insurance. They only care if you can pay. To protect against non-payment, they require a cash deposit. If you can't pay the deposit and you're not about to die, even if it's very serious, the hospital will not accept you."[251] Card-sharing served as proof the migrant patient could pay and therefore could get treatment in the public hospital. As a migrant worker quipped to me, if the state treated them as indistinguishable members of a marginalized social group, then they could all share one face, meaning one insurance card. In effect, migrant workers converted their societal anonymity and status as outsiders into an advantage.

However, insurance companies are becoming more aware of the card sharing and have begun to track use more vigilantly. "This is a problem—cheating and getting around the system. Some companies buy work-related injury insurance for one person. Then a bunch of workers use the same insurance card," said a senior doctor at a hospital in Beijing.[252] Complaining about the spread of the practice, he continued, "Hospitals and doctors should check identity cards more carefully for their name and especially their picture. Insurance companies check more strictly." Inside a fragmented system with imperfect coordination between public insurance, hospitals, and the administrators of government-issued cards, these migrants are able to get healthcare by sharing insurance cards and the reduce cost for one card instead of multiple cards for each individual person.

Insurance cards can be shared for healthcare, but acquiring access to public education without the proper documentation requires a different strategy. Some migrants purchase fake papers to try to meet the burdensome documentation requirements for enrolling their children in public school in many cities. "Documents are so important that fake certificates and packages of certificates are available for purchase[253]," said a Chinese scholar and activist who knew migrant parents who had purchased and used them. Fake identification cards, diplomas, certificates, and licenses are readily available for purchase, and migrants use them to enter the urban labor market (J.-M. Wu 2010). Not only are fake papers available, but sellers even bundle them into convenient packages that fit the documentation requirement, such as the "five documents" needed for public school enrollment in Beijing. Unfortunately, it is easy to identify the cheapest fake documents as counterfeit, and the all-inclusive, more believable packages of papers are more expensive and therefore less affordable to the migrants most desperate for them.[254]

Fake papers are illegal, but they also enable migrants to enroll their children in nearby urban public schools. Otherwise, they will have to send them to live in the countryside alone, leave them with aging grandparents, or put them in private migrant schools. These schools are susceptible to being shut down without notice, often employ under-qualified teachers, and typically leave them with a certificate that might not be accepted by other schools or future employers. The fragmented system where papers are not always easily verifiable or cross-checked means that some migrants can get away this. Like the legal methods of accessing healthcare and education, this is a coping strategy to use services in the public system.

Creating Services Outside the System

[251] Ibid
[252] Interview 100
[253] Interview 88
[254] Interview 131

Though some migrants seek services within the government-sponsored education and healthcare services, others decline to participate in the public system altogether. Many migrants I met, especially workers in the informal economy, did not even register with the local police or apply for official temporary residence permits since they would not have access to social services or transferrable social insurance accounts. In its 2000 World Health Report, the World Health Organization ranked China 188th out of 191 countries worldwide in fairness in financial contribution and 144th for overall performance (Saich 2011).[255] As a result, migrant workers construct informal and private alternatives to public hospitals and government-sponsored insurance schemes in their destination cities. This is in response to the state strategy of sometimes withdrawing services. With informal, private alternatives at their disposal, migrants can be less at the whim of the restriction of services by local authorities.

Black Clinics

Having opted out of public services, many migrant workers seek health services outside government-related schemes.[256] In addition to the private migrant schools I discussed in Chapter 4, most migrants frequent underground, often illegal clinics known as "black clinics" (*hei zhensuo*) for healthcare services. Unlike the parents who had to scramble to relocate when their children's schools were shut down, migrants with informal alternatives for social services do not have to rely on public services that can be withdrawn by the state when it enacts social control. Despite the lower quality of medical care and possibly dangerous conditions, most migrants still frequent these clinics. Most importantly for workers who put in long days and fastidiously saved their wages, black clinics are affordable and convenient. Migrant workers can visit the local clinic and afford to purchase a round of pills with the cash they had on hand. Many clinics have more flexible and late night hours that suit the schedules of migrants working during the day, and some even allow migrants to buy on credit. Concentrated in predominantly migrant neighborhoods, they are in accessible locations and do not have the long lines that plagued many public hospitals, particularly those facilities with the best doctors or specialties. These low-cost clinics substitute for more advanced medical care in the urban public hospital and saved migrant workers a long trip home to the county hospital, even if that visit could be covered by their rural health insurance.

Quick trips to black clinics are an especially favorable option for migrant workers in the informal economy. They are self-employed or their employers rarely purchase insurance for them. Few have any expectation of getting health insurance because "past employers have never bought any of kind of insurance for [them.] Not health insurance, work-related injury, pension, etc."[257] As I commonly heard, one migrant said, "I don't have social insurance or any other kind of insurance. I've never had any of these social protections or services…I am just looking to find

[255] (World Health Organization 2000)

[256] Private education and healthcare were not the only alternatives to public services that migrants devised. I also met migrant-activists who were providing legal aid despite having no formal legal training or a law degree. One outspoken migrant activist from Sichuan Province who had moved to Beijing said, "I used to work odd jobs and be a migrant worker myself. Then I learned about the law from media and reports. Previously, I worked with a migrant telephone helpline. Now I am writing a pamphlet for migrants on how to avoid workplace injury. I'm not a lawyer, but migrant workers can't afford lawyers anyway. They only pay me 500 RMB, much cheaper than the 3,000 RMB they would pay a lawyer." Interview 15

[257] Interview 112, Interview 113

a job doing some housework."[258] Even for older migrants who might be facing more health problems in the near future, healthcare means treating common colds, abrasions, or sore muscles rather than engaging in preventative care or addressing chronic injuries or illness. Years of working as nannies or maids for various households means they cobble together healthcare from clinics since they will never have insurance coverage.[259]

These illegal clinics are sometimes hidden down alleyways, range from a storefront room to a table set up outside, and are often not staffed by licensed doctors or medical professionals. "If a clinic has government certification, then some insurance companies will accept the receipts. However, the rules and standards for getting certified are tough to achieve. Not many private clinics meet these standards," said a doctor at a hospital in Shanghai.[260] During a crackdown of illegal clinics in Harbin, the capital of Heilongjiang Province, officials found clinicians operating without a license, expired pharmaceutical drugs, and generally unsanitary conditions.[261] Furthermore, they reported that garbage and drugs were being stored in the same place and that disposable medical devices were being repeatedly reused between different patients. In 2013, the National Health and Family Planning Commission announced they cleaned up 6,626 black clinics.[262] According to government figures, the Beijing government shut down approximately 1,000 black clinics per year between 2010-2013.[263] In 2015, the Beijing Municipal Health and Family Planning Commission cracked down again on these clinics in another strike-hard campaign.[264] After these publicized campaigns against black clinics, closed clinics usually reopen nearby, as there continues to be a market for their services.

Informal Insurance

In addition to black clinics, some migrants workers create alternatives to government-sponsored insurance. For instance, they negotiate with their employers for payouts to cover healthcare expenses as needed rather than have a monthly deduction from their wages to pay for insurance. As was typical of conversations I had with other migrant workers, a construction worker said, "If I am a little sick, I go out and buy my own medicine from the pharmacy. If I am seriously ill, I try to get the company to pay."[265] He reasoned with them by saying that they saved labor costs over time by not having to pay for insurance for every worker. In return, he and others argued, the company should shell out funding for medical care on the rare occasions when their workers needed more extensive medical care at the hospital that they could not afford to pay for out of pocket.

Some small- and medium-sized factory owners agree with these workers' solution. Giving out discretionary payouts for medical visits is in in their interest, since they cannot afford to pay for insurance because of already low profit margins and increasing demands for higher wages. "We do not offer health insurance to our workers. The company cannot afford social insurance for every worker. When they have a minor illness, the workers take pills or go to the local clinic. When they are seriously ill, they can go to their hometowns and use their rural health

[258] Interview 114
[259] Interview 115, Interview 116
[260] Interview 133
[261] (People's Daily 2015)
[262] (National Health and Family Planning Commission of the People's Republic of China 2013)
[263] Cited in (H. Li and Blanchard 2013)
[264] (Xinhua News 2015)
[265] Interview 2

insurance," said a factory-government liaison for a factory in the city of Dongguan in Guangdong Province.[266] An official labor representative in Chengdu explained the practice in more detail, "Often, businesses make a 'deal' of sorts: The company will deduct 100 RMB per month from wages to buy insurance, or the more popular choice is to give them [migrant workers] 500 to 600 RMB when they actually get sick or injured toward paying bills.[267]" It was a popular win-win choice because companies save on labor costs, and migrant workers earn higher net wages while keeping a source of funding for dire medical problems.

When employers do not provide insurance or medical care payouts, some migrant workers form their own informal insurance groups. A construction worker at an outdoor day labor pavilion in Chengdu said, "No company has ever bought me any kind of insurance…If you die, no one cares. The company does not care. They don't ever buy coverage for workers' compensation."[268] Instead, he pooled risk with other workers from his home village. Everyone in the group keeps some cash on hand or with the labor subcontractor who serves as the group leader, but each person's money alone will not suffice to pay for an emergency hospital visit. However, a member of the group who needs to go to the public hospital can then collect from everyone and will have enough money to bring with them to cover various medical contingencies and procedures. A doctor in Shanghai described the strategy from his point of view, "Most migrant patients borrow money first from friends and family before going to the hospital. Once they've collected enough cash, then they go see the doctor."[269]

Most households in low-income countries deal with economic hardship by participating in informal insurance within their communities rather than through public or market-provided insurance schemes, but the arrangements are often weak because of idiosyncratic risks and lack of enforcement for reciprocity (Morduch 1999). Sometimes migrants pay back their group members when they could, but other times they do not or pay it forward to the next member with a medical emergency. According to the migrants participating in them, these groups are relatively informal but provide some relief when they can not afford to keep a large stash of money aside in case they have a medical emergency and do not want to be forced to return to their hometown to get care. Thus, they create a version of insurance outside the government-sponsored social insurance schemes.

Navigating Social Control and Identity

Carving out services within the public system and creating alternatives outside it are practical coping strategies used by migrants in the city. They are focused on finding work and earning money to save or send to family in their home village. Even if they have rural health insurance or can afford to purchase it, they are reluctant to take time off work to use health facilities there. Getting affordable, convenient medical treatment in the city enables them to continue working and earning money, and ensuring education opportunities for their children helps them provide the foundation for socioeconomic mobility and more comfortable, less precarious lives. This practical need to get services counters the state's attempts to use public service provision as a tool of social control, and their regional identity or migrant status helps them gain services from sympathetic officials or street-level bureaucrats.

[266] Interview 26
[267] Interview 105
[268] Interview 117
[269] Interview 132

Exasperated migrants are focused on maintaining their livelihoods but are still critical of systemic discrimination against them. "My child cannot go to school in Beijing, despite the new policies that say they can go to public school…Going to a small, not famous college in China is the same as working temporary jobs now. So you might as well not go to college if it's not *Qinghua* or *Beida*. Work experience is more important any way for migrant workers today,"[270] said a migrant worker frustrated with the exclusion from public services. In one migrant family from Shandong Province working in Beijing, the wife sold vegetables during the daytime while her husband sold them at night, so there would always be someone available to watch their children since they could not attend school. She said, "I have lived in Beijing as a vegetable seller for ten years and have gone without health insurance…Only people with a state-owned enterprise work unit have it…I brought my kids to Beijing to watch them."[271] Although she and others work around the shortcomings of the public system, they still find fault with it.

Additional Limits of Social Control

The concrete, pragmatic healthcare and education concerns of most migrant workers contrast with the state's use of social services as a tool of social control. Year after year of splashy headlines about major *hukou*-related overhauls without meaningful results leave migrants increasingly aware of how often and how many reform promises go undelivered. For example, when news spread that Shandong Province would soon allow migrant children to take the college entrance exam regardless of their household registration status, many migrant workers rebuffed the idea. "Starting this year in Shandong Province, outsiders, including migrant workers, can take the college entrance exam there," heralded a government official of the imminence of the reform.[272] While she praised the change in policy as the first in an inevitable wave of migrant education policy reform, she also said, "The Chengdu Education Bureau is not discussing this yet. This is because there are too many students."

Additionally, as an education researcher noted, "The college entrance exam in Shandong is one of the country's most difficult for getting into college, so there are no real results or gains from allowing migrants to take the exam there."[273] According to him, because of education deficits and the popular opinion that earning admission to university from taking the exam in Shandong was particularly difficult, migrants were unlikely to even take up the chance to take the test there. Migrant workers I interviewed agreed. Yet, officials can continue to announce it as a momentous change in policy and give hope to some migrants.

However, frontline service providers and migrants are skeptical of successful implementation after these policy reform announcements. A principal of a school in Beijing with a 90% migrant student population said, "Last year in October, Beijing talked about outsiders taking the college entrance exam here—but there were no results."[274] For migrants who heard rumors of the news, this disparity across the country in policy implementation rollout indicated that any reforms were isolated and exceptional, not the beginning of an education revamp. In response to questions about his thoughts on specific policy changes like this that seemed to signal bigger changes in the national system, a migrant activist echoed the lack of realization of

[270] Interview 33
[271] Interview 12
[272] Interview 90
[273] Interview 37
[274] Interview 99

substantial change for migrants, "In healthcare reform, we've lost. In education reform, we've also lost."[275]

While local governments enact social control through the restriction and provision of public services, some migrants recognize the possible ulterior motives for the progression of social service reform. A few see through onerous requirements for eligibility for urban social services. For example, a migrant worker from Henan Province heard that property ownership would help fulfill the residency requirement. She sold vegetables out of a narrow storefront in a migrant neighborhood and noted, "Beijing housing prices are too high. I looked, and the average price I found was 10,000 RMB per square meter. When I only make a couple thousand to 10,000 RMB per month, there's not much left over after paying rent for my house and store and for food. For example, one head of bok choy only sells for 5 *mao* [0.50 RMB]."[276] Formal policy dictated her child could be eligible for enrollment in Beijing's public schools if she met the requirements, but she was also aware of how many of the eligibility requirements were near impossible for her to meet.

The demolition of private substitutes for public services is becoming more of a trend and less of a surprise to the leaders of migrant schools. After they are closed, migrant schools and black clinics reopen in the neighborhood and continue to serve the local population. "Migrant schools are always being relocated, not completely demolished, in land grabs," said a Chinese researcher with extensive ties to the migrant school community in Chengdu.[277] Principals adapted, and relocation became an anticipated part of their tenure as leaders of migrant schools. For instance, they typically rent buildings for their schools and learn not to immediately panic when a demolition notices for their schools are posted.

Like migrant school principals, some migrant activists realize how often coordinated school demolitions are driving migrants out of the district or city and share the pattern with their neighbors. While migrant workers still move to pursue jobs and find other schools for their children, others try to engage in pushback against the state. "Which schools are demolished does not seem to depend on the quality of the school nor providing a real, better alternative," said a migrant activist who worked closely with principals of migrant schools in Beijing. When he first received news that the main school he worked with was to be demolished, he was frustrated but accepted it as he knew that illegal migrant schools' existence was always uncertain. However, he later learned that three additional migrant schools in the neighborhood were also slated to be shut down. Rather than being about the safety of a particular school, migrants who lived there discerned the local government was trying to encourage them to move out of the surrounding area. He walked around his neighborhood to alert others.

Recognizing this tool of social control, some migrants find ways to stay in the same city and not have to move back to their hometown. In order to stay in the same place, they change industries or jobs according to what work they can find. For instance, migrant workers I met moved from hammering and sawing on construction sites to manufacturing shoes or metal pans and bowls in factories.[278] They drew on their regional networks within the city, such as those with whom they formed the informal insurance groups. Those migrants who opt out of the social insurance system are less likely to be subject to social control through public services, especially if migrant schools and black clinics can easily relocate nearby after they are shut down. Still, for

[275] Interview 36
[276] Interview 33
[277] Interview 88
[278] Interview 18, Interview 20

many migrant workers, the inconvenience and uncertainty of sudden restrictions in service provision is enough to encourage them to move. Stalwarts and activists who stay behind are not necessarily signs of failed social control, but could also be suggestive of success since the state can deal with them individually instead of as part of a big group or mass mobilization. Still, it remains unclear how sustainable the state's use of public services as a tool of social control will be over time.

Navigating Contingent Benefits and Discretionary Provision

Between the state's use of public service provision for social management and the relationship between local authorities' or frontline service providers' identities and migrant access to services, it is often difficult for migrant workers to navigate the contingency of benefits and discretionary provision to their advantage to actively increase their overall level of services. While some local officials and frontline service providers provide better services to migrant workers with whom they share regional or migrant identities, not all migrants are able to benefit from it. Because many follow job opportunities, they do not always have a choice of host city. Many dedicated construction workers follow their labor subcontractors to construction sites for a year or two. Some manufacturing workers might leave a factory in one city to move to a different factory in another city where their friend works and can help secure a position for them. The exception was for those migrants who strategically work in cities close to their hometown, such as near Chengdu in Sichuan Province or near Hangzhou in Zhejiang Province. Many can return home to use rural health insurance or retain receipts from urban public hospitals for reimbursement from the same insurance. For most workers, it is a matter of chance whether the doctor with the appropriate specialty for their illness or injury was a fellow migrant or someone from the same region as them. Unless they have a personal reference from a family member or friend, they rely on what hospitals they could access or what schools are open to their children. If the doctor or teacher does share an identity and empathize with them, they likely receive better services. However, this is difficult to arrange in advance given the other restrictions in the fragmented social service schemes available to migrant workers.

Furthermore, not every migrant feels a sense of entitlement to services in the city. A construction worker from Guizhou Province working on the outskirts of Beijing said, "I want to make a little more money and then see what happens. I do not think much about education and healthcare policy or about anything in general that might improve my life."[279] This lack of expectation of opportunities for life improvement, much less any provided by the state in the form of public services, was common among the workers I interviewed. Many had internalized their marginalized position, which was unsurprising given the complicated and localized web of restrictions on service access.

Not only do relatively few migrant workers feel a sense of entitlement in the city, their distinct awareness of their low socioeconomic and outsider status in the city affects their interaction with school administrators and doctors when they could get services. I spoke with and observed many migrants who felt uncomfortable even visiting doctors in the public hospital because of the disparity in their education level and social status. With that additional challenge affecting how they seek out public services, it is difficult for the average, busy migrant worker to shop around different schools and hospitals for a sympathetic service provider who would, for instance, have co-migrant empathy.

[279] Interview 19

As an example, when a middle-aged migrant worker from Henan Province reluctantly entered an orthopedic doctor's office in a Beijing public hospital, he seemed embarrassed to tell the younger doctor how he injured his swollen left ankle and foot. At first, he said he hurt himself when he fell while running, and he inquired about a brace. The doctor examined his ankle and pressed how he could have sustained his clearly serious injury from simply tripping while, as he suggested, out running for fitness or to catch the bus. The migrant worker then slowly admitted he was actually carrying a wooden yoke, with two large baskets laden with fruit on either end, on his shoulder when he fell. Thinking the well-educated doctor might not know what a yoke was, he mimed how he carried the heavy yoke and appeared apologetic and ashamed of his occupation, explaining that it was the only way he could earn a living. The doctor matter-of-factly told him to first go downstairs to pay for the medical test and then proceed to get an x-ray. The patient consulted with his companion who had helped him limp into the doctor's office. His friend wondered aloud whether it was severe enough for surgery. After reviewing the x-rays, the doctor guessed that surgery might be necessary and that it could cost anywhere from 10,000 to 20,000 RMB ($1,600 to $3,200). Up to this point, the patient had been extremely deferential to the doctor, quietly responding to inquiries and never asking questions. When he heard surgery might be necessary and how much it could cost, his eyes dropped as he hinted he would not come back on Friday when the surgeon could examine him and give a more exact cost estimate of the surgery. He finally spoke unprompted, "I don't have health insurance. I don't have work-related injury insurance. I have no insurance. I only have the Minimum Livelihood Guarantee."[280]

With the difficulty of navigating the contingencies and without a sense of entitlement to universal rights, most migrants continue to participate in the fragmented and locally discretionary system set up by the state. Despite the newsworthy reports and pictures of occasional migrant riots, protest is not the common migrant response. A researcher of social welfare said, "Stability maintenance is not just about reducing crime and resistance. It's broader and includes social welfare. It must be broader. If migrants sense something is unfair, they resist."[281] To be sure, migrants do sometimes protest exclusion from urban social services. In 2015, for example, announcements that new regulations in Beijing would prevent migrant children from entering the first year of school triggered weeks of protests by despaired migrant parents.[282] Yet, the day-to-day priority for most migrant workers is keeping their jobs and maintaining livelihoods, and most perceive protest as a last resort. Another researcher noted, "migrants are difficult to control because they move around."[283] While their mobility can be a liability in predictably containing their demands and movement, it can also be an asset for local governments. Migrant expectations for services in the city are so low that they form informal insurance groups and create other ways to get services outside of the public system, and they can be encouraged to move and become another official's problem in their new host city.

Conclusion

Migrant workers are relatively powerless actors with respect to the state, but some exercise agency and manage to get services in the city to maintain their livelihoods. In this chapter, I

[280] Interview 101
[281] Interview 73
[282] (Hornby 2015)
[283] Interview 75

examined the innovative strategies migrants used to access urban healthcare and education services. Some of these services are within the public system, wherein they utilize tactics like selectively negotiating with employers for workers' compensation as their sole form of insurance or sharing insurance cards with a family member, friend, or co-worker. Others also construct services outside the government-sponsored schemes, including building institutions like black clinics and migrant schools or informal insurance groups. I posit that these strategies are practical adaptations to an urban public service system that was designed as a tool of social control rather than as an institution to meet their welfare needs. Migrants' agency has consequences for the state's goals of stability and population management, diminishing some of the effects of restrictions in service provision on their movement.

In the following and final chapter, chapter 7, I conclude with a discussion of broader implications of public service provision for migrants and social control for the study of Chinese politics and real-world policy. Even if the state deliberately makes public services a tool of social control for managing the migrant population, its effectiveness is not guaranteed. Next, I explain new hypotheses generated from this project and suggest directions for future research. Finally, I discuss non-coercive social control in comparative perspective.

Chapter Seven

Implications of Social Control

Introduction

In the preceding chapters, I showed how and why the state can use public services as a tool of social control in China. However, frontline service provider discretion and migrant agency can also curtail some of the effects of social regulation. I traced public service provision from center to citizen by examining healthcare and education services from the points of view of the central government, local government officials, frontline service providers, and migrant workers themselves.

What are the implications of these findings for the study of Chinese politics, real-world policy, and future research? Contrary to existing studies on Chinese citizenship, gradations in second-class citizenship among migrants have emerged, how (not only if) services are provided is itself a tool of social control, and authoritarian states sometimes restrict services instead of providing them to enhance social stability. State capacity is adaptive but low given the likely unsustainability of many of these strategies of control through social policy. To better serve migrants and increase their welfare, the central government needs to create a national system of transferrable benefits, and local officials need to build infrastructure that makes services geographically and financially accessible. Future research could examine the conditions under which non-coercive social control is used, when it is successful, and what relationship it bears to coercive methods of state control. More attention paid to non-coercive methods of social control will enhance our knowledge on how authoritarian states rule.

Social Control in China

The central government issues guidelines for the general direction of social policy toward rural migrants, and local governments are responsible for the concrete ways to fund and provide healthcare and education for them in the city. The 260+ million migrants are not only the sources of labor who have fueled China's export-led, low-wage dependent economic growth over the past three decades, but they also constitute the future consumers who will contribute to the country's domestic demand. Local governments must regulate this population to attract workers while maintaining social stability and avoiding overburdening their own infrastructure and public services systems.

Local governments utilize public services to contain and channel migrant demands. First, local authorities prefer to provide contingent rather than universal benefits because this allows them to control costs, to selectively allocate benefits to some migrants and not others, and to leverage their discretion as a source of power. Second, authorities restrict access to healthcare and education in urban areas to discourage migrants from using those services and/or to encourage them to use these services in their home jurisdictions. Third, authorities sometimes withdraw services to migrants to encourage them to move away, thereby easing resistance prior to land reclamation projects. The local state often perceives migrants as potential criminals and threats to social stability given that they are outsiders of lower socioeconomic status. In the past, violent tactics used by the government on migrants have induced a backlash from the migrant

community, who have strong regional identities and numbers in their favor. Though this has not been common, this has sometimes incited days-long riots. Public services are an area they could contain and channel their demands to not only steer their movement but also selectively provide services to avoid drawing a huge influx of rural migrants in already packed cities.

Not only do local governments judiciously administer public education and healthcare services to migrant workers, but they also regulate private substitutes. In the regulation of "people-run" migrant schools specifically, local governments in Beijing, Shanghai, and Chengdu regulate private alternative schools and integrate migrants into public institutions using three modes: 1) suppression and exclusion—closing down migrant schools and excluding migrant students from public schools, 2) selective absorption and segregated inclusion—closing down small, unlicensed schools while taking over the rest and permitting some migrant children to attend public schools but in separated classrooms with different teachers, and 3) certification and full inclusion—legalizing and certifying migrant schools while incorporating migrant students into attend urban public schools. Their orientation toward migrant education depends on whether local officials shared a regional identity with the migrants they serve and whether they can get credit for visible results and avoid blame and criticism for bad outcomes.

At the point of service delivery, frontline service providers and migrant workers influence the level and quality of services. Market-oriented reforms of the public sector created some space for doctors and teachers to exercise discretion in their provision of healthcare and education. These reforms led some hospital administrators and principals to prioritize high-paying clients over low-income migrants, while others saw the gap in services as an opportunity for moneymaking business ventures. Many frontline service providers who were native urban residents discriminated against migrant patients and students, providing them worse services than the baseline. However, doctors and teachers were migrants themselves tended to enact co-migrant empathy and treated their migrant clients with extra care. Among this subset, many of those who shared a regional identity with their migrant patients and students practiced favoritism toward them.

On the other side of the interaction during service delivery, migrant workers are able to exercise some agency in a fragmented system to carve out services within government-sponsored schemes or go to "people-run" schools and "black" clinics. Getting services in the city is a practical necessity for keeping a livelihood there. Some migrants carve out social services within government-sponsored schemes by, for example, negotiating with employers for work-related injury insurance or stowing away cash for medical emergencies. Others opt out of the public system and instead frequent privately run "black" clinics or participate in informal insurance groups to access some form of services without having to return to the countryside. Through their agency, these migrants are able to limit the effects of social control.

When considering the reach of social control, there remains a question of the level of the state's intent. The policies and implementation that encompass social control are a combination of deliberate forethought and ad hoc, reactive firefighting. While perhaps not a complete, coherent national plan coordinated between the central and local governments, social control is both a goal and consequence of state action. In some instances, local officials' intentions in social control are straightforward by their own admission, but in other cases, the origins of strategies are less clear. It is hard to determine whether mixed signals from the Chinese state about what is permissible are deliberate or accidental (Stern and O'Brien 2012). Similarly, it is difficult to definitively discern the overall level of intention and coordination in social policy as

social control. The evidence and consistent patterns nevertheless point in the direction of deliberate action.

Regardless of official intention, migrants experience the combined effect of social control strategies as one of power being exerted on them. In other words, the consequences of social control hold no matter the level of intent from above. Migrants feel restricted by the state and describe a circumscribed set of choices available to them. Even without repression and violent coercion, they face practical pressures to make decisions that serve state interests. Without the financial means to buy their way out of the system, they must play the game on the state's turf if they want to access better public services in the city. When social control enables the state to channel and contain demands, migrants have even fewer resources to convince reluctant officials to give them more services.

Implications for State Capacity

In a fragmented authoritarian system (Lieberthal and Lampton 1992; K. J. O'Brien and Li 1999; Davies and Ramia 2008; Mertha 2009), social policy that does not increase welfare is the product of state capacity that is adaptive but still low.[284] On one hand, non-coercive social control is an indicator of a state with adaptive capacity. When the state's control mechanisms in coercion or buying people off may have been insufficient or involve unacceptable consequences and costs, it has other means to narrow the range of society's behavior to better conform to what the state desires. What may appear at first blush to be the product of inadequate state capacity or misimplementation of policy (e.g., migrant policies that do not increase migrant welfare or national systems that do not allow account transfers between places) might actually indicate that the policymakers have other ends in mind, such as social regulation. Strategies social control also reflects a state that is adept at using more fine-grained tools in controlling large marginalized social groups. Furthermore, official documents explicitly lay out measures for household registration reform and related service access that restrict population growth in first-tier cities and steer migrants toward smaller cities.

On the other hand, the strategies of non-coercive control in this study reflect a state capacity that, while adaptive, is also low in both public service provision and social control. Many scholars view the adaptability of the Chinese state as a positive attribute of a lithe state that can pragmatically react to problems and incorporate local feedback and solutions, especially in areas of economic reform (Heilmann 2008b; Heilmann and Perry 2011). However, as these scholars themselves say, this approach to governance does not yield the same returns in social goods provision and leaves localities to fend for themselves. These characteristics of the adaptive state that relies on gradual experimentation lead to weakened capacity in a system that allows room for some localities to provide contingent benefits to or withdraw services from vulnerable members of society, such as migrants. When considering public service provision and welfare improvements as the ultimate goals, localization of social service provision reveals low state capacity, because an overhaul of the national system is ultimately needed to support important changes like the transferability of social insurance coverage between places. This challenge appears even larger when considering the fact that *hukou* reform is intimately tied with land

[284] By state capacity, I refer to government's abilities to administer policies effectively. More specifically, "the capacity to implement state-initiated policies depends on the ability to tax, coerce, shape the incentives facing private actors, and make effective bureaucratic decisions during the course of implementation" (Geddes 1994, p. 14).

reform. Serious policy changes in public service provision will require deep and substantive reforms related to the national *hukou* system and land rights as well as the building of new infrastructure to support a truly national welfare state that effectively serves migrant workers and their mobile lifestyles.

In addition to being an inefficient path to long-term and universal welfare improvements for migrants, state capacity is also relatively weak in the area of social control because it is imprecise and likely unsustainable. Providing contingent rather than universal benefits, steering migrants away from using services in urban areas, and withdrawing services are imprecise tools. Although local authorities can grant household registrations and the concomitant benefits to rich, high-skilled migrants, these are imprecise tools for disaggregating subgroups within the majority of low-skilled migrant workers. For example, it is difficult to use social service provision to target workers needed for a specific industry. Despite official policies offer the promise of benefits in an attempt to attract migrants to smaller, newly developed cities, these strategies of non-coercive social control cannot overcome a more fundamental obstacle to excessive urban concentration in China's biggest cities. Migrant workers continue to select destination cities based on economic opportunities and social networks, both of which are often in existing metropolises.

Although these strategies of social control may sometimes be effective in the short-run, in the long-run, they will likely be unsustainable. Publicly perceived uncertainty over state capacity can even provide political cover for officials to carry out policies of social control. Most people would be unhappy to learn that public service provision is actually devised to serve social control aims over welfare goals. However, if the state can convince them that gradual urbanization and piecemeal reform of public services, even if agonizingly slow in policy formulation and sometimes non-existent in delivery, is the only way for the government to change social policy, then they can carry out social control policies under the auspices of incremental reform. This is compatible with other research that finds Chinese people trust the central government's intent but not its capacity and distrust local governments (Lianjiang Li 2004; Lianjiang Li 2013). Therefore, the central government is able to issue directives and guidelines that say migrants have equal access to education and healthcare coverage in cities without being responsible for concrete suggestions for implementation. They can essentially get credit for their intent, while capacity to integrate migrants depends on local governments resources, abilities, and priorities. As a result, migrants who cannot access services in their specific city can blame local officials for not having the capacity to extend social services to them. Unlike uneven implementation of policies in rural China (Göbel 2011), variation in local service provision in big cities bubbles up from local governments in the absence of effective steering from the central government. However, as more migrants catch on to these strategies and share information, these particular strategies of social control will likely be unsustainable as time passes without more substantial gains in public service access. This policy short-sightedness is an indication of weak state capacity.

Policy Implications

Once the state enacts social control through public service provision, there will be short-term and long-term consequences for population management and the reconstruction of the Chinese welfare state. These extend beyond the immediate lived experience of how migrants encounter power relations and how city governments deal with migrants in their own localities. If China

wants to fill the many new small cities and towns it is building, it will need to better entice residents. Rural residents are reluctant to give up their land that allows for subsistence farming and serves as a household safety net. So long as migrants continue to favor cities with stronger economic prospects, social services may work for regulating migrants after they arrive in a city but not for attracting them to new locales. If people-run schools and black clinics simply reopen in new locations after they have been shut down, the effects of social control may continue to be eroded. To overcome the imprecision of these non-coercive methods of control, officials could develop more targeted reforms to consider labor supply and demand in addition to concerns about social stability.

While much scholarship has documented the dismantling of the "iron rice bowl,"[285] the expansion of health insurance coverage and incorporation of migrant children into urban public schools involves reconstructing China's welfare system. The post-socialist public sector has undergone market-oriented reforms, but the healthcare and education system will need to continue to be developed. Over the long-term, a welfare system built on fragmentation and the obstacles and opportunities afforded by these decentralized policies may not be sustainable. In terms of broader governance approaches, China's reliance on local government experimentation and incremental reform (Heilmann 2008a; Heilmann 2008b; Heilmann and Perry 2011; Florini, Lai, and Tan 2012; Teets and Hurst 2014) are insufficient when a national systemic overhaul is ultimately necessary. For Chinese migrants themselves, improvements in their welfare will be limited if they cannot access high-quality education and healthcare. To deliver real welfare improvements for migrants, the state will need to complete two key tasks: 1) build a national scheme with geographically transferrable services that are systematized to reduce interregional differences rather than rely on local discretion and 2) deliver services through public hospitals and schools that are physically and financially accessible to migrants (e.g., not only in the cities, but more specifically in the districts and neighborhoods where migrants actually live).

Furthermore, market distortions and fiscal inefficiencies will not fade away if local service provision is designed to serve state goals of stability. Adding to this, as more people take advantage of a fragmented public services system with imperfect coordination between bureaucracies across hierarchal levels of government and across regions, more national coordination and systemization (not less) will be crucial to improving social services and eliminating wasteful spending on things like excessive and unnecessary diagnostic medical tests. Designing public services for migrants as a tool of social control contrasts with the "new public management" (NPM) approach to public sector administration and public service delivery that emphasizes efficiency and outputs, especially in OECD countries.[286] More to the point, the downsides of social control may outweigh the benefits for the state if enough people simply circumvent the system rather than participate in it and the follow the rules that are designed to push them into making decisions the authorities want them to make. While universal rights would be ideal, at least authorities could provide contingent benefits with systematic rules that apply to everyone instead of depending on the discretion of local officials who can leverage the contingencies as a source of power.

Hypotheses on Social Control

[285] See (Kuruvilla, Lee, and Gallagher 2011) on how this process and ensuing informalization have specifically affected workers.

[286] For more on new public management, see (Hood 1991; Hood 1995; Kaboolian 1998; Bevir and Rhodes 2003) for a start.

Having established that public services can be used as a tool of social control, this study generates a number of hypotheses. For example, the conditions under which governments are more likely to contain and channel a people's demands instead of coercing them or buying them off is an important question that follows this research. Although this project focuses on non-coercive methods of control, none of this is to say that the state does not use coercion or that coercion is not important to the management of society. Instead, it reminds us that coercion has costs, and that there are other ways to regulate social groups that are less expensive and sometimes more effective than force. Hypothesis 1: The more likely coercion is to induce a violent backlash, the more likely officials are to resort to non-coercive methods of social control.

Another alternative is to buy people off, which comes in two forms: general economic development and direct cash transfers to individuals. Local governments in China have "stability maintenance funds" (*weiwen*), which they use to pacify aggrieved citizens in labor, land, and property disputes with cash payments or provide urgent utilities and services (Lee and Zhang 2013: pp. 1485-1486). We know that big disturbances tend to be more resolved more quickly than small ones. Moreover, when the organizers of contention are easy to identify, they become clear targets of the state, whereas the state is more accommodating in diffuse incidents (Su and He 2010). Yet, none of this addresses how to manage marginalized social groups when they are making demands but not protesting. Buying off all migrant workers with universal access to public services would induce more migrants to come and quickly overtax the healthcare and education system. Hypothesis 2: The larger the target group of social control is and the more expensive it would be to buy them off as a whole, the more likely authorities are to provide contingent rather than universal benefits.

The concept of social control has been under-theorized in the literature. My research suggests that when the marginalized group is large and their demands require long-term commitment, the state is more likely to contain and channel demands. First, big groups are expensive to buy off with money or services. Fulfilling demands for commitments like public services mean that the state needs to invest in, build, and continue to fund them. In contrast, pointed demands for a one-time concession are easier and less costly to meet. An additional condition would be if the state has an interest in keeping at least some of the members of the group in their locality rather than driving them out completely from the area. In this case, containing and channeling demands is a nimbler approach to dealing with social groups by dividing and conquering among them, satisfying some members' demands while turning down others. A theory of social control would help explain why governments restrict and expand public services to selective groups over time.[287] Hypothesis 3: The more public service provision policies also serve to support the day-to-day maintenance of social stability (as opposed to as a response to an imminent threat to regime survival), the more likely the state is to both restrict and expand services at the same time.

Furthermore, an emerging theory of social control must intertwine with existing scholarship on authoritarian durability, public service provision, and citizenship. Thus far, the literature on authoritarian durability has focused on harbingers of immediate regime change, but maintaining social stability while fostering economic development is a daily task for rulers. In day-to-day authoritarian durability, developing countries like China must consider how to

[287] Although explanations for unpopular welfare state retrenchment that rest on electoral considerations do not apply to the Chinese context, the point that the political goals of public policy makers and the political context of distinguishing between expanding and cutting back welfare policies is relevant (Pierson 2001).

manage marginalized social groups, particularly one as large and significant as migrant workers. Through social control of migrants, the state has linked authoritarian resilience in China with public service provision and thereby highlighted a crucial tool in the state control toolbox that has hitherto been understudied. Instead of making concessions to placate social groups like other governments have, some Chinese cities have taken away services to urge migrants to move away at pivotal or politically sensitive times. Hypothesis 4: The more inherently mobile the social group being targeted is, the more likely it is for the state to encourage the group's use of certain services and not others or to withdraw services altogether.

Social service provision for migrants in China also points to new areas of study in public service provision. The mechanisms of accountability in rural public goods provision do not extend to the city, and urban government-sponsored social services scheme are not only about improving the welfare of migrants. Effective containment and channeling of demands requires a strategy where services will never actually be provided to a portion of the group. Like failures of policy implementation in other issues areas, this "is not so much inadequate control over local leaders as the centre's own priorities and conflicting policies. The Chinese party-state maintains the ability to selectively effective…" (Edin 2003: p. 35). If we evaluate China's public services for migrants in terms of service access, quality of healthcare and education, and welfare outcomes, the system appears ineffective and progress in gradual reform looks glacial to many observers. However, that would miss the goals in the deliberate design of the system, social control. By metrics of social control, it appears to be successful in recent years. Migrants act up less than many would expect. Hypothesis 5: The more that officials prioritize social stability goals over welfare improvement aims in the provision of public services, the less likely they are to provide accessible, high-quality services to that segment of the population.

The Chinese case is also informative for citizenship studies. Within China, this project finds new gradations in second-class citizenship among migrant workers. Because they are also a tool of social control, we can better understand why this highly fragmented system for migrant workers has become seemingly more complicated and difficult to access over time despite the past administration's turn to social policy and central directives to fully integrate migrants. Partial incorporation of some migrants but not others in China also runs against the notion that some integration is a sign of more to come. Citizenship in China is no longer a simple bifurcation between urban residents and rural residents or wholly determined by the *hukou* system, since public services for migrants are separately contested in metropolises. Differentiated social citizenship in China is in part a product of social control policies involving the bureaucratization of conflict. Hypothesis 6: The more fragmentation and discretion there are in the system(s) of public service provision, the more likely it is that new gradations in second-class citizenship emerge. Testing these hypotheses would enable researchers to build an emerging theory of social control.

Future Directions

The conclusions of this project and hypotheses generated from it point to opportunities for future directions in the research on the outcomes of social control need to be more fully evaluated: 1) the effectiveness of social control, 2) consequences for welfare improvement, and 3) effects on economic development. First, future research could explore whether social control works and under what conditions the strategy of using public services as a tool of social control is sustainable over time. Tactics like segregated inclusion may meet with resistance from migrant

parents if it becomes clear the next steps in so-called gradual reform do not come. We will need to keep watching to see whether migrants will continue to make the decisions the Chinese government nudges them to make, or if a different lever than social policy will be necessary in the future. The divide and conquer strategy in providing goods to some in select places but not everyone everywhere can prevent mobilization of large groups of migrants. However, it could also potentially radicalize the few who do not want to participate within the constraints of the system or respond to the incentives established by the state. If those who are radicalized cannot be bought off or coerced, then the state's current control toolbox may be ineffective.

Other researchers may also be interested in the welfare outcomes of social control rather than social regulation itself. For example, improving health outcomes for migrant workers will require more than gaining insurance coverage through the NCMS in rural China. If they cannot afford high-quality care in public hospitals, visit unlicensed clinicians at frequent "black" clinics, and wait for medical emergencies to seek healthcare, then improvements in their health outcomes will be limited. Likewise, most migrant parents will continue to prefer more developed cities with better education systems and chances to gain entrance to higher education over less developed cities with fewer educational opportunities for their children. State-directed urbanization will face more obstacles if many migrants continue to flock to first-tier cities instead of moving to the newly developed small cities and townships to which officials want them to permanently relocate. This will place an even greater strain on the urban public services schemes and make the improvement of migrant welfare more difficult to achieve in these dense urban areas with infrastructure that cannot keep up with demographic pressures.

Beyond welfare outcomes, the state has explicitly tied urbanization to economic development. Not only are healthcare and education important for building human capital, but the Chinese state hopes to turn these 260 million migrants into middle class consumers to boost domestic demand for the future of economic growth. The connection between outcomes of social control and economic development are not obvious, but the government has closely linked them through its state-driven urbanization policies. The management of migrant workers also relies on their ability to find jobs in the city that are more lucrative than in the countryside and provide greater opportunities for their children. If their rural land continues to be expropriated and cities do not provide an alternative, then a large underclass may emerge despite the government's constant attention to preventing slums through the *hukou* system and other state institutions. It will take more than changing the paperwork for household registration reclassification to turn these rural residents into full-fledged consumers.

Additionally, as permanent urbanites, migrant workers will need to spend more of their disposable income than they currently do on consumer goods and services, which would require them to save a smaller portion of their income. In spite of spectacular economic growth in recent decades, many Chinese people experience the anxieties of precarious jobs and uncertain access to social services, which leads them to save. China has one of the world's highest savings rates. Chinese households save 30 percent of their disposable income and consumption accounts for only 35 percent of GDP; in comparison, U.S. households save around 5 percent of their income and consumption comprises 75 percent of the economy.[288] Many Chinese people sock away such a substantial part of their money to cover future healthcare costs, retirement spending, and children's education fees because they have little expectation that these will be covered by the state as they age. Instead of spending on consumer goods as the government would prefer, people are saving money to guard against uncertainty in the future. To facilitate a consumption-

[288] Cited in (D. Roberts 2015)

based economy, one of the projects China will need to continue is improving its social services schemes.

Besides scrutinizing how these policies affects outcomes in social regulation, public services, and economic development in China, future research could extend the analysis to social groups in other developing countries. For instance, to what extent can this form of social control be used on other social groups? Migrant workers are a large marginalized group (one in five people in China) that makes them an unwieldy population to manage, but they have one quality that is particularly advantageous for local governments: their mobility. They can and expect to move for jobs over their lifetimes, both within cities and between cities and provinces. Therefore, local government policies that contain and channel their demands for public services rely on sometimes being able to encourage them to move to another district or city and essentially become another official's problem to deal with. For social groups where movement is not a common option, the particular strategies of social control identified in this project may prove less effective.

To understand how states regulate social groups that are not mobile, scholars may examine other forms of non-coercive control. Containing and channeling demands is but one form of state control. Moreover, there are likely other strategies for channeling demands than those used to manage migrants, such as setting near impossible eligibility and documentation requirements for services or shutting down schools. Practices of partial inclusion probably extend beyond segregated public schools. To forestall unrest, local officials may do more than shut down social services in anticipation of possible mass grievances and mobilization. This could indicate that the state is engaging in more nuanced and proactive tactics than simply rounding up dissident leaders in sensitive times or reactively repressing riots. The bureaucratization of state-society relations through rules-based policies is common in China and other authoritarian regimes. Other examples in China include bureaucratic absorption of contentious citizens (Lee and Zhang 2013) and the registration of civil society organizations (Hildebrandt 2011). In Vladimir Putin's Russia, the state uses similar strategies to manage independent organizations (Robertson 2009). Non-coercive control is productive for the state in empowering allies while disempowering resistors and ensures that conflict is limited and dealt with within the confines of government bureaucracy.

Finally, researchers may be interested in the relationship between coercive and non-coercive control. This project focused on public service provision as a tool of social control and separated control from coercion. However, states may not utilize these categories of control so distinctly for different purposes or different groups of people. The native urban residents who are poor, certain ethnic minorities, or even urban-to-urban migrants may experience similar kinds of regulation. Or social control may be a sequential process. After schools were shut down in migrant neighborhoods, those few who did not move away in anticipation of land development may have been subjected to other forms of non-coercive control, such as compensatory payments, or to force. The urban para-police (*chengguan*) of the Urban Administration and Law Enforcement Bureau who manage low-level crime and are responsible for tasks like regulation migrant street vendors have come under intense criticism for excessive force and violence since their founding in 1997. Sometimes operating in a legal grey area, they are given broad-ranging mandates that do not match the tools available at their disposal. What relationship, if any, is there between their use of force and how well migrants are controlled without coercion? These tools may be used in conjunction to manage a marginalized social group, or they may be reserved for separate situations.

By broadening our conception of authoritarian control of society, we are able to better understand how non-democratic regimes hone their methods of control. While this project has establishes that the state uses a variety of methods of non-coercive state control, new forms of social regulation in China will reveal themselves in coming years. In addition to other types of social control, the outcomes of these policies will come into view and allow us to scrutinize the economic, institutional, and welfare consequences of state control without coercion.

Comparative Perspectives

Scholars of authoritarian governance and comparative public policy find that the use of public services for social control is not unique to China or authoritarian regimes. While the Chinese case does have some similarities with other countries, it also has several distinctive features.

In terms of commonalities, democracies and developed countries face a similar challenge wherein the poor live on the margins of society but make crucial contributions through their lives and work (Soss, Fording, and Schram 2011). Governments "create incentives and services to smooth the path to preferred behaviors…[and]…work continually to manage low-income populations and transform them into cooperative subjects of the market and polity" (Ibid: pp. 1-2). Paternalistic welfare programs, especially in the United States, operate under a philosophy of the social contract and make recipients satisfy behavioral requirements, such as working or staying in school (Mead 1998). Similarly, the eligibility requirements for migrants to access services in urban China creative incentives and set behavioral requirements to mold migrant workers into productive members of society. For example, the documentation requirements for outside *hukou* holders to prove long-term permanent residency and sustained, full-time employment promote the behaviors of a middle-class consumer who is upwardly mobile.

The link between social service provision and the maintenance of civil order is evident elsewhere, but local Chinese authorities show a distinctive pattern. Public relief has been used to regulate the poor in order to avoid civil disorder during hard economic times and encourage work when the situation is more stable (Piven and Cloward 1971). Medicine has long been an institution of social control (Parsons 1951; Zola 1972). While the Chinese state also uses social services to regulate migrants (i.e., the urban poor), local authorities make use of *how*, not only if, services are provided as a tool of social control. Whereas others argue the U.S. government relied on the expansion and restriction of public welfare to deal with civil disorder, Chinese officials use a different tactic. Rather than blanket increases or decreases in public assistance, they provide contingent instead of universal benefits in the provision of healthcare and education. Furthermore, unlike other findings that indicate officials *either* restrict or expand social policy, local authorities in China simultaneously restrict and expand services while carrying out social policy.

In addition to controlling social groups through services, governments have limited services for the intended recipients. Diversion has been common in U.S. state local welfare policies since 1996. To divert clients away from public assistance, some states implemented eligibility rules that steered applicants away with work search requirements and short-term cash payments in lieu of enrollment in the system (Blank 2002). Diversion programs in welfare may also restrict people's access to and eligibility for Medicaid (Maloy et al. 1999). Similar eligibility determination and work-related requirements divert Chinese migrants away from public services in certain locations. However, unlike these examples from the U.S., local authorities in China do not necessarily aim to steer migrants away from social services completely. Instead, some

discourage migrants from using public hospitals and schools in urban areas and encourage them to use these services in their home jurisdiction. Additionally, rather than wholly blocking them from entering the system, they provide contingent benefits to selectively allocate benefits to some migrants but not others and to leverage discretion as a source of power over this marginalized segment of the population.

Social control without coercion extends beyond the domain of public service provision. Policymakers openly promote government efforts to indirectly elicit compliance from society. Some even have offices dedicated to it. The Behavioral Insights Team in the United Kingdom and the Social and Behavioral Sciences Initiative (colloquially known as the "nudge unit") at the White House in the United States advise government officials how to design policies that influence how individuals make decisions. In the UK, telling people who failed to pay taxes that most people had already paid their taxes increased their payment rate by more than five percentage points.[289] Officials structure policies to encourage people to make the decisions the state wants them to make. The difference in the Chinese state's use of public service provision as a tool of social control is its relationship to anticipated direct contention with the state. By withdrawing services, Chinese officials can encourage migrants to move away and thereby ease resistance prior to land reclamation projects.

The utility of the concept of social control accentuates how many different forms it has. In particular, the use of political symbols, rhetoric, and signals from the state are another kind of non-coercive control. Mixed signals, political ambivalence, and uncertainty help discipline lawyers and journalists in China (Stern and Hassid 2012; Stern 2013). In Syria, the regime under President Hafiz al-Asad produced compliance through public participation in rituals (Wedeen 1999). Like the Chinese state's control of migrant workers, these examples show how governments induce compliance from large swaths of social groups, including professionals and the entire citizenry. Furthermore, the targets of these control mechanisms participate with consent. Even when their acquiescence to the state's preferences are steeped in power relations, they are still willing players. Force and the threat of violence are not the only ways the state can influence society's behavior and decisions. Analyzing mechanisms of social control helps researchers unpack people's compliance, and in turn, how it relates to outcomes such as the durability of authoritarian regimes.

Non-Coercive Social Control

China's focus on "social management" has brought the debut of new methods of non-coercive social control. Migrant workers, one group targeted in social management, are not only sources of labor. As potential consumers, they are also integral to the government's urbanization plan to boost domestic demand and support the country's future economic growth. On the way to building this economic vision, local authorities must continue to maintain social stability. For now, public service provision is one area that local officials have been able to regulate migrants.

These particular forms of non-coercive social control may be effective in the short-run but unsustainable in the long-term. Nonetheless, their existence points to the Chinese state's ongoing diversification of tools in its social control toolbox. The relationship between non-coercive and coercive strategies of social control and the outcomes, both planned and unintended, complicate our understanding of state control and regime durability. More and more

[289] Cited on the official website at http://www.behaviouralinsights.co.uk/

non-coercive approaches to social control are likely to emerge as authoritarian states continue to hone their methods of control.

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Appendix

List of Interviews

1. Migrant worker and activist, Beijing, 2010
2. Construction worker, Beijing, 2010
3. Construction worker, Beijing, 2010
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10. Construction worker, Beijing, 2010
11. Construction worker, Beijing, 2010
12. Fruit and vegetable seller, Beijing, 2010
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14. Migrant worker and activist, Beijing, 2010
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17. Construction worker, Beijing, 2010
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20. Construction worker, Beijing, 2010
21. Migrant worker and activist, Beijing, 2010
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23. Urban planning scholar, Beijing, 2010
24. NGO staff member, Guangzhou, 2010
25. Factory manager, Dongguan, 2010
26. Factory-government liaison, Dongguan, 2010
27. Economics scholar, Guangzhou, 2011
28. Factory owner, Chengdu, 2011
29. Construction company manager, Chengdu, 2011
30. Migration scholar, Chengdu, 2011
31. Rural development scholar, Berkeley, 2011
32. NGO staff member, Beijing, 2011
33. Vegetable seller, Beijing, 2011
34. Street stall vendor, Beijing, 2011
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36. Migrant worker and activist, Beijing, 2012
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40. Teacher, Beijing, 2012
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