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Jinsong, Gu; Hua, Jiang

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FREIE UNIVERSITÄT BERLIN

HUMBOLDT-UNIVERSITÄT ZU BERLIN

The Chinese higher education system and the impact of gender

The structure of Chinese education system and previous research and an empirical study



Von der Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg – Fakultät I Bildungs- und Sozialwissenschaften – zur Erlangung des Grades eines

Doktor der Wirtschafts- und Sozialwissenschaften (Dr.rer.pol.)

genehmigte Dissertation

von Frau Hua, Jiang

geboren am 19.08.1975 in Beijing, China

Erste Gutachterin: Prof. Karin Flaake
Zweite Gutachterin: Prof. Heike Fleßner
Tag der Disputation: 29.10.2010

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Erste Gutachterin: Prof. Karin Flaake
Zweite Gutachterin: Prof. Heike Fleßner
Tag der Disputation: 29.10.2010

The Chinese higher education system and the impact of gender

The structure of Chinese education system and previous research and an empirical study

Gu Jinsong

Jiang Hua

Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg, Germany

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Abbreviations

CCP	**Chinese Communist Party**
CERNET	**China Education Research Network**
CPA	**Certified Public Accountant**
EPO	**Education Planning Offices**
HEIs	**Higher Education Institutions**
MOE	**Ministry of Education**
NCEE	**National College Entrance Exam**
OECD	**Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development**
PRC	**People's Republic of China**
SOHO	**Small Office, Home Office**
SED	**State Education Commission**
TFSA	**Taiwanese Feminist Scholars Association**
UNESCO	**United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization**
UNNC	**University of Nottingham, Ningbo, China**

Introduction

This dissertation focuses on the situation of males and females in Chinese universities. This includes the allocation between males and females in different positions and disciplines, as well as an analysis of the reasons for these differences and the meaning of women's involvement in universities.

The dissertation consists of two parts. The first part is based on theories and previous research done by different researchers and could be seen as fundamental information to the subjects of the dissertation. The second part is an empirical study conducted by the authors, including a questionnaire, interview transcripts and the results of the study.

There are four chapters in the theoretical part. The first chapter offers an overview of the Chinese education system, emphasising higher education, its history, forms and characteristics. The second chapter describes the students' situation in Chinese higher education, including their distribution in different disciplines, socio-economic background and career aspiration. An important point in this chapter is the differences between male and female students. The third chapter focuses on recent developments in teacher training, with special attention to teachers in higher education. The last chapter deals with the female teachers in Chinese higher education, especially with some of their central orientations and motivations. Gender politics in China will be mentioned as well.

The second part presents the results of an empirical study concerning biographies, experiences, motivations and orientations of male and female university teachers. It is a qualitative study based on interviews with six female and six male teachers at Capital Normal University in Beijing, an outstanding university in China. After a detailed presentation of the central contents of each interview, these contents are condensed to core statements: first for the group of female teachers, then for the group of male teachers. Central dimensions of the analysis are: family background, motivation for working in the university, the significance of marriage and family, and experiences in the university– especially concerning the proportion of male to female teachers in the department. Based on this information, similarities and differences

between male and female teachers are described.

Because there are males and females among the interviewees, it is necessary to state the definition of "Gender". As a matter of fact, gender in this dissertation is understood as socially constructed. According to Lorber, "from the social construction perspective, gender is a society's division of people into differentiated categories of "women" and "men". In the social construction perspective, gender is an intrinsic part of many societies' social orders. Gender divisions are built into the major social organizations of those societies, such as the economy, the family, religion, the arts, and politics. In those societies, gender is a major social status for individuals, with established patterns of expectations and life opportunities."[1] At the same time, "for society, Gender means difference. In the social construction of gender, it does not matter what men and women actually do; it does not even matter if they do exactly the same thing. The social institution of gender insists only what they do is perceived as different."[2] All of the interviewees in this dissertation, whether they are male or female, are university teachers. They do the same job and have similarities at work and in their lives, but at the same time there are also some differences. What the empirical study is trying to do is to find out such points and then to analyse them.

The final chapter, chapter 6, presents a summary of the main research results. In addition, this chapter opens up for an international perspective by comparing our results concerning gender differences in universities in China with the characteristics of gender proportions in higher education in Germany.

---

[1] Lorber, Judith, and Moore, Lisa Jean, "Gender and the social construction of illness", Altamira Press, UK, 2002, P4 http://books.google.com.sg/books?id=Be85M4g_4XMC&pg=PA3&lpg=PA3&dq=gender+definition+lorber&source=bl&ots=dMLmS3-vHv&sig=UlcNQxFqXZ0eV1pTwRUG41EitZA&hl=en&ei=Bh7xS9qrN4mssAbSr6DbAg&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=2&ved=0CB0Q6AEwAQ#v=onepage&q&f=false

[2] Lorber, Judith, "Night to his Day": The Social Construction of Gender. New York: Yale University Press, 1994, P5

Part I The Chinese higher education system and the impact of gender – The structure of Chinese education system and previous research

Chapter 1 Chinese education system

Concerning the theme "university teachers' and students' behaviors" in China, there is a lack of material. Although some relevant works and dissertations can be found in China, they are not similar to this topic. Actually, this theme could be seen as a scope to sociology, and sociology in China still needs much time to develop.

1.1. Main forms of the Chinese education system

Since the 1950s, China has adopted a nine-year compulsory education system, which means that all children are required to attend school for nine years. Students have to complete both the primary school program and the junior middle school program. Higher education is only for those students who have passed examinations of all levels, which includes primary school, junior and senior middle school. During the Cultural Revolution, this education system was broken completely. Although the National College Entrance Exam was restored in 1977, the education system remained broken up until 1984. In this year, some major laws on education were notably formulated with official efforts and one year later, in 1985, they were actualized. One important article of those laws is that "all children who have reached school age shall enroll in school and receive compulsory education for the prescribed number of years, regardless of sex, nationality or race".[3] This article reflects that all people in China have the right to be educated. At the same time, some changes or reforms were seen in the new education laws. Students must pass the entrance examination for senior middle schools or middle-level technical schools after the nine-year compulsory schooling. After three or four years, they have to participate in the National College Entrance Examination for admission to universities.

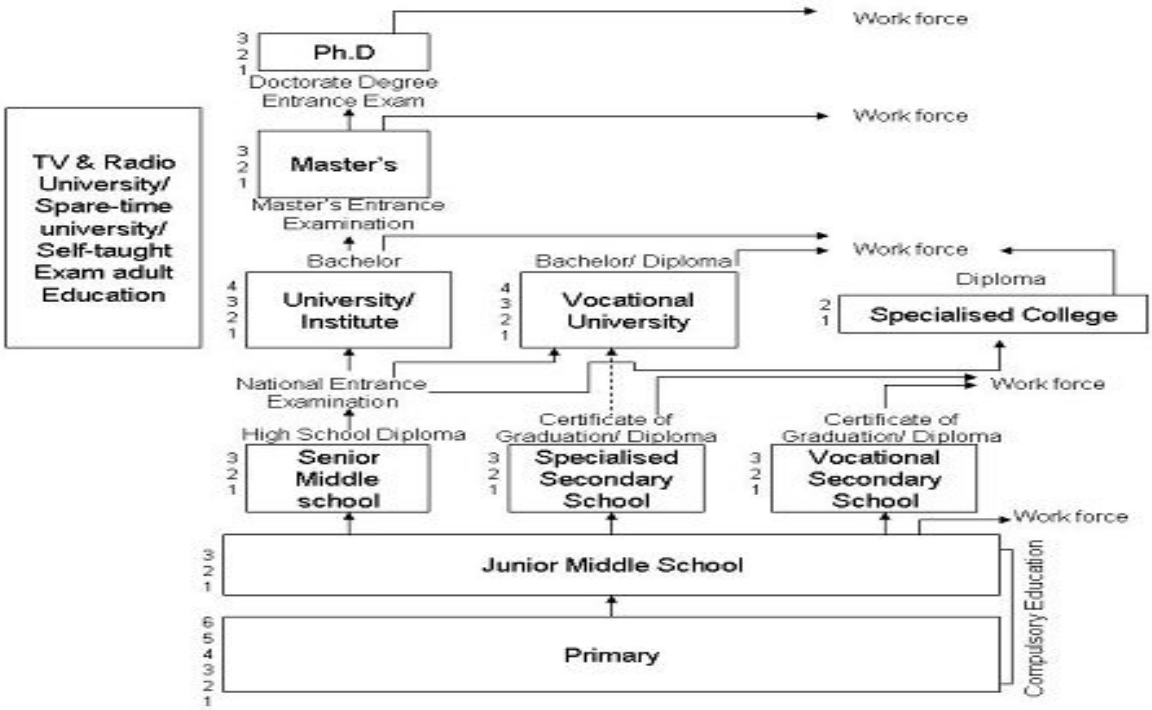
The development of the Chinese higher education indicates that the aim of Chinese

[3] Compulsory Education Law of the Peoples Republic of China: Article 11 http://www.en8848.com.cn/yingyu/52/n-92252.html

higher education has been changed from a political weapon to a means of educating and cultivating. As higher education has become a top priority in the Chinese society of today and the function of a Higher Education Institution (HEI) has been redefined from a pure teaching centre to a scientific research community, research and teaching are taking over as key roles in the society[4].

Priority was given to university development, and the Chinese higher education system has expanded very quickly over the past thirty years. The total enrollments at higher education institutions in China rose from about 1 million in the early 1980s to about 13 million in 2001. Obviously, the structure of the old higher education system based on a centrally planned economy could no longer fit in with the new reality[5].

Figure 1.1 The Chinese educational structure



(Source: Brandenburg, Uwe, and Zhu, Jaini, "Higher education in China in the light of massification and demographic change", CHE Centrum für Hochschulentwicklung GmbH, 10, 2007，page 6)

[4] Ouyang, Kang, "Higher Education Reform in China Today" Policy Futures in Education, Volume 2, Number 1, 2004

[5] Min, Weifang, "Historical Perspectives and Contemporary Challenges: The Case of Chinese Universities" http://www.tc.columbia.edu/centers/coce/detail.asp?Id=Publications&Info=%28C%29+Research+on+Higher-Education+Development

1.1.1. Basic education

Pre-school education

Pre-school education is for 3-5 years old and takes place in kindergartens, where they learn the basics of the native language and subjects such as simple mathematics and natural science. The Chinese take childhood education very seriously since a person's personality is molded during early childhood. However, this kind of education was brought into effect since the 1980s and does not belong to the compulsory school system.

Primary education

Primary education is from 6-11 years old. Primary schools are usually run by local educational authorities and offer free tuition, although there are some private schools owned by enterprises and individuals. Besides taking a variety of subjects such as the Chinese language, fundamental mathematics and moral education, pupils also take part in sports and extra-curricular activities. Foreign languages such as English are optional courses in the senior year of primary education.

Table 1.1 Net Enrollment Ratio of School-age Children in Primary Schools

Unit: 10 Thousand			
	Net Enrollment Ratio of School-age Children in various regions.		
Year	Total No. of School-age Children	No. of School-age Children Enrolled	Net Enrollment Ratio（%）
2002	11310.4	11150.0	98.6
2003	10908.3	10761.6	98.7
2004	10548.1	10437.1	98.9
2005	10207.0	10120.3	99.2
2006	10075.5	10001.5	99.3

(Source: Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, http://www.moe.edu.cn/edoas/website18/83/info33483.htm)

The above table (Table 1.1) shows that the development of primary education in so vast a country as China was a formidable accomplishment. In contrast to the 98.6 percent enrollment rate in 2002, in 2006 about 99.3 percent of primary school-aged children were enrolled in primary schools. The lower birth rate led to the reduction of the total number of school-aged children from year to year, but the net enrollment

ratio increased step by step.

Under the Law on Nine-Year Compulsory Education, primary schools are to be tuition-free and reasonably located for the convenience of the children attending them; children can attend schools near their homes.[6] Parents pay a small fee per term for books and other expenses such as transportation, food and heating. Previously, fees were not considered a deterrent to attendance. If in the rural areas some parents felt these minor costs are more than they can afford, under the education reform, their children receive loans from state enterprises, institutions and other sectors of society.

Children usually enter primary school at six or seven years of age for five days a week. All primary schools have a six-year course, and the primary school curriculum consists of Chinese, mathematics, music, drawing, nature, history, geography, sport, and general knowledge of politics and moral training, which stress love of the motherland, love of the party, and love of the people. A foreign language, often English, is introduced in about the third grade. Chinese and mathematics account for about 60 percent of the scheduled class time, whereas natural science and social science account for about 8 percent. Mandarin is taught in regular schools and Pinyin Romanization in lower grades and kindergarten. Most schools have after-hour activities at least one day per week– often organized by the Young Pioneers– to involve students in recreation and community service.

Table 1.2 Promotion Rate of Graduates of Primary School

Year	Promotion Rate of Primary School Graduates (%)
2002	97.0
2003	97.9
2004	98.1
2005	98.4
2006	100.0

(Source: "Promotion Rate of Graduates of School of All Levels" http://www.edu.cn/school_496/20100121/t20100121_442082.shtml)

Table 1.2 represents the fact that more and more graduates of the primary school

[6] Compulsory Education Law of the Peoples Republic of China: Article 9 http://www.en8848.com.cn/yingyu/52/n-92252.html

can go to junior middle school after six years. In 2006 the rate reaches 100 percent.

1.1.2. Secondary schooling

Secondary schooling is for children from 12-17 years of age. Local governments and various business authorities run education of this kind. State-run secondary schools include junior middle schools and senior middle schools, both with three grades or years. The first three years of secondary school are compulsory and tuition is free. Senior middle school education is a continuation of junior middle school. It is not compulsory and students must pay minimal tuition fees.

Junior middle schools

Junior middle school covers the last 3 years of the 9-year compulsory education, which is subject to fees. At the end of the last year, the college-bound students take exams to enter senior middle school, whereas others wishing to continue their training may enter a technical high school or vocational school.

The students usually enter junior school at twelve or thirteen years of age for five days a week. The two-semester school year consisted of 9.5 months, with a long summer vacation in July and August, and a short winter vacation in February. Urban schools typically divide the school week into thirty classes of forty-five minutes each. However, in the rural areas the norm is half-day schooling, more flexible schedules, and itinerant teachers. All students study the same course as in the primary school, but now in junior middle schools, English is of the same importance as Chinese and Mathematics, and they will study Physics and Chemistry during the last year.

Table 1.3 Number of Students in Junior School

Year	Students Admitted Unit: in Person	Graduates Students Unit: in Person	Graduates Ratio（%）
2002	22522972	18798695	83.5
2006	20715766	19295580	93.1

(Source: “Number of Students in General Secondary Schools” http://www.edu.cn/2002_9467/20100121/t20100121_443129.shtml)

From this comparison, we know that in 2006 the graduates’ ratio in Junior School

was 93.1 percent, compared with 83.5 percent in 2002, around 10 percent higher. The rate increases continuously.

Senior middle school

Table 1.4 Number of Students in senior middle school

Year	Students Admitted Unit: in Person	Graduates Students Unit: in Person	Graduates Ratio （%）
2002	6767049	3837605	56.7
2006	8712080	7270693	83.5

(Source: "Number of Students in General Secondary Schools" http://www.edu.cn/2002_9467/20100121/t20100121_443129.shtml)

According to table 1.3 and 1.4, the graduates' ratios in junior middle school or senior middle school increase rapidly. Within only 4 years they are 9.6 percent and 26.8 percent, respectively.

Table 1.5 Promotion Rate[7] of Senior School Graduates

Year	Promotion Rate of Senior School Graduates (%)
1990	27.3
1991	28.7
1992	34.9
1993	43.3
1994	46.7
1995	49.9
1996	51.0
1997	48.6
1998	46.1
1999	63.8
2000	73.2
2001	78.8
2002	83.5
2003	83.4
2004	82.5
2005	76.3
2006	75.1

[7] Promotion rate of senior middle school graduates is the ratio of total number of new entrants admitted to the universities and the colleges – Author's Note

(Source: "Promotion Rate of Graduates of School of All Levels" http://www.edu.cn/school_496/20100121/t20100121_442082.shtml)

The trend from this table is that more and more middle school students choose to achieve higher education after school. Within the 10 years between 1990 and 2000, the ratio increased nearly 46 percent. The reasons are various: not only do people today realize the importance of knowledge, but the expansion of the universities and colleges from 1997 also provides the possibility.

For most middle school students in China, the decision to follow an arts path or a sciences path is made in middle school, because they will be divided into two kinds of classes. One is for the students who will be sciences students, and the other is for those who hope to study humanities. After passing the final test, which is something like the *Abitur* in Germany, they have the qualification for the university. The final test is called the National College Entrance Examination (NCEE) and takes place in June for 3 days at the end of the last year in senior middle school. There are a total of five subjects on the examination, the so-called "3+XX" model: all students have to learn Chinese, Math and English for the college entrance test; the other two subjects are then different. This means that the students who want to study science in university will take Physics and Chemistry, while those who hope to study humanities need to take History and Politics.

This kind of test was established in 1952, and until 1965 it ran very well and was then broken off by the Cultural Revolution for 11 years (1966-1976). In 1977, it was restored and about 5.7 million people took the examination and about 270,000 were admitted at that time. One year later in 1978, the number reached 6.1 million[8].

As a rule, the application process begins after the publication of students' NCEE scores and each province announces its minimum passing score. Students above the passing score can list 10 to 20 choices of universities ranked in two or three levels on

[8] Zheng, Rouling, "Chinese College Entrance Examination, Problems and Reforms", Teachers College, Columbia University, USA, 10, 2006

their applications (e.g. they list some universities as their first choice, some as their second and others as their third choice). On the application form, students have to list the departments as well as the subjects they prefer. The applications will then be sent to provincial education planning offices to be distributed to the universities. If their first choice universities reject them or the number of students reaches their limitations, the applications are passed on to their second choice universities and finally to the institutions listed as their third choice.

1.2. Higher education

1.2.1. History of Chinese higher education

The history of modern higher education of a broader scope in China is a rather young history compared with the history of education in Europe and the Middle East. Nevertheless, China did establish some private academies (in Chinese 书院/書院or shūyuàn) which may have been a close parallel to the medieval universities of Europe[9]. These institutions functioned in their initial phase as pure libraries that later became research institutes and then academies. These private academies took over educational tasks especially in the late Tang and Five Dynasties periods when the government could not afford enough funds for education at the local level[10]. In the Qing Dynasty, emperor Guangxu (1871-1908) ordered to establish a new style of institutions of higher learning, and then the Peiyang University in Tianjin (Now Tianjin University) was founded and was regarded as the first institution of higher education in modern China.

By 1949, 205 universities[11] had been founded.

In the late 50s up until the mid-60s, it is indeed very interesting to note that China

[9] Brandenburg, Uwe, and Zhu, Jaini, "Higher education in China in the light of massification and demographic change", CHE Centrum für Hochschulentwicklung GmbH, 10, 2007, page 10

[10] "Chinese History - Song Dynasty 宋 (960-1279) government, administration and law" http://chinaknowledge.de/History/Song/song-admin.html

[11] China Statistical Yearbook 1985, Beijing

established a mixed Confucian-Western style higher education[12]. The reasons for this change seem to be more political than scientific. China was on rather less-than-friendly terms with Russia by the end of the 1950s and, therefore, it might not have seemed politically appropriate to follow an educational model of a state which was not well-received by the Chinese government. Thus, the Western-style model prevailed again, if only for a short time.

The Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) led to the eradication of all formal education and a decade of deterioration set in, thus leaving an entire generation vastly uneducated. This was a disaster for the Chinese educational system and repercussions were felt for a considerable amount of time. Only in 1977, the National College Entrance Examination was resumed and universities opened again.

The academic degree system was reintroduced, with Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral degrees, and a Postdoctoral research system was set up. As Ouyang calls it, "a relatively rational higher education system was set up with different subjects, different aspects and different levels"[13]. This system included a rather diverse system of 270 different subjects. The development of diverse subjects was the consequent answer to the developments in international research and teaching which were felt to be not adequately mirrored by the existing academic fields and categories. Therefore, an adjustment was needed in order to be able to produce education on an up-to-date level.

From Ouyang[14], current Chinese higher education shows five characteristics: internationalization, synthesis/comprehensiveness, modernization, diversification, and holistic education/self-cultivation.

[12] Finnish National Board of Education, 2007

[13] "Higher Education Reform in China Today" http://www.wwwords.co.uk/pdf/viewpdf.asp?j=pfie&vol=2&issue=1&year=2004&article=8_Kang_PFIE_2_1_web&id=195.71.119.86

[14] Ouyang, Kang, "Higher Education Reform in China Today" Policy Futures in Education, Volume 2, Number 1 2004,

1.2.2. Chinese higher education at present

Normally, access to higher education in China remains a very competitive endeavor because of “gaokao”, the National College Entrance Exam (NCEE), which is described by the Chinese as "thousands of troops on a single-log bridge" due to its low enrollment rate[15]. For example, in 1977, about 5.7 million senior middle school students took the NCEE, but among 29 graduates only one could be admitted to higher education[16]. The rate was about 4.8 percent, and in 1979 it became 6.1 percent[17]; the rate was very low. However, during the last three decades, with the reforms of the “gaokao“ system and the changes of the people’s awareness to higher education, this rate has changed very quickly– especially in 2001 when the rate was over 50 percent for the first time.

Table 1.6 The number of students who are enrolled in the universities and the enrollment rate from 2002 to 2007 in China

Year	Students who take the NCEE (unit: ten thousand)	Students who pass the NCEE (unit: ten thousand)	Enrollment rate
2002	527	321	60.91%
2003	613	382	62.32%
2004	723	447	61.83%
2005	867	504	58.13%
2006	950	540	56.84%
2007	1010	567	56.14%

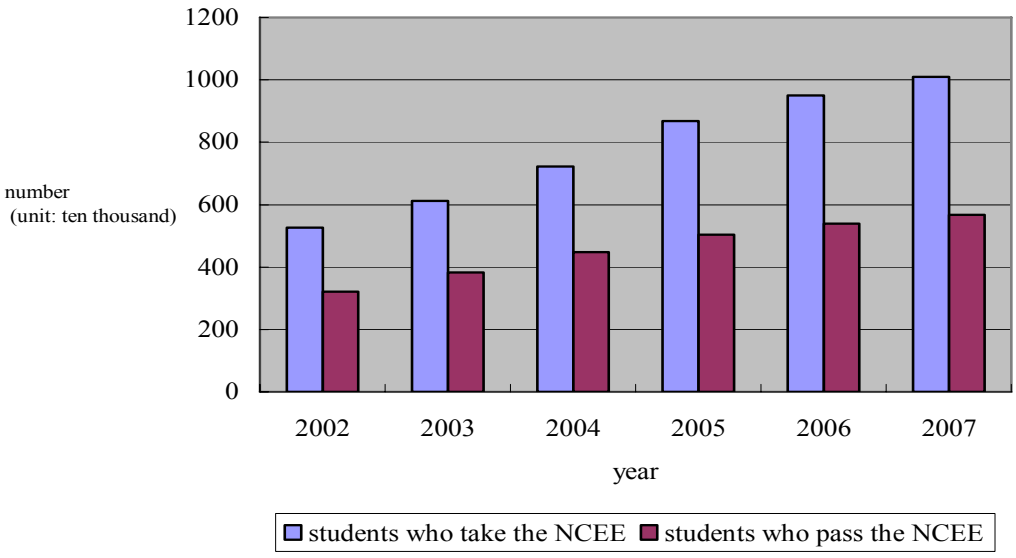
(Source: http://hi.baidu.com/dontcry/blog/item/4ae7bb120acec1c8c2fd784b.html)

[15] Brandenburg, Uwe, and Zhu, Jiani, “Higher Education in China, in the light of massification and demographic change”, CHE Centrum für Hochschulentwicklung GmbH, 10, 2007, page 16

[16] “The proportion of NCEE in 1977” http://www.sooxue.com/gaokao/gkkd/gkxw/200810/95343.html

[17] “The number of students of NCEE” http://hi.baidu.com/dontcry/blog/item/4ae7bb120acec1c8c2fd784b.html

Figure 1.2 The number of students who are enrolled in universities from 2002 to 2007 in China



(Source: http://hi.baidu.com/dontcry/blog/item/4ae7bb120acec1c8c2fd784b.html)

Table 1.6 and Figure 1.2 reflect the development of higher education through focusing on the changes in the number of students who enroll in the universities and the enrollment rate from 2002 to 2007. Based on this information, the number of students who are permitted to be educated in high educational institutes increases each year, and in 2003 the enrollment rate reached 62.32 percent– the highest enrollment rate in Chinese history– although the percentage of enrollment from then on decreased. This trend shows that higher education is seen as an important element for social development and national economy by the Chinese government. At the same time, the increasing number of university students is a result of the expansion of university from 1999. At that time, following the economic reform, some workers in state-owned factories became unemployed and they needed to find other jobs. In order to avoid conflicting between them and the middle school graduates who did not pass the NCEE during the period of finding jobs, improving the enrollment rate was an effective way[18].

[18] Ding, Xiaohao, "Expansion of university, opportunity and risk", Institute of Education and Economy, Beijing University, Nov. 2000

Actually, University admission operates on a centralized enrollment system, in which admissions committees at the provincial level are under the Ministry of Education. Admission is granted on the basis of academic, physical and moral qualifications. Special allowances are made for minority nationalities and overseas Chinese candidates, or those with special talents, such as in sports or musical instruments. Candidates can take the examination in either one of the two categories: humanities or sciences/engineering. They apply for the institutions and departments they wish to enter in order of preference. The examination results and the number of people taking the exam determine enrollment. Brief investigation into their social behavior and moral character is conducted before students are admitted. Getting into university is highly competitive. Other innovations[19] in enrollment practices in the mid-1980s included allowing colleges and universities to admit students with good academic records but relatively low entrance-examination scores. Some colleges were allowed to try an experimental student recommendation system– fixed at 2 percent of the total enrollment for regular colleges and 5 percent for teachers' colleges– instead of the traditional entrance examination. This means that the high middle school graduates with good scores can be recommended by their schools to go to some universities without taking the NCEE.

Until today, there is no accurate data about the proportion of students who can be permitted to go to higher education every year, since every higher educational institute has its own plan.

From the 1950s until the 1960s, the Chinese higher education was adopted from the Soviet Union based on the "central planning economy" policy. This means that specialized higher education institutions were established and that the Chinese higher education system became more departmentalized and segmented under different central ministries. For example, Beijing Agricultural University came under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Agriculture, Beijing Forestry College under the

[19] "Education in the People's Republic of China" http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_the_People's_Republic_of_China

Ministry of Forestry, Beijing Chemical Engineering College under the Ministry of the Chemical Industry, Beijing Metallurgy College under the Ministry of the Metallurgical Industry, Beijing Geology College under the Ministry of Geology, Beijing College of Mines under the Ministry of the Mining Industry, and so on. There were a total of about 60 ministries in the central government, each operating its own higher education institutions. This kind of model lasted until the mid-1990s. Obviously, such a higher education system based on central planning could not fit in well with the new market economy. The "Decision on Reform of the Education System" which was launched in 1985 by the Chinese Communist Party was seen as a milestone of the reform era for the higher education in China, because it stressed the importance of higher education in terms of contributing to China's independent scientific and technological development, and solving major theoretical and practical problems in the process of social modernization. It also clearly stated that higher education institutions should enjoy greater operational autonomy, including the right to enroll commissioned and self-paying students (i.e., non-state-plan students), to readjust the services provided by specialized departments, to accept commissioned projects and to expand their cooperation with other sectors of the society and economy. At the end of the 1980s, the process of decentralization, diversification of management and financing of higher education, and institutional autonomy accelerated[20]. Some years later, in December 1992, another key document "Points Regarding How to Expedite Reforms and Vigorously Develop General Higher Education" was issued by the State Education Commission, which indicated that higher education should try to adapt to the socialist market economy. And the higher education institutions should be "autonomous corporate bodies"[21]. On the one hand, Chinese universities never had the same degree of autonomy as their European counterparts, although the government had given considerable freedom for the universities to decide on issues such as curriculum, commissioned research,

[20] Huang, Lihong, "Elitism and Equality in Chinese Higher Education", Institute of International Education, Stockholm University, 2005, page 41

[21] China Education Yearbook, People's Education Press, China, 1993

recruitment of fee-paying students, etc. On the other hand, autonomy did not bring in more government funds; instead, universities were forced to secure funds by means of profit making activities, commercialization and enterprise-friendly activities[22]. At the same time, the private and enterprise-run educational institutions were permitted to be built in this document.

With the development of a market economy, after graduating from a university belonging to a specific line ministry, a student might well find a job in a completely unrelated field through labor market mechanisms. As more and more graduates found their own jobs in the labor market instead of through job assignments handled by the ministry, the manpower plan of the central-line ministries failed. Between 2000 and 2003, hundreds of universities and colleges were reorganized. For example, Beijing Medical University under the Ministry of Public Health merged with Peking University, which is under the Ministry of Education. Interestingly, up until the early 1950s, Beijing Medical University used to be the medical school of Peking University.

The current Chinese higher education system is one of the largest in the world, with more than 3,000 universities and colleges– including 1,225 regular full-time universities and colleges, 686 adult higher education institutions, and 1,202 new private universities and colleges[23] as of 2001.

Higher education in China is to train specialists for all the sectors of the country's development.

The higher education segment of the current Chinese higher education system carries both the US and UK systems[24]. Common higher education comprises of junior

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22 Huang, Lihong, "Elitism and Equality in Chinese Higher Education", Institute of International Education, Stockholm University, 2005, page 43

23 Min, Weifang, "Historical Perspectives and Contemporary Challenges: The Case of Chinese Universities" http://www.tc.columbia.edu/centers/coce/detail.asp?Id=Publications&Info=%28C%29+Research+on+Higher-Education+Development

24 Brandenburg, Uwe, and Zhu, Jaini, "Higher education in China in the light of massification and demographic change", CHE Centrum für Hochschulentwicklung GmbH, 10, 2007, page

college program[25] without degree, Bachelor, Master and Doctoral degree programs. The junior college program usually lasts 2 to 3 years; Bachelor program 4 years (for medical and some engineering and technical programs 5 years); Master program 2 to 3 years; Doctoral program 2 to 3 years. Students who have completed a first degree may apply to enter graduate schools. These institutions conduct academic and scientific research and provide social services as well as offering courses to students.

The Chinese government attaches great importance to the development and reform of higher education. By the end of 2004, China had 2,236 schools of higher learning, with over 20 million students. Postgraduate education is the fastest growing sector, with 24.1 percent more students recruited and 25.9 percent more researchers than the year before. Up until 2005, there were a total of 1.92 percent university students in the entire population of China, compared to the 0.29 percent of graduates in the entire population of Germany and 0.72 percent in the USA in the year 2005[26]. This number expresses that China had twenty-five million university students in 2005, and the government estimates that there will be thirty million university students in 2010[27].

At present, accompanied with rapid economic increases and development, people's economic statuses ameliorate step by step. More and more parents encourage their children to go to colleges and universities to get higher education because they have the awareness that knowledge can create "power" and wealth. According to China Year Book 2006[28], about thirty years ago, after the National College Entrance Examination restarting in 1977 (it was closed during the Cultural Revolution), there were only 0.4 percent of university students in China. It was a very low ratio among a large population. Then the number increased slowly— it reached 1.2 percent in 1989 and 1.5 percent in 1997. The year 1997 was a significant year for higher education,

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[25] It is also called "short-cycle" program-from author, this educational degree is higher than graduation of senior middle school and lower than a Bachelor's degree – author

[26] "Ratio of university students among whole population ", http://zhidao.baidu.com/question/70386897.html
"Graduates by field of education" http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DatasetCode=RGRADSTY

[27] National development and reform committee, Beijing, China, 2006

[28] National Bureau of Statistics of China, Beijing, 2006

since the government made the decision to expand the universities and colleges in order to gain more new students, and some new institutes were to be built. Although many more students can go to higher education institutes due to the reform, the disadvantages are also obvious, such as the pressure of finding a job.

Students of ethnic minorities are a small part among all students; they represent 5.7 percent of higher education students nationally. However, it is worth noting that the proportion of the minority population in the region is 25.4 percent. There are a total of 12 "Nationality Academy" universities in the country, which are specially established for minority students doing studies in their own language. In such universities, over 70 percent are minority students while the maximum quota for Han students varies between 10 to 30 per cent[29].

1.2.3. Tuition fees

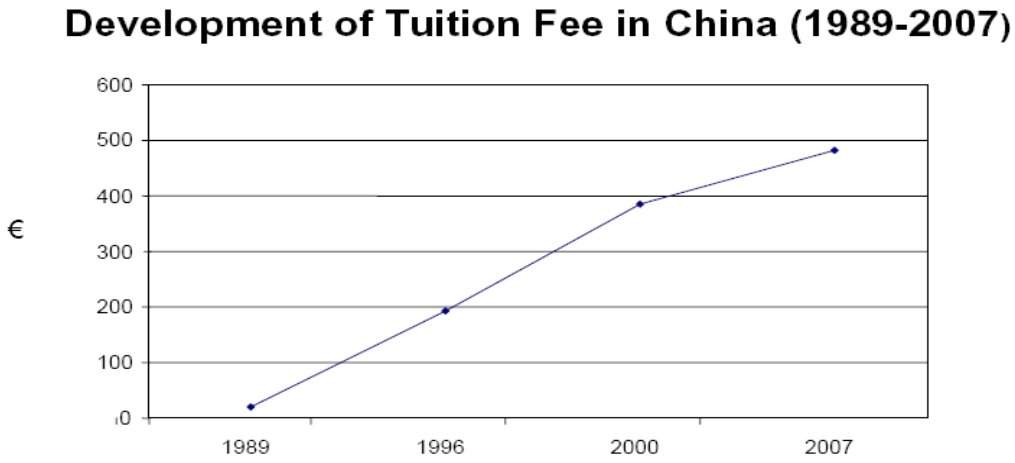
During the last two decades of the twentieth century, China had opened her door to the world and changed from a socialist planning economy into a socialist market economy. Higher education in China was free to all students until the mid-1980s. It was free to the majority and expensive for a small group of the students until the mid-1990s.

Promoted especially by the World Bank, tuition fees were introduced into educational systems in many developing countries, including China, during the 1980s and 1990s. Since the 1980s, the Chinese higher education has been facing serious financial tension. In order to fill the gap between financial demand and supply, the Chinese government and departments have been solving the problem through two paths: one is to enlarge financial resources and explore more channels to raise educational funds, while the other is to improve the utilization efficiency of educational resources. Among many channels of fund-raising, cost-recovery policy implementation has been regarded as having theoretical support and practical value[30].

[29] China Education Yearbook 2002: 92, Beijing
[30] Li, Wenli, and Min, Weifang, "Tuition, private demand and higher education in China",

In 1993, “An Outline of Chinese Education Reform and Development” pointed out, “Higher Education is non-compulsory education in China. Principally, students should pay the tuition”[31].

Figure 1.3 Development of Tuition Fee in China



(Source: Tang, Kailing, “How much is the university tuition fee: Focusing on the reform of university tuition fee” China Reading Weekly, September 29, 2007)

A unified tuition charge was introduced in 1997. According to a survey carried out by the China Youth Daily and another report from China Weekly Reading, fees officially jumped from 200 RMB (18 €) per year in 1989 to some 5.000 RMB (500 €) per semester nowadays[32]. Certainly, there are also universities with higher tuition, such as music or film academies, which cost about 1,500 Euros per year. At the same time, the tuition fee between state-run universities and private universities is different as well. The students in private universities pay more than those in state-run universities. Since private universities possess autonomy, they can adjust the tuition fee themselves, which is controlled by the Ministry of Education.[33]

Under the mechanism of cost sharing, the charging of tuition fees has raised the

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Graduate School of education, Peking University, Beijing, January 2001

[31] China Newsweek 2005, Beijing

[32] “Survey: Hike in university tuition fees dramatic” China Daily; Guo, Qiang 2007 http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2007-01/16/content_784859.htm

[33] “China Education and Research Network: Tuition in Chinese University” http://gkcx.eol.cn/z/sfbz.html

private cost of higher education beyond a middle-income family's means. This has serious implications for having access to higher education for certain social groups in the nation. Financial assistance mechanisms such as the student loan program and a national scholarship are new and still in the trial phase, and have a limited impact in helping poor students[34].

Wenli Li, a researcher at Beijing University's Economics of Education Institute, has the idea that the financing of higher education in China changed drastically since 1990, from a system that was paid for mainly by direct government contributions (83 percent of funding) and the revenues from industries affiliated with universities (about 10 percent of total funding) to a system in which almost 30 percent of funding in 2002 came from tuition and only 50 percent of funding from direct government contributions. The Economics of Education Institute surveyed about 15,000 students in 18 higher education institutions (10 national and 8 local), mostly in eastern China. The survey shows that tuition and other "necessary" private expenditures vary little for the students across different social classes. The students from the lowest quintile families spent about 8600 Yuan (860€) in 2004 on these necessary expenditures (about 480€ on tuition), whereas students from the upper quintile of families spend only 2600 Yuan (260€) more (110€ more on tuition and about 110€ more on food, 30€ more on transportation, plus another 10€ more on housing)[35].

Since students of higher social class are likely to be in Beijing and Shanghai, and study in expensive institutions or enroll in high cost faculties, this small variation in the private share of spending on tuition suggests that tuition differences between high-cost and low-cost institutions are small. This implies that the public share of spending in high-cost institutions and faculties is higher than in low-cost institutions. Therefore, the public subsidies for higher-income students may be considerably higher than for lower-income students.

This strategy makes sense in terms of economic growth optimization if higher

[34] Huang, Lihong, "Elitism and Equality in Chinese Higher Education", Institute of International Education, Stockholm University, 2005

[35] http://scid.stanford.edu/events/PanAsia/Papers/Carnoy.pdf

income students from eastern Chinese cities and provinces are academically more able and are likely to contribute more in social benefits than lower-income, lower-scoring students entering less elite, lower-cost universities. A plan of public subsidies that favors enrollment of the best and the brightest in faculties and universities that produce high externalities should contribute to greater innovation and higher economic growth. It is generally assumed that externalities to investing in very smart students in certain fields of study—such as research science or teaching—are large because the activities that these students engage in once they are working create social benefits greater than the additional earnings they realize.

If the higher-income students tend to study in faculties and universities that have high private rates of return but low externalities, a student loan program would be the most cost-effective policy in terms of maximizing economic growth. A scheme of market-rate education loans would help overcome barriers of entry resulting from undeveloped capital markets for educational investment, but would leave students and their families responsible for paying a substantial share of the costs of high private payoff education[36].

1.3. Other forms of Chinese education system

Besides public higher education institutes, private education came into being and developed rapidly in recent years.

Private secondary schools often offer specialized education and have a more vocational bent, but the qualifications they offer are considered to be on the same level as those of state-run middle schools. However, graduates from secondary professional schools are seen to have achieved a higher level in some ways akin to a university education. Some students graduating from junior middle schools usually go on to senior middle schools, others move to vocational high schools or secondary professional schools for 3-5 years of study.

Private education includes private higher education as well. It is said that Confucius

[36] Duan, Xinran, "Chinese education enters a new era" http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/pubsres/academe/2003/ND/Feat/duan.htm

(551–479 B.C.) himself introduced private higher education in China during the Eastern Zhou dynasty, at a time when the state institutions were becoming weaker. It was recorded that he had more than 3,000 students[37]. Up until July 2003, 167 independent private universities were founded, which can issue certificates or diplomas. About 50 private universities have more than 10,000 students[38]. However, institutions of private higher education are founded by private sources, and they can choose what they offer and to whom they offer it. Normally their tuition costs much more than public higher education because they cannot receive funding from the state. There is no limitation for students, which means that everyone who has the ability to pay the tuition can study in private colleges. Therefore, many students of the private higher education are those who cannot enroll in public universities or colleges because of their low score. The subjects in private higher education are not the same as those in public higher education. There are no humanities courses; they focus much more on the labor market, which means that most of their subjects are science, engineering, or business. Some also offer MBA subjects.

The private institutions quickly grew and matured, some becoming very large and competitive. For example, Xi'an International University—a private comprehensive university established in 1992 in Xi'an City, Shanxi Province— now has 10 colleges and 21,000 students, modern teaching facilities that include a satellite digital transmission system, a multimedia computer network, a campus on-line network, a computer centre, an audiovisual teaching centre and a considerable number of laboratories.

However, private universities students worry about their employment prospects. Indeed, while 70 to 80 percent of public university graduates find jobs upon graduation, private university graduates have only 60 to 70 percent employment rates

[37] Min, Weifang, "Historical Perspectives and Contemporary Challenges: The Case of Chinese Universities" http://www.tc.columbia.edu/centers/coce/detail.asp?Id=Publications&Info=%28C%29+Research+on+Higher-Education+Development

[38] Gu, Binglin, "Chinese Universities: Present and future", Tsinghua University, Beijing, China, June 2004

upon graduation[39], because it is said that these students are those who cannot enroll in public universities or colleges due to their low scores, although it is not true for all of the students. Some of them just want to choose some special professions that are not provided in state-owned universities. Most private university graduates often have to face discrimination in the labor market.

Although public higher education has expanded very quickly, the demand for higher education in China is still very large.

After the Cultural Revolution in 1976, China entered a phase of modern construction. During the Cultural Revolution, all education systems were destroyed completely, and higher education was not an exception. However, since the National College Entrance Examination was restated in the late 1970s, adult higher education was restored and developed quickly.

Constrained by the limited resources available for higher education development, Chinese government implemented policies to promote private institutions. In August 1993, an important document, the Provisional Stipulations for the Establishment of *Minban* (non-state-run) Higher Education Institutions, was issued[40]. This kind of non-state-run higher education institution is another type of private university. In this year, "The Guidelines for Educational Reform and Development in China" pointed out, "Adult higher education plays an important role both in the development of conventional school education toward life-long education and in the continuous enhancement of the national quality and in the promotion of economic, social development"[41]. Until 2001, there were over 56,000 *Minban* educational institutions providing all levels of education, which accounted for 3.8 percent of total student

[39] Jing, Lin, "Employment and China's Private Universities: Key Concern", University of Maryland, USA, 2007

[40] Min, Weifang, "Historical Perspectives and Contemporary Challenges: The Case of Chinese Universities" http://www.tc.columbia.edu/centers/coce/detail.asp?Id=Publications&Info=%28C%29+Research+on+Higher-Education+Development

[41] "Higher education in China" http://www.moe.edu.cn/english/higher_h.htm

enrollment [42]. Currently in China, *Minban* colleges remain inferior to public institutions in the eyes of government and parents because of their relatively low academic qualities, including teachers' qualities or the infrastructure of the institutions. *Minban* institutions are only allowed to recruit students after public institutions complete their recruitment. Some students only choose to attend *Minban* colleges after being rejected by public institutions due to their low scores on the National College Entrance Examination.

Adult higher education usually consists of the following: distance education such as radio and television universities, institutions of higher learning for workers and peasants, colleges for management personnel, colleges of management for training and upgrading administrators and Communist Party cadres, educational colleges for school teachers, independent correspondence colleges, adult education offered by regular institutions of higher education (departments of correspondence, evening universities, advanced training for teachers), as well as the system of examinations for self-taught students at a higher level.

Adult higher education offers both part-time and full-time programs, some of which are with a Bachelor's degree. They usually do not have advanced degree programs. The number of the employed who took part in adult higher education such as advanced teachers or job training had steadily increased. Post-college further education was broadly launched to scientific, technical and management personnel in terms of supplementing or updating their knowledge. Millions of people participated in such kind of training each year. In the past 20 years of reform and opening up, adult institutions of higher learning turned out as many as 9,242,100 graduates at university and short-cycle college levels[43].

Although the diplomas are officially supposed to be equivalent to those offered by formal universities, which require their students to complete four years of training, the

[42] China Education Yearbook 2002, Beijing
[43] "An overview of the Chinese higher education"
http://www.moe.edu.cn/edoas/website18/80/info4180.htm

comparison represents a flawed sense of accomplishment given the disparate academic background of the two student population groups[44].

The Chinese government pays attention to the development of adult higher education continuously. The law, which was formulated in December 2002,[45] gives private schools and universities the same legal status as public institutions and guarantees their autonomy. It also stipulates the evaluation procedures and legal guidelines that private institutions must follow. The legislation represents the official recognition that private institutions serve the public interests. Private institutions will be expected to grow more quickly, account for an ever-larger proportion of higher education enrollments, and play an increasingly significant role in Chinese higher education.

1.4. International exchange of Chinese higher education

As a matter of fact, it has been more than 100 years since China began to send its students and scholars to study abroad. After the restoration of the NCEE in 1977, the work related to students and scholars studying abroad has seen rapid developments and is now regarded as a window for China's reform and opening up as well as for the cultural exchanges between China and other countries[46]. It is one of the ways in which China cooperates with the whole world, and Chinese universities and colleges have to cooperate with international colleagues in order to develop rapidly and to become world-class universities and colleges.

As knowledge-based institutions, universities play a critical role in a country's economic growth and social development. The Chinese government has, therefore, formulated policies not only to expand the higher education system but also to upgrade the quality of the leading national universities to world-class status. Increased

[44] Yu, B., and Xu, H.Y. "Adult Higher Education: A Case Study of a Workers' College in The People's Republic of China", Paris: IIEP, 1988

[45] Gu, Binglin, "Chinese Universities: Present and future", Tsinghua University, Beijing, China, June 2004

[46] "Work Related to Students and Scholars Studying Abroad" http://www.moe.edu.cn/edoas/website18/en/international_2.htm

funding was allocated to selected universities[47], Peking University, for example, has established intercollegiate cooperative relations with more than 200 universities and research institutions in 49 countries and regions in the world[48].

Today, China has established educational relationships with countries across Europe, Central, North and South America, Oceania, Africa and the rest of Asia. Agreements on mutual recognition of academic degrees have been signed between China and, e.g., Germany, the UK, France and New Zealand. In the meanwhile, international educational cooperation agreements and memoranda of understanding on educational cooperation have been signed with, e.g., the USA, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand[49].

The exchange of the students and scholars plays a significant role for international communication. As of 2002, approximately 450,000 students and scholars have gone to study abroad in the past 20 years, more and more international academic exchange programs and joint research programs have been set up, and numerous international education conferences and workshops are held each year in China. Some new subjects have now become very popular at Chinese universities following the development of information technology— especially computer networks— such as International Studies, Foreign Languages, International Relations, International Economics, International Business, International Politics, History, and International law. At the same time, more and more international students are coming to study in China[50]. According to statistics from the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), China sends more students than any other country to study abroad. In the other direction, more students from the United States and elsewhere are

[47] Ding, Xiaohao, "An examination on higher education equalities in China", Beijing University, 2003

[48] http://www.oir.pku.edu.cn/newoir/coop/index.asp

[49] Brandenburg, Uwe, and Zhu, Jiani, "Higher education in China in the light of massification and demographic change", CHE Centrum für Hochschulentwicklung GmbH, 10, 2007

[50] Min, Weifang, "Historical Perspectives and Contemporary Challenges: The Case of Chinese Universities" http://www.tc.columbia.edu/centers/coce/detail.asp?Id=Publications&Info=%28C%29+Research+on+Higher-Education+Development

going to China to study language, culture, history, traditional Chinese medicine, science, engineering, and other fields. The increasing number of international students worldwide demonstrates a relatively quick change in the integration of the global education[51].

Another way of communicating with the world is to encourage foreign universities to be partner universities with a Chinese counterpart, and the Chinese government has already made some progress on it. Chinese universities tour Asian countries to promote study at their institutions. China is active and aggressive about becoming a major player in international education. It recognizes that huge sums of money leave the country when students go abroad, and it is keen to tip that trade balance in its favor. Recently, seventeen Chinese universities from the Jiangsu province went to Vietnam, Singapore and Malaysia in search of education links and opportunities for student exchanges. Besides this action, some foreign universities are allowed to build their campus in China— the University of Nottingham is one of them. Of course, the students are Chinese. In September 2004, the University of Nottingham, Ningbo, China (UNNC) began its first intake of students. The school is a branch of the United Kingdom's Nottingham University and is China's first joint-venture university with an independent campus. There are, however, more than 700 foreign-affiliated colleges in Mainland China. At UNNC, all students are required to speak only English during study and even while socializing[52].

Supported by both the central government and the Ministry of Education, Chinese universities spend billions of dollars to attract top foreign-educated and overseas-born Chinese, building cutting-edge research centers, partnering with the world's best educational institutions, and developing new programs taught in the international lingua franca: English. For example, in 2004, the international department of Beijing Normal University received some 16 million Yuan annually. The positions are open to

[51] Duan, Xinran, "Chinese education enters a new era" http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/pubsres/academe/2003/ND/Feat/duan.htm

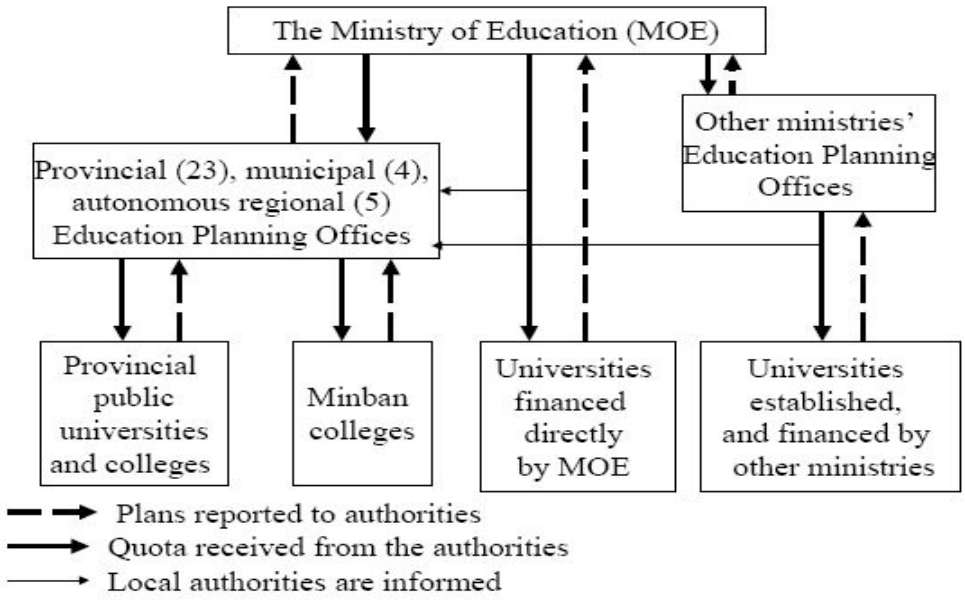
[52] Pallavi, Aiyar, "China hunts abroad for academic talent", http://www.atimes.com/atimes/China_Business

all nationalities, although cultural affinities and language requirements have meant that so far only ethnic Chinese have been recruited by Beijing Normal University as full-time staff. They hope to get a more international academic mix in the future[53].

1.5. Characteristics of Chinese higher education

1.5.1. Hierarchical structure of higher education

Figure 1.4 The planning system of Chinese higher education recruitment



(Source: Huang, Lihong, "Elitism and Equality in Chinese Higher Education", Institute of International Education, Stockholm University, 2005)

The above figure (Figure 1.4) displays that recruitment priority influences the positions of universities and colleges by allocating students from the top down, to the three levels of institutes: the institutes under the Ministry of Education, the institutions under the local government as well as the institutes under other ministries. Among them, the institutes under the Ministry of Education have priority to admit students with the highest scores on the NCEE. The figure demonstrates that first of all, the Ministry of Education (MOE) has authority to manage all kinds of Education Planning Offices (EPO) and higher education institutes. Secondly, EPOs are in charge

[53] Pallavi, Aiyar, "China hunts abroad for academic talent"
http://www.atimes.com/atimes/China_Business

of the provincial public universities and colleges as well as the Minban colleges. Each year, such universities and colleges have to report to an EPO about their plans regarding the number of students who will be recruited or how many teachers they will employ, and then the EPO will apply for financial support from the MOE. The MOE will allocate investment to different EPOs based on their data, and at last the EPOs will distribute it to universities and colleges.

To tell the truth, the access to higher education, namely the National College Entrance Examination, shows the hierarchy. The NCEE scores serve an additional purpose within the hierarchically structured higher education system by allocating students to different institutions. The level of an institute and its quality are two of the important elements. Moreover, an institution's ranking will determine the type and number of students it recruits. To be on the list of jurisdictions under the Ministry of Education means that an institution will be able to recruit students of a higher standard as measured by the scores on the National College Entrance Examinations. Institutes under the MOE (Ministry of Education) also have less regional restrictions and can recruit students from across the country, whereas most institutes under a provincial EPO can only recruit students in certain provinces. In the institutes under the MOE, top students help the institute gain higher status and better funding, thus producing better quality graduates recognized by the enterprises and organizations in society. Furthermore, in the eyes of the students and their parents, entrance into a Ministry of Education university ensures a good opportunity in the labor market upon graduation.

A hierarchical system has divided universities into elite and non-elite, which categorize students as elite and non-elite although, in a sense, they are all an elite within the nation[54].

Hierarchy exists not only among the universities, but also within an institute or a

[54] Huang, Lihong, "Elitism and Equality in Chinese Higher Education", Institute of International Education, Stockholm University, 2005

department as well. Sometimes such hierarchy can be seen as an "unfair" phenomenon. For example, in China, to be nominated as supervisor of PhD students is something very special and is the highest ranking a university teacher can attain[55]. To be a supervisor means to have control over academic work, although some of them are not PhD holders themselves and may not be qualified to develop research projects and guide students in their dissertations. In contrast, most of the young teachers who hold their own PhDs have not been given the title of supervisor. They are therefore obliged to submit to the authority of the older, titled supervisors. Similar academic hegemony may emerge among students or peer groups. This situation somehow blocks the improvement of the department, the universities, and may influence the academic qualification.

During the process of a university's development, some problems merge as well. The qualification of postgraduates is one of them. In China, postgraduate education currently lacks quality control. According to Professor Yang Fujia, former president of the prestigious Fudan University in Shanghai and current Chancellor of the University of Nottingham in the UK[56], some supervisors guarantee that they can all graduate after three years and they do not challenge their students by giving them difficult subjects. This means that although numbers of postgraduates merge every year, their quality is not effectively guaranteed. Another issue that baffles Professor Yang is the quest for the almighty Doctorate. He believes that certain professions and areas of practice, such as enterprise management, require practical working experience more than paper qualifications; however, the reality is that many first-class experts in their field believe that they would not be able to survive in their sector without a Doctorate degree.

1.5.2. The proportion of the colleges students

In China, the distribution of higher education opportunities and public investment

[55] Shen Hong, "Academic freedom and academic duty in Chinese universities", Huayhong University of Science and Technology, Wuhan, 2005

[56] http://english.hanban.edu.cn/english/education/196025.htm

in higher education used to be very unequal among different social groups. These inequities have lessened with the economic reforms and the development and expansion of higher education enrollments. For example, according to the 1991 City and Township Household Survey, college-age young people from the poorest 20 percent of households accounted for only 2.3 percent of higher education enrollments in China, while those from the richest 20 percent of households accounted for 55.6 percent of higher education enrollments. The enrollment rate for the highest-income families was 24 times higher than that of the lowest-income families. During the 1990s, access patterns changed for the better. In 2000, college-age young people from the poorest 20 percent of households accounted for 9.5 percent of total higher education enrollments in China, a significant increase from 10 years earlier. Students from the richest 20 percent of households accounted for 30.1 percent of higher education enrollments, a 25.8 percent reduction since 1991. In 2001, female students accounted for 42 percent of total enrollments, a higher percentage than before[57].

The improved access is one result of the expansion of higher education, as well as the introduction of financial aid programs for students from low-income families. For example, in 2002, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Finance initiated a new national scholarship program with an annual allocation of 200 million Yuan (approximately U.S. $25 million) that provides outstanding students from low-income families with stipends for living expenses. The program also stipulates that scholarship recipients should receive tuition exemptions from their universities.

It should be noted that although access to higher education has improved to a certain extent, it remains a serious challenge for China. As previously stated, in the year 2000 the enrollment rate for the 20 percent of highest-income families was still three times higher than that for the lowest-income families. How to balance the gap between them is still a problem. Furthermore, since the higher education system is becoming increasingly differentiated, more college-age young people from higher-income families are likely to attend the leading national universities than those from

[57] Ding, Xiaohao, “An examination on higher education equalities in China”, Beijing University, 2003

lower-income families, which creates equity issues within the system. This is another kind of access issue that China will need to tackle in the near future.

1.5.3. Information technology in higher education

Today, information technology challenges the traditional means of knowledge everywhere in the world, and China is no exception. The use of information technology in Chinese higher education came relatively late. The reform of Chinese education started in the early 1990s, and from then on the importance of information technology was stressed. One example is the so called "211" project, which means that in the 21st century, 100 top-level higher education institutions and key disciplines will be selected in China. In addition, the government will invest in some other important subjects. The project includes: 1) Updating and improving the China Education Research Network (CERNET), Chinese Education TV and campus networks in West China; and 2) Setting out a research project on the key technology in modern distance education. The project has formed a material and technical basis for the development of distance education in Chinese universities and colleges. Sixty-eight higher education institutions have engaged in distance education and enrolled 2.3 million students online[58]. During 1998-2003, the government invested over 500 million Yuan RMB in the project[59]. It is also expected that most of the Project 211 universities will be able to enhance their own performance, physical conditions and competence of staff.

The CERNET, funded by the Chinese government and directly managed by the Chinese Ministry of Education, is the first nationwide education and research computer network. The main objective of the network is to establish a nationwide education and research network infrastructure to support education and research in and among universities, institutes and schools in China by using up-to-date telecommunication and computer technologies. By the end of 2004, it had completed

[58] Zhang, Y., The Reflection Upon China's Online Higher Education Academy, China Distance Education (Media), 8, pp. 18-22, 2004
[59] www.moe.edu.cn

a 30,000 km high-speed transmission link crossing 31 provinces and serving more than 200 cities[60].

The *National Survey of ICT in Chinese Education 2004* (Graduate School of Education of Peking University, 2004) shows that in terms of the infrastructure development in higher education institutions, 96.5 percent of higher education institutions have developed campus networks. Thirteen percent of institutions have even developed Wireless Local Area Networks. In the universities and colleges investigated, 76.6 percent of faculty offices, 48.2 percent of classrooms and 49.4 percent of student dormitories have connections to the Internet. Regarding classrooms, 31.2 percent are equipped with fixed projectors.

Higher education institutions have also equipped computers for individual faculty members, administrative staff members and students, but with a wide variation. The survey shows that 35.4 percent of faculty members and 43.5 percent of administrative staff members have their own computer; 48.5 percent of faculty members, 45.8 percent of administrative staff members and 34.4 percent of students share one computer between 2-5 persons; and 35.9 percent of students share one computer among 6-10 persons.

The survey also shows that 100 percent of higher education institutions have developed their own websites. Websites have become the most important way of disseminating messages, retrieving information and communicating among institutional members, including students[61].

1.5.4. The restructuring of the higher education

This is actually not a new topic of higher education in China. As early as 1986, the first cross-institute consortium was set up in Beijing, which has the largest number of institutions as a municipality in China. The consortium was composed of eight higher education institutions with a total enrollment of 47,000 students and fixed assets of

[60] Cai, Yuzhou, and Guo, Wenge "Responses of Chinese Higher Education to the Information Society", University of Tampere, Finland, Peking University, China, 2006

[61] Cai, Yuzhou, and Guo, Wenge "Responses of Chinese Higher Education to the Information Society", University of Tampere, Finland, Peking University, China, 2006

0.6 billion RMB. The eight institutions set up close cooperative relations in a number of areas, including open access to laboratories, libraries and lecture halls, exchanging academic staff and teaching materials, cooperation in research and joint-training staff[62]. In late 1992 and early 1993, the Central Government proposed a new round of reform in higher education by concentrating on higher education management. As a part of the reform, consolidation and cross-institute cooperation were highly recommended by the government as a means of optimization of resources[63]. The effects of this reform have been seen in 2 years. According to the statistical information, in 1995 more than 70 institutions in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou got involved in institutional mergers, among which 42 institutions consolidated, and about 100 joined in cross-institute consortiums. One advantage of the consolidation is that the enrollment rate can be increased. For example, in Shanghai in 1995, more than 140,000 students studied in 45 higher education institutes, making the average enrollment for each institution 3120 students. Following this reform, they were consolidated into 30 institutes with an average enrollment of over 4680 students. The capacity of enrollment of each institution increased 50 percent[64].

In September 1998, Zhejiang University combined three other universities—Hangzhou, Zhejiang Agricultural, and Zhejiang Medical Universities—becoming one of the largest and most comprehensive institutes of higher education in the country. The second largest merger in the country was that of Beijing University and Beijing Medical University. In April 2000, a merger of Xi'an Jiaotong University, Xi'an Medical University, and Shaanxi Institute of Finance and Economics (formerly administered by the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Public Health, and the People's Bank of China) was announced as the new Xi'an Jiaotong University. Other mergers include the restructured Huazhong University of Science and Technology and Central South, Fudan, Jilin, Shandong, Sichuan, Southeast, Tongji, Tsinghua, Zhongshan, and Wuhan Universities. Official statistics show that from 1996 to 2000,

[62] Zhao, Fang, "A Remarkable Move of Restructuring: Chinese Higher Education", University of Western Sydney, Australia, Feb, 5,1998. Vol. 6. Nr. 5
[63] China Education Newspaper, 1995, July 12
[64] China Education Newspaper, 1995, December 4

387 colleges and universities were consolidated into 212[65].

However, some problems emerged following the consolidation and cross-institute consortiums, which can be summarized as[66]:

1) Lack of a powerful central administration with clearly defined roles and responsibilities to ensure cooperation plans were enforced;
2) Lack of materialized support rather than the rhetoric of approval from the government agencies that administered the participating institutions to inject sufficient funds into the consolidation;
3) Pre-occupation with quick economic returns from consolidation;
4) Fears of losing jobs because of the potential redundancy caused by consolidation;
5) Concern about losing institutional status and consumption of time in consolidation processes.

1.6. The future development of Chinese higher education

The development of Chinese higher education is strongly related to the social and economical development. In a marketing-oriented economy, higher education institutes should keep in touch with society closely in order to adapt to the development of society and at the same time to help society develop. As it is known, in China today, colleges are located all over the country, but besides aiming at increasing educational levels and extending educational opportunity, they should also focus on training all kinds of intellectuals to work towards social development[67]. Each college should have its own characteristics based on its local resources. Colleges are, overall, the most top-level higher education agencies in local areas. Therefore, they have to not only to be a medium of transmitting knowledge but also to contribute to the cultural environment in those areas.

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[65] Duan, Xinran, "Chinese education enters a new era", http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/pubsres/academe/2003/ND/Feat/duan.htm

[66] Zhao, Fang, "A Remarkable Move of Restructuring: Chinese Higher Education", University of Western Sydney, Australia, Feb, 5,1998. Vol. 6. Nr. 5

[67] Imhe, "Current Issues in Chinese Higher Education", Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Paris, 2000

Globally, more and more universities wish to be independent from the government, and Chinese universities are no exception. However, they need the governmental support as well. This means that the government should pass legislation in order to clarify the rights and responsibilities of colleges. At the same time, financial support from the government is also necessary. If the government and the public were to realize the importance of financial supports and the necessary measures were taken, scholars would not find it necessary to use their abilities and time in off-campus employment. They are misusing their freedom, which will inevitably lower standards within the universities[68].

Academic freedom should also be noticed in current China. Some academic committees do exist but they have limited rights. Some directors have power but are lacking an academic background. For instance, a professor without an administrative title is free to teach and conduct research, but has no influence in the policy-making of the institution since administrators do not agree with his ideas or they disregard ideas coming from their subordinates. However, professors with academic titles have more rights, power and freedom. They can obtain research funding more easily, for instance. According to Shen[69], the scholars are free to submit their research projects to appropriate bodies but the network of personal relations influences even the peer reviews and approval procedures, except in some of the large national institutions. Therefore there is no real freedom for projects.

[68] Shen, Hong, "Academic freedom and academic duty in Chinese universities", Huazhong University of Science and Technology, Wuhan

[69] Shen, Hong, "Academic freedom and academic duty in Chinese universities", Huazhong University of Science and Technology, Wuhan

Chapter 2 Male and female students in Chinese higher education

The first few years after the Cultural Revolution were officially characterized as a move to 'turn the chaos back to correctness'. The goal was to restore the political, economic and educational systems back to the state that existed in the 1950s, and the strategic focus of national policies was switched from class struggle to economic development. Education was to serve the purpose of national modernization and discrimination against those with politically incorrect backgrounds—particularly intellectuals— was discontinued in the admission policies and procedures of higher education institutions. Professors and teachers were called back to schools from wherever they had been assigned for hard labor and many universities were restored or reopened. The extreme shortage of specialized talents demanded an accelerated development of higher education and significant increase in enrollment. By 1985, the number of higher education institutions had doubled and enrollments had tripled[70].

2.1. Some statistical data about Chinese students today

Table 2.1 Cumulative Frequency Distribution of Institutes by Size of Enrollments in China: 1978-1990[71]

Year	1 or more %	301 or more %	501 or more %	1001 or more %	1501 or more %	2001 or more %	3001 or more %	4001 or more %	5001 or more %	Median enrollment
1990	100	94.6	87.4	66.7	45.4	31.8	15.8	9.3	6.6	1393
1986	100	90.6	81.6	58.8	39.5	27	14.4	9.2	6.2	1229
1982	100	91.6	81.9	50.9	33	21.8	10.9	5.4	1.8	1026
1978	100	83.4	71	41.9	25.5	15.1	6.4	1.7	0.7	862

(Sources: Adapted from the State Education Commission (SED) and the Ministry of Education, (1984-1991))

[70] Huang, Lihong, "Elitism and Equality in Chinese Higher Education", Institute of International Education, Stockholm University, 2005

[71] Zhao, Fang, "A Remarkable Move of Restructuring: Chinese Higher Education", University of Western Sydney, Australia, Feb, 5,1998. Vol. 6. Nr. 5

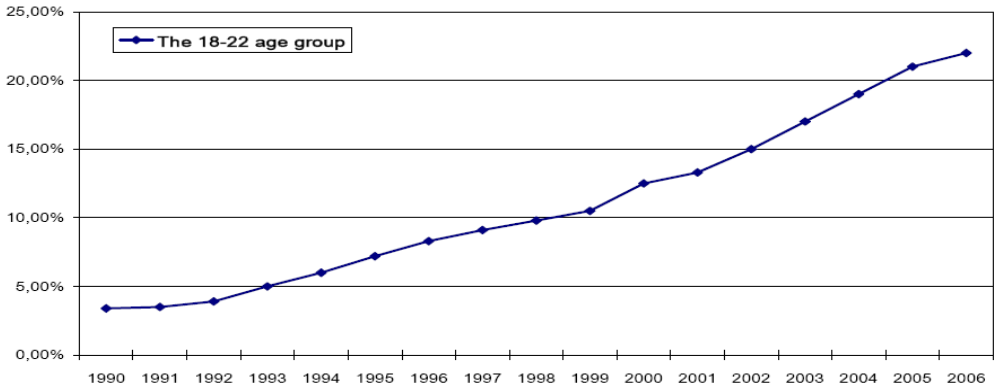
This table displays a clear trend of development towards bigger institutes. In 1978, only 0.7 percent of institutes had an enrollment of more than 5,000 students, but in 1990, the number of such institutes rose to 6.6 percent. In 1978, 83.4 percent of institutes had more than 300 students and the number reached 94.6 percent in 1990. At the same time, the median enrollment was only 862 students in 1978 and became 1393 in 1990, an increase of 61.9 percent. Despite the increase, only about 15.8 percent of institutes had more than 3,000 students in 1990, and much fewer prior to 1986.

In 1986, in order to restrain the extremely fast growth in institutes and improve the quality of higher education, the State Council circulated the Provisional Regulations on Establishing Higher Education Institutions, and revoked the accreditation of higher education by local governments. In 1988, the State Education Commission issued another policy paper to reinforce the quality standard on higher education institutions set by the State Council in 1986[72].

Since 1986, the emphasis on the expansion of higher education began to be shifted from setting up new institutions to adjustment of the structure of existing institutions. Confronting serious tensions raised in the first seven years of expansion, such as growth versus quality and expansion versus cost-effectiveness, the central government also sent a clear message to the higher education sector that no encouragement would be made to build new institutions in the next five years, and that expansion of enrollments was to be achieved through tapping the existing resources and extending the existing institutions. Under the guideline of this policy proposal, the exuberant growth of institutions was eased and a trend towards larger institutions began to take shape[73].

Figure 2.1 The Enrollment Rate of Chinese Higher Education (1990-2006)

[72] China Education Newspaper, 08.10.1991
[73] Zhao, Fang, "A Remarkable Move of Restructuring: Chinese Higher Education", University of Western Sydney, Australia, Feb, 5,1998. Vol. 6. Nr. 5



(Source: Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, Age Group 2007)

After 1985, because of the acceleration of the social development and the improved awareness of knowledge, the enrollment rate increased year by year.

Figure 2.1 shows that in 1990, less than 4 percent of the age group of 18- to 22-year olds enrolled as students in higher education institutions compared to 22 percent in 2005, an 18 percent increase within 15 years. The total number of students in 2005 exceeded 23 million[74].

However, the popularization of Chinese higher education becomes a hot topic in China recently. "Whether the popularization of higher education declines the quality of Chinese higher education or not" is one of the most serious criticisms[75], although this kind of criticism is mostly based on personal feelings rather than empirical evidence. As a matter of fact, there is no doubt that popularization has changed the old structure of Chinese higher education very much, and at the same time brought significant innovations. One of these innovations is that popularization optimizes the structure of different disciplines in the Chinese higher education system. In 1998, the number of science students was far higher than that of humanities students; the proportion is 1.64:1. However, in 2004, the proportion became 1.07:1. This can be seen as a significant structural change in the process of popularization; the number of undergraduates in 1998 was 2.23 million, and it increased 3.3 times (7.36 million) in

[74] Bie, Dunrong, "Higher Education in Asia in the 21st Century: Reality and Prospects", presentation on the Salzburg Seminars, Salzburg 2006

[75] Xie, Weihe, "Reform and Innovative Construction in the structure of Chinese Higher Education", Tsinghua University, 2004

2004.

According to a three-month survey by Xinhua news agency[76], more than 50 percent of Chinese people are “very satisfied” or “relatively satisfied” with the country's education standard. 5,049 people were chosen from 10 cities, 7 towns and 8 rural areas across the country. Each questionnaire contained 16 questions with five possible answers: very satisfied, relatively satisfied, neutral, dissatisfied and very dissatisfied.

The overall result was “relatively satisfied” and “neutral”. Some 57.4 percent of correspondents were positive about the education standards while 12.6 percent were negative.

The survey represented that most Chinese people were satisfied with the country's promotion of nine-year compulsory education in rural areas and reforms of textbooks, curricula, etc. whereas high college tuition fees caused the most dissatisfaction.

In 2001, the Ministry of Education abolished the limitations based on marital status and age for the National College Entrance Examination since it was restored in 1977. Before this reform, candidates who were older than twenty-five and married could not be permitted to take part in the examination. This significant change opened opportunities for adults to enter common universities and colleges. It has been reported that people in their fifties, and even their sixties, have been allowed to take the National College Entrance Examination, and some have ultimately been admitted to college[77].

The motivation to go to universities of almost all students is the utility value of higher education, i.e. improving social standing and getting a good job. Personal enjoyment and parental pressure have also influenced the students’ decision to attend higher education.

Statistics indicate that the number of university students in China has increased rapidly in recent years, from 1.08 million in 1998 to over 17 million in 2003. As the

[76] http://www.tech.net.cn/en/ne/14805.shtml
[77] Duan, Xinran, “Chinese education enters a new era”, http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/pubsres/academe/2003/ND/Feat/duan.htm

country continues to enlarge its recruitment for higher education, the figure will keep growing[78].

In China, women enjoy the same rights as men to receive education, including higher education. However, in present-day China, the educational level of women is generally lower than men's. According to the survey in 2003 by Meilande Co., among the population between the ages of 18 to 60 in 31 provinces, 63.5 percent of all females had the education under secondary high school, compared with 56.3 percent of males[79]. This means that the higher the educational level is, the lower the proportion of female to male students. Some solutions are suggested to overcome this fact, which today is diagnosed as a problem:

(1). The basic education of females should be ensured, especially in countryside. The secondary high school belongs not to the compulsory education, and people must pay tuition. However, in some poor villages, peasants cannot afford the costs for all the children in a family, and the boys have more chance than their sisters to go to secondary high school because of the conventional idea against women. Hence, the educational laws should be ameliorated to guarantee the girls' proportion to be the same as the boys' in secondary high school, and the local government should investigate the educational situation regularly.[80]

(2). Women employees should be encouraged to receive adult education or higher education in order to improve their educational levels and their awareness of participating politics. At the same time, women's adult education is a significant condition to gain equality and it can help women achieve their emancipation thoroughly. Women with high educational levels have a strong emotion to break away from the conventional awareness against women; they have their own

[78] China Education Yearbook 2004, Beijing

[79] Zhu, Pingyan, "Investigation of the Positive Correlation between Women's Educational Level and their Political Participation", Wuhan, China, 2002

[80] "Basic education in China at present" http://hi.baidu.com/%E9%A3%8E%E5%8A%A8%E4%BA%91%E9%A3%9E/blog/item/1b5b443dad67d0ee3c6d97f6.html

opinions and they pursue equality between women and men.[81]

Following the changes of people's ideas about education, the percentage of women's enrollment in university increases step by step. For example, it raised from 35.4 percent in 1995 to 44 percent in 2002; in 2003 it reached 45 percent; in 2004 and 2005 the proportions were around 47 percent; in 2006 and 2007 it kept increasing and in 2007 it reached 49 percent [82], almost the same as the percentage of male students. At the same time, in 2004, the percentages of female postgraduate and doctoral students were 44.2 percent and 31.4 percent, 13.6 percent and 15.9 percent, respectively, higher than the figures for 1995[83].

Based on two surveys by Wen and his colleagues in 1998 and 2003[84], the gender differences of higher education opportunity, school work achievement, graduate employment and their tendencies in China were analyzed, and it was found that there were no significant differences in school work achievements and starting salary but a notable inequality in both higher education and employment opportunities between genders.

2.2. The socio-economic background of the students

Domestic consumption is the most important factor in supporting the country's economic development, and university students play a key role in this. On the one hand, university students affect consumption trends in the domestic market; on the other hand, they are potentially big consumers after their graduation. In the near future they will possibly become the highest purchasing power. According to a survey

[81] "Women adult education in China "
http://www.lw23.com/paper_140374441_2/

[82] "Number of students in regular HEIs by field of Study"
http://www.moe.gov.cn/edoas/website18/level3.jsp?tablename=1249610459599815&infoid=1249434091393239&title=%C6%D5%CD%A8%B1%BE%A1%A2%D7%A8%BF%C6%B7%D6%D1%A7%BF%C6%D1%A7%C9%FA%CA%FD

[83] "China publishes Gender Equality white paper"
http://www.china.org.cn/english/2005/Aug/139404.htm

[84] Wen, Dongmao, "A Comparative Study on the Gender Differences of Higher Education Opportunity"
http://www.tc.columbia.edu/centers/coce/pdf_files/c10.pdf

in 2007 by Sinomonitor[85], a Sino-Japanese independent market monitoring company, the average disposable income for current Chinese undergraduates is 4,919 Yuan (490€) per semester, of which 44% is from family funds, 17.4% is from grants and loans, and 10% earned by themselves. Most students are reasonable about their consumption. About 67% of those surveyed could make ends meet, while 22.4% were able to have some savings in the bank.

In the survey by Huang[86], she uses 4 categories to analyze the students' socio-economic background: home social status; home economic status; community socio-economic environment and home environment. At the same time, gender and ethnicity are also included in the analysis as control variables. Her survey was conducted in southwest China in December 2002, and included three provinces (Guizhou Province, Sichuan Province and Yunnan Province), one municipality (Chongqing Municipality) and one autonomous region (Guangxi Zhuang Minority Autonomous Region). She chose southwest China as her sample because on the one hand, there is a vast mountainous area with the majority of the population engaged in rudimentary agriculture; on the other hand, it has a few big cities that are as modern as the big cities in the rich East.

She summarizes four financing resources of the students, including "Family", "Borrowed money", "Financial assistance" as well as "Self working and/or saving". In her survey, she chose six universities in three provinces in southwest China as examples. The table below shows us the results:

[85] http://www.atimes.com/atimes/China/

[86] Huang, Lihong, "Elitism and Equality in Chinese Higher Education", Institute of International Education, Stockholm University, 2005

Table 2.2 Proportions of each financing resource utilized to pay for different costs (%)

Sources	Tuition fees	Living costs	For both costs	N of cases
Family	93.4	98.3	91.1	97.7
Borrowed money	12.6	7.1	6.4	14.5
Financial assistance	12.9	21.3	15.1	32.5
Self working and/or saving	6.1	17.9	5.7	20.6

(Source: Huang, Lihong, "Elitism and Equality in Chinese Higher Education", Institute of International Education, Stockholm University, 2005, p114)

From this table, we can see that in order to pay tuition fees, 93.4 percent of students were supported by their families; 12.6 percent of students and/or their families borrowed money; 12.9 percent received some kind of financial assistance, such as student loans or scholarship; and the final 6.1 percent had part-time jobs and/or they saved money to pay the tuition fees.

In 1998, the average tuition among higher educational institutions was 3,613 Yuan (approximately 370 €) and the average cost for a dormitory was 935 Yuan (approximately 94 €). The sum reached 24.6 percent of the GDP in Beijing per capita, and 71.2 percent of GDP in China per capita. To compare to the USA, the sum of these two costs occupied only 33 percent of the GNP per capita in the same year[87]. In 1999, the percentage of tuition to GDP per capita reached 42.4 percent, and the percentage of tuition to disposal income per urban resident was 47.3 percent, while the percentage to net income per rural resident exceeded 100 percent and reached 125.3 percent. The decision-makers need to consider students and their families' willingness and ability to pay for higher education when making the decision to increase tuition and boarding charges[88].

From the table (Table 2.2) we can also see that of all the sources, family is still the biggest source to finance students in southwest China, whereas financial assistance is

[87] Digest of Education Statistics 1999 Table 317. U.S. Department of Education

[88] Li, Wenli, and Min, Weifang, "Tuition, private demand and higher education in China", Graduate School of education, Peking University, Beijing, January 2001

the second largest source. Among various forms of financial assistance, the student loan program is the most popular one. According to Huang's paper, at present in China, the traditional negative attitude towards debt has changed, especially among university students who are from poor families or rural areas; they exhibit their confidence to repay loans in the future, and they do not think that taking a loan is an embarrassment, although they admit that they have pressure with the debts.

Of course, the students with better-educated parents and a good family economy have better economic conditions in universities. Those who are from higher socioeconomic strata are less likely to borrow money or need external financial assistance. The comparatively small contributions made by students' part-time jobs and savings to their education costs show very minor negative correlations with their socioeconomic backgrounds.

Other sociologists did the same research as well. According to Li and Min[89] in December 1999 in Beijing, they found that the 1) types of higher education, 2) types of majors, 3) in which year they are, as well as 4) the family income, are the 4 main elements that influence the private educational costs. The same conclusion was made as Huang's survey in southwest China: family is the biggest source for the students during their study in universities. At the same time, Li and Min summarized that following the increased tuition fees, the students' willingness to pay for the study become weak. The samples in this survey are students from 3 universities, 8 vocational schools, as well as 3 private higher education institutions in Beijing. 4,000 questionnaires were distributed to the sample students, of which 3,838 were returned. The questionnaire includes information such as:

(1) the student's personal information: sex, subjects, in which academic year

(2) the student's social and economic background: home location (rural or urban area), family income, the educational level of parents, father's vocation

[89] Li, Wenli, and Min, Weifang, "A Study on Willingness to Pay for Higher Education: From College Student Survey", Paper submitted to the Annual Meeting of Economics of Education, Beijing, 11. 2000b

(3) the private costs during the study: tuition fees, living costs, transportation costs

(4) the financial resources of the students: loan program, scholarship, part-time job, family support, and assistance from relatives or society

The results from "type of institutions" in Li and Min's survey indicate that the private institutions have higher living costs than public institutions. For example, the students in private institutions have to rent a room off campus with high costs, and the students who enroll in public institutions can have a dormitory on campus with low costs. The students in senior vocational schools have to pay the highest tuition fees and living costs.

The students from urban areas pay more than those from rural areas, although they obtain less assistance than their counterparts. Among all types of assistance, family support is the biggest source.

According to this survey[90], nearly 82 percent of financial assistance for a student is from his/her family, especially for the vocational school students, whose financial assistance from family reaches 94 percent. For students of public institutions, it is 76 percent, compared with 76 percent for private students.

The results of the analysis on willingness to pay indicate that when the tuition increases, the willingness to pay for higher education becomes weaker. When tuition is 3,000 Yuan and below, there is no significant difference in willingness to pay for higher education across different income brackets. However, when tuition reaches 4,000 Yuan, it appears that there is a significant difference in willingness to pay among different income brackets, and higher-income students have stronger willingness to pay than their schoolmates from lower-income families. When tuition is at the range of 4,000 to 6,000 Yuan, there is not a great difference in willingness to pay among the different income brackets. When tuition reaches and exceeds 6,000 Yuan, the difference in willingness to pay among different income brackets becomes larger and larger.

[90] Li, Wenli, and Min, Weifang, "A Study on Willingness to Pay for Higher Education: From College Student Survey", Paper submitted to the Annual Meeting of Economics of Education, Beijing, 11. 2000b

Family background, including parental education and family financial resources, has a significant impact on the private demand for higher education. Expected returns to higher education have a positive influence on the private demand, while private costs have a negative impact upon individuals' decisions to attend higher education institutions. Based on the results from another survey by Li and Min[91], the cost elasticity of demand for higher education in urban China is 0.562, which means that a 1 percent increase in private costs would lead to a decline of 0.562 percent in private demand for higher education, ceteris paribus. Meanwhile, the cost elasticity of demand for higher education varies among different income groups. The poor are much more sensitive to changes in private cost than the rich.

Table 2.3 The proportion of the tuition fees in the total costs from 1996-1999

(Unit: RMB Yuan, %)

	Public University			Senior Vocational school			Private higher education		
Year	Total costs	Tuition fees	Rate of tuition fees in total costs	Total costs	Tuition fees	Rate of tuition fees in total costs	Total costs	Tuition fees	Rate of tuition fees in total costs
1999	9923	3274	33.0%	10841	6065	55.9%	9331	2469	26.5%
1998	9163	2824	30.8%	10968	5086	46.4%	11691	2930	25.1%
1997	7840	2314	29.5%				11805	2926	24.8%
1996	7552	1867	24.7%				12311	3080	25.0%
Aver-age costs	8620	2570	29.5%	10905	5576	51.2%	11285	2851	25.3%

(Source: Li, Wenli, and Min, Weifang, "A Study on Willingness to Pay for Higher Education: From College Student Survey", Paper submitted to the Annual Meeting of Economics of Education, Beijing, 11. 2000b)

[91] Li, Wenli, and Min, Weifang "Tuition, Private Demand and Higher Education in China", Graduate School of Education, Peking University, Beijing, January 2001

The above table (Table 2.3) shows that the proportion of tuition fees among total costs differentiate in different types of higher education. In senior vocational schools, the proportion was 51.2 percent, compared with 29.5 percent in public universities and 25.3 percent in private higher educational institutions. This means that the tuition fees of the students in senior vocational schools accounted for more than half of their total costs. This table also shows that the percentages of tuition fees kept increasing rapidly from 1996 to 1999. For those in public universities and senior vocational schools, especially in public universities, the tuition fees rose from 1,867 Yuan (approximately 190 €) in 1996 up to 3,274 Yuan (approximately 330 €) in 1999, an average increase of 469 Yuan (approximately 47 €) per year. On the contrary, the tuition fees in private higher education decreased year by year. Some reasons are as follows:

1. In order to attract more students from public higher education. The expansion of public higher education since 1999 affected the students' participation in private higher educational institutions. They have to decrease their tuitions in order to attract the students to study in their institutions.
2. To compete with other private higher educational institutions. Until 1997, the number of private higher education institutions reached 1,187[92]; the competition among them was very drastic.

2.3. The career aspiration among students and graduates

Every graduate hopes to find a good job after studying in university, and they have various career aspirations. Some of them want to work in the private sector, even though their parents work in a state-owned sector. Others choose to achieve higher degrees. But almost all of them want to fulfill their personal interests and capacity, and at the same time, the intrinsic values of jobs influence their career aspirations very deeply[93].

[92] China statistic yearbook 1998, Beijing
[93] Levin, Henry, and Xu, Zeyu, "Issues in the Expansion of Higher Education in the People's Republic of China", Teachers College, Columbia University, New York City, USA, Vol. 5, No. 11, 2005

In 2001, 1.15 million students graduated from higher education institutions in China, 0.49 million with college diplomas, 0.59 million with Bachelor's degrees, and 70 thousand with Master's degrees. The rate of immediate employment of new graduates with a Master's degree is 94 percent, compared to 83 percent of those with a Bachelor's degree, and roughly 55 percent for those with college diplomas. In addition, the rates of immediate employment of Bachelor graduates are different among the institutions under the three jurisdiction levels: 92 percent of those resorting under the MOE (i.e. the elite universities), 82 percent of those under central ministries and 75 percent of those under local governments[94]. Under such labor market conditions, studying abroad becomes an attractive option for career development after graduation in China. However, many ordinary Chinese families cannot afford the costs for it, although it is seen as a good way to lead to a successful career after returning. Returning students usually get relatively good rewards with positions and prestigious working and living conditions. For instance, in 1999, the government built 30 High-tech Enterprises Parks and returned overseas students set up over 500 high-tech enterprises. In over 90 institutes of the Chinese Academy of Science, 530 returned overseas students became leading researchers. Among them, 219 became directors of the institutes— equal to 53 percent of the directors. Among universities affiliated with the Ministry of Education, over 50 percent of university presidents are returned overseas students[95]. Returning students bring different technologies and cultures from abroad, and China can then learn from them and communicate with the opponents. China still continues sending and encouraging scholars to study abroad and return to their homeland after completing their studies. At present, more than 80,000 Chinese students go to study abroad privately each year and, more and more of them (12,243 in 2001) return to China after graduation[96].

Another survey by China's National Education Examinations Authority shows that in 2007, more than 80 percent of university students in China want to study abroad.

[94] China Education Yearbook 2002: 217
[95] Wang X., Education Week 2001
[96] China Education Yearbook 2002, Beijing

42 percent of respondents believe an overseas education will be beneficial to their future career development. The top 5 countries they want to go to are the United States, Great Britain, France, Australia and Canada. This means that the new Chinese young generations become much more open with the development of economy, technology, and global view. They hope to communicate with the whole world.

The students who study abroad can be divided into 2 parts due to the different financial assistances. One is the "public students", which means that the government pays for the study. They are supposed to make a contract with government, so that they go back after studying; otherwise, they have to return all costs, and in addition they must pay 30% more as a penalty. The other one is "private students", namely, they have to afford their costs themselves, but they can apply for scholarships. Nevertheless, whether public students or private students, they have the same expectation to study in foreign countries. If students are given the chance for a meaningful study and opportunities to gain an appreciation of the society, there will be less hatred and misunderstanding of our values and way of life.[97] Students can create global awareness and enhance their academic learning by studying abroad. In fact, "to create global awareness" is one of the main reasons why students hope to study abroad. Obviously, the Chinese government realizes it as well. They understand that they need to use education to advance tolerance and understanding. They suggest that the young generation must build on the open-mindedness of young people, and ensure that their minds remain open. They also encourage young students to study abroad, since they believe more than ever that international understanding is essential to world peace. It promotes understanding between faiths, between nations and between cultures. The students who study abroad will one day return to their countries and take on leadership positions.

Studying abroad can develop a broad understanding of the world, proficiency in other languages, and knowledge of other cultures. At the same time, people can enhance programs at their hometown's institutions that build international

[97] Goodman, Allan E., "Education in a Global Age", President and CEO. Institute of International Education. IIE February 8, 2001

partnerships and expertise; they could expand high-quality foreign language learning and in-depth knowledge of other cultures; they have to learn with foreign language at all levels, including efforts to achieve bi-literacy[98]. To be an educated person in the new millennium, one must have the new skills that come from exposure to other cultures and the understanding produced from the study of different societies and nations. Therefore, a new sensitivity and understanding is required[99]. Students with international exposure come to understand the value of dialogue between people from different cultures and between people with different points of view. They also gain an understanding of the importance of relationships. Relationships are the foundation for meaning and success in life.

However, when looking for the disadvantages of study abroad, different aspects should be noted. Experts mentioned that Chinese students often find it difficult to readjust to the Chinese society after often having lost their social bonds as well as having changed in behavior and attitudes. Even if this is not totally unknown to experiences of European or American students, the fact that many students coming back and entering the labor market or returning to the home university have to face worse treatment than local or foreign students is remarkable[100].

Since the world economy is facing a severe downturn, the overall pressure on employment is increasing day by day. The employment situation for college students is no longer as optimistic as before in China. As a consequence, their ideas about work change as well. At present, at several job markets for college students, many fresh graduates seem to favor the policy of "employment goes first, job selection second"[101]. Some of them are planning to accumulate work experiences, as well as money from this first job, and then they believe with a solid economic foundation and

[98] "The Plan of the Young teachers of Fudan University studying abroad" News Center. Fudan University. 05.2007

[99] "National Security and Internationalization," American Association of State Colleges and Universities AASCU.2002

[100] Brandenburg, Uwe, and Zhu, Jiani, "Higher Education in China, in the light of massification and demographic change", CHE Centrum für Hochschulentwicklung GmbH, 10, 2007

[101] "New challenges of College students' choices of a job" http://www.china.org.cn/english/2002/Jun/35359.htm

more mature recognition towards themselves, they would find a much better job in the future.

Facing employment pressure, most college students show their unique confidence and maturity. Most of them are advancing from the concept of a life-long job towards many jobs during their lifetime, because it is a far too romantic idea to find a life-long job after graduation from college.

Another change is the emergence of "SOHO" type of work. SOHO, the short form of "small office, home office"[102] represents the freelancers working right at home. This kind of employment is catching on among college students, since they believe that it can give them a free life. Most of the graduates who choose this type of work were born at the end of the 1970s, and many of them are single children in their families. Unburdened with the financial pressure from their families, they seldom put money making as their top priority; therefore, they can enjoy this kind of free employment.

2.4. Countryside students vs. City students

The "Compulsory Education Law of the People's Republic of China" states at Article 5 "All children who have reached the age of six shall enroll in school and receive compulsory education for the prescribed number of years, regardless of sex, nationality or race."[103] All principles express an effort to make higher education dependent on merit criteria rather than other criteria.

However, it is widely known that the equity of any educational system could hardly reach the point of having the same proportion represented in the school by each social group as their original proportion in the society at large, even when talent is equally distributed among the population.

First, seen from a sociological perspective, education as a public good is hierarchically organized from primary to higher levels. Even though it can be

[102] "New challenges of College students' choices of a job" http://www.china.org.cn/english/2002/Jun/35359.htm

[103] "Compulsory Education Law of the People's Republic of China" http://www.edu.cn/20050114/3126820.shtml

theoretically open to every person in a society, entry into higher education depends on personal will and choice, besides individual learning ability. Second, there are many political, social, economic and cultural factors that influence the decision of a person to enter a school and stay for many years. Third, learning ability differs from person to person, but it is an important criterion in terms of selection for higher education[104].

The inequality in Chinese higher education can be noticed from the enrollment of students from urban areas and those from rural areas. In metropolitan and thriving economic areas such as Beijing, Shanghai or Hong Kong, most students[105] who want to study can find a place. However, the opportunities for students from rural China are less extensive, so that the separation between cities and rural areas is a looming problem. According to a survey[106], more than 50% of the undergraduate students and two-thirds of the graduate students came from homes more than 500 kilometers away from the university at which they studied.

However, following the rapid development in rural areas, the situation now is already much better than before. Also based on the same research[107], the education gap between China's rural and urban populations has been improving in recent years with an obvious increase of female students receiving high education.

According to a 2003 survey made by the working group in colleges involving Tangshan College, North China Coal Medical College and Hebei Polytechnic College, the percentage of rural population accounted for 63.3 percent of the total students at school, 7.9 percent higher than in 2001[108]. This shows that the newly increased number of students from rural areas were mainly in local universities and colleges in recent years.

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[104] Huang, Lihong, “Elitism and Equality in Chinese Higher Education, Institute of International Education”, Stockholm University, 2005

[105] Brandenburg, Uwe, and Zhu, Jiani, “Higher Education in China, in the light of massification and demographic change”, CHE Centrum für Hochschulentwicklung GmbH, 10, 2007

[106] Jacob, W. James, “Social Justice in Chinese Higher Education: Regional Issues of Equity and Access”, International Review of Education, 2006

[107] Research into Equity Issues in Chinese Higher Education, 02, 2005

[108] Li, Wenli, and Min, Weifang, "Tuition, Private Demand and Higher Education in China"; Graduate School of education, Peking University, Beijing, 01, 2005.

From 1997 to 2001, the growth rate of the number of candidates applying for university entrance in rural areas surpassed that of candidates from urban areas. Nevertheless, in 2001, the number of candidates from urban areas surpassed that of rural areas for the first time in history. This displays that urban students mainly shared the expanded enrollment quotas. Since then the conditions had been improved, the number of candidates from urban areas increased 1.29 times in 2004, while the number of candidates from rural areas also increased 1.29 times, reaching the equal increase margin for both urban and rural areas when compared with that of 1998[109].

The participation of female rural students is a significant element of watching the education gap between city and countryside. The research[110] shows there is an obvious increase of female students receiving higher education. From 1998 to 2002, the number of female students in universities and colleges in China was doubled and the percentage of female students increased to 43.95 percent of the total students in school from 38.31 percent, or an average increase of one percent annually. At the same time, the proportions of female students in different degrees also increased with the fastest growth rate for female doctors. There was an increase of nearly 10 percent for female doctors during the four years. The number of female candidates applying for university enrollment was more than that of male candidates in areas including Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai and Xinjiang. As a result, more opportunities were offered to them for receiving higher education. Nevertheless, the percentage of females in higher education in rural areas is still lower than that of males. Based on Huang's survey[111] in 2005, among 6 universities in 3 provinces, women from rural areas make up only 22 percent of the female students in the sample, while men from rural areas represent 44 percent of the male students. This implies that the men's access to higher education is less influenced by their geographic origins than the women's access.

Parental educational attainment also influences the motivation of their children to

[109] Research into Equity Issues in Chinese Higher Education, 02, 2005
[110] Research into Equity Issues in Chinese Higher Education, 02, 2005
[111] Huang, Lihong, "Elitism and Equality in Chinese Higher Education", Institute of International Education, Stockholm University, 2005

achieve higher education between rural and urban students. Generally speaking, urban parents tend to have higher levels of education attainment than rural parents. Mothers tend to have less education than fathers in both rural and urban areas, but rural mothers are the most poorly educated group of all. Because of the lack of education, some parents in rural areas prevent their children to achieve high education, which may become one of the barriers for the development of rural areas.

This situation leads to the conflicts between urban and rural students. In fact, China is still basically an agrarian country where roughly 70 percent of the populations live in rural areas. Their living standard is generally lower than that in the city, and lots of differences exist between China's cities and countryside, such as their income, their divergent organizational system, or customs. The students from the rural areas are seriously underrepresented. Most students in higher education are from urban areas, according to Li and Min[112]. Indeed, about 70 percent of the population is living in rural areas in China while only about 20 percent of college students are coming from rural areas. However, with educational opportunity, the reverse happens. About 80 percent of students in the sample of higher education institutions in Beijing are coming from urban areas, while only roughly 30 percent of Chinese residents are living in urban areas. At the same time, urban students have more advantages than their rural counterparts. For example, in the cities with the best universities, such as Beijing, local urban students can obtain university entrance with scores considerably lower than those outside this city. In the process of college expansion, the issue of equality was not at the center of policy concern, except regarding the number of enrollments. In 1965, Chinese statistics could proudly claim that 71 percent of students in higher education were of worker and peasant origins[113]. The National College Entrance Examination gives the impression that access to college is based on merit and is fair to people of all social origins with academic competence. However,

[112] Li, Wenli, and Min, Weifang, "Tuition, private demand and higher education in China", Graduate School of education, Peking University, Beijing, January 2001

[113] China Education Yearbook 1949-1981: 338, Beijing

most university students are from urban families[114]. They tend to be more heavily weighted to the upper social strata than their rural counterparts, with a better living standard, a better family economy and better-educated parents in high skilled occupations.

Therefore, the conflict between countryside students and city students becomes obvious. Social factors influence the selection before and after senior middle schools and colleges, which screens out students from working class families in spite of the fact that working class children have good academic records in senior middle school. In China, the distance between rural and urban areas becomes not as obvious as before, but the urban people still have some advantages due to the Chinese special registration system (in Chinese: *Hukou*) which effects the employment, child education, housing and medical treatment, etc[115]. In a survey by China Youth Daily[116], 67.8 percent of people believe a Beijing Hukou or registered permanent residence is worth at least 100,000 Yuan. Some 14.6 percent thought it should be worth 200,000 Yuan. A questionnaire asked 3,000 recent graduates what their choice would be if they were to choose between an annual salary of 100,000 Yuan or Beijing Hukou; most chose the latter. The Hukou system is the central government's method of managing urban population. Registered permanent residence allows people to live, work and study in a specific city, but makes living in another city difficult. In the survey, 77.1 percent of interviewees said they would choose a job if the offer included applying for Hukou, while 11.1 percent considered the Hukou as the deciding factor. In an online forum among students at Beijing University, one student said a Beijing Hukou is worth about 100,000 to 200,000 Yuan, making getting the residence permit even more crucial for those whose monthly salaries are 2,000 to 3,000 Yuan. But for a person with a high monthly salary of over 20,000 Yuan, getting a Hukou is not an issue.

[114] Huang, Lihong, "Elitism and Equality in Chinese Higher Education, Institute of International Education", Stockholm University, 2005
[115] Qian, Wenbao, "Rural-Urban Migration and its Impact on Economic Development in China", Ashgate Publishing Limited, England, 1996
[116] http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2008-04/21/

Language barriers and cultural differences are among the stumbling blocks for rural students as well. Because of different cultures and awareness, most students from the countryside have a relatively isolated life. After coming to universities in cities, what they face or what they hear are very different to their atmosphere at home. Some kinds of impacts will come into being, such as the attitude towards people, the different ideas for the same thing, etc. Such impacts will lead to psychological pressure for them. Therefore, either society or higher education has responsibility to help them overcome their difficulties[117].

Some differences between countryside students and city students still exist in present-day Chinese Higher Education. The MOE and local government provide some possibilities to help those students who have financial difficulties. According to Chapter VI of the Higher Education Law of the PRC (brought into effect on January 1, 1999) "students from families with financial difficulties may apply for subsidies or a reduction of or exemption from tuition fees" (Article 54). The State can establish scholarships, work-study funds and student loans for students in higher education institutions. At the same time, higher education institutions, enterprises, public organizations or social groups and individuals are encouraged to establish scholarships, work-study funds and student loans in a variety of ways in accordance with the relevant regulations of the State as well. These should be awarded to students of good character and scholarship, to provide assistance for students who come from families with financial difficulties (Article 55) (MOE 1999). Ultimately, local governments, social organizations and universities must provide all means of financial assistance to prevent a dropout for financial reasons[118].

The following main problems can be identified for countryside students. The

[117] "The psychological conflict among rural students in the process of urbanization" http://qkzz.net/magazine/1006-2335/2007/03/1761563.htm

[118] Huang, Lihong, "Elitism and Equality in Chinese Higher Education", Institute of International Education, Stockholm University, 2005

impact between countryside and city is the first problem rural students have to face. The developmental inequality between the urban and rural areas is a striking feature in China. Most families of countryside students are poor, especially those who are from western regions. Some of them have to borrow money from relatives or friends in order to help their children to go to university. According to official regional statistics[119], the average individual annual income in the advanced eastern coastal provinces was double that of the rest of the country. Sometimes tuition fees become a burden for most rural families and often cause students to leave school or universities.

According to a survey by Hu[120], the poor rural students are usually from three kinds of families: 1) families in poor areas, such as villages in the mountains; 2) families with more than 3 children, who cannot afford costs for all children to go to university; and 3) single-parent families.

Therefore, almost all countryside students are frugal during their study. Most of them have at least one part-time job after class, they hardly go to restaurants, and the library is their favorite place. Almost all rural students live in the dormitories[121] instead of living off campus. Not only can they not afford a private room, but also they are afraid of facing more interesting and attractive things that they could not see in the rural areas outside university.

In contrast, city students have their own features. One cause is that a large proportion of the students are from the host province (where this college is located). The urbanization rate in some provinces is high. The students from the city are usually rich; they do not have to worry about their spending.

The second problem for rural students is the tuition fee. “The tuition fee is about 3,200 Yuan (320€) and other expenses are around 400-500 Yuan (40-50€) a month,” said Zhang, a junior student at Xi’an University of Finance and Economics. Her annual consumption is in fact higher than the average disposable income of Chinese

[119] National Bureau of Statistic of China, 2002a, Beijing
[120] “The study of poor students in Chinese university” http://www.lunwennet.com/thesis/2007/17623.html
[121] China Daily, “Dorm: A room of one's own,” 25.09.2004

urban residents, which is 8,472 Yuan (840€) a year. This sum is too far behind to catch up with for the countryside students[122].

In addition to tuition, students and their families have to cover all living costs during their schooling. It was documented that expenses borne by parents and students of Bachelor's degree programs in Chinese public institutions ranged from US $2,228-8,187 during the 1999/2000 academic year[123]. The average total private cost of higher education in Beijing reached 9,923 Yuan in 1999[124]. The total cost of one student for one academic year exceeds an urban resident's annual income and is almost four times the average rural income.

The tuition fee is too high for the countryside students; it is beyond their families' means. Therefore, the different attitudes toward money become a conflict, and the two sides of students are against each other. Those from poor families in the countryside hardly make contact with those from city in order to protect their self-pride.

The countryside students worry about their future. They do not have as many advantages as urban students. If they cannot find a job in city after university, the only option for them is to come back to the countryside. However, one of the reasons for them to study in university is to get out of the rural areas due to the poverty; hence, the disciplines they choose are those which can help them find a job easily after graduation instead of those in which they are really interested. Because of a significant difference in the quality of life exists between the cities and the countryside in China, their parents have the same idea. Most parents of these students did not have much education. However, although they have much less education than their children, they hope that their children can stay in the cities instead of working in the fields.

Those from rural areas sometimes show their lack of self-confidence when

[122] http://www.atimes.com/atimes/China/
[123] www.gse.buffalo.edu/org/IntHigherEdFinance/region_asiaCN.html
[124] www.teacherscollege.edu/centers/coce/publications.htm

communicating with others from cities, based on their limited knowledge about cities. Some rural students never even saw a train before they came to the city. Hence, they are always silent when others chat freely, for they are afraid to be looked down upon if they say something wrong. As a result, some of them become self-contemptuous, they do not talk to anyone, and studying hard becomes their only aim. However, once they cannot receive what they pay out from studying, they would lose their hope of life; tragedy might occur.

Following these pressures, one consequence is inevitable, and that is the decline of the number of rural students who achieve higher education. The education gap between China's rural and urban populations has been the most important and outstanding one in higher education opportunities. One research[125] shows that among the recruits of new students by the public key higher institutions, Tsinghua University, Peking University and Beijing Normal University, for instance, the proportion of rural residences has been on decline since the 1990s.

Another consequence following those pressures is that the rural students have to study very hard at university day and night, whether they want to or not. Moreover, too many pressures might lead to psychological illness; sometimes they even lead to extreme behavior, such as suicide.

Normally the rural students study harder and better than the urban students, and the students from the small cities study harder and better than the students from the big cities in order not to be neglected or looked down upon by them.

Rural students in higher education need help. Some of them are from poor families. The central and local government provide loan programs to support them to get through their study. In 2007, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Finance and the China Development Bank launched a new project jointly. According to this project, each student is allowed to get a loan of up to 6,000 Yuan (approximately 600 €) each

[125] Research into Equity Issues in Chinese Higher Education, 02. 2005

year to be mainly used as tuition or dormitory fees. Those whose families were ascertained as in economic difficulties or with an annual income less than 8,000 Yuan (approximately 800 €), or under such conditions as being an orphan, or with handicapped or unemployed parents, can be regarded as applicants[126]. At the same time, the central government and some departments have recruited new teachers to serve in rural areas teaching children for their nine years' compulsory education. Since 2006, China launched a special teaching program to encourage Chinese university graduates to become teachers in the rural areas for compulsory education including education at primary school and junior middle school levels[127]. The program, co-funded by central and local governments, recruits college graduates to serve a three-year term in rural schools and also offers them favorable policies for their future careers after they leave their teaching posts. This program not only provides many qualified teachers for rural schools, but is also an innovative way of recruiting teachers.

2.5. The situation in the labor market

Career aspiration is not only getting stable when a person approaches adulthood, but also is amenable to measurement in the wider life context of a person. Although individual 'free will' is one dimension, career aspiration is subjected to the effects of the full spectrum of a person's life context. Not only is career aspiration directly influenced by a student's socio-economic origin, but also many environmental factors exert pressure on a student's career aspiration. The linkages between a person's socio-economic background, living and working environment, and future career choices reflect a pattern of web-like relationships in society.[128]

During the process of marketing economy in the 1990s, students were divided into state-plan and non-state-plan groups. After graduation, a two-way-selection

[126] China education newspaper, 09. 2007, Beijing
[127] http://www.tech.net.cn/en/ne/
[128] Huang, Lihong, "Elitism and Equality in Chinese Higher Education", Institute of International Education, Stockholm University, 2005

employment mechanism was introduced to replace the government's central placement of graduates. Consequently, employers were free to select their own employees and graduates could choose their employers. As a final step in the reform process in the 20th century, students in Chinese higher education were exposed to the market[129]. At present, female and male graduates compete for the same jobs in the public and private sectors. However, employers, including government agencies, do not like hiring females due to their negative expectations of women's skill and their maternity and reproduction period. There is evidence that even government departments, which would be expected to uphold non-discrimination clauses of the Labor Law, have openly discouraged female university graduates from applying for employment at recruitment fairs[130].

The expansion serves a combination of political, social and economic purposes. The introduction of the market into a system of socialist planning economic principles changed the role of higher education from a system to produce political and professional elites to one that produces skilled workers for the growing labor market. One of the consequences of expanding access to higher education is that more students remaining longer in school relieved the immediate pressure on the labor market at a time when unemployment was increasing due to the hastened reform of state enterprises.

In 2001, more than seven million students were enrolled in Chinese higher education institutions, but they were only 10 percent of their age cohort. At present, China has less than five percent of its 870-million labor force with some higher education attainment[131].

Meanwhile, about 20-30 percent of higher education graduates could not find employment upon graduation in 2001[132].

However, both male and female graduates have to seek employment in a free labor

[129] Huang, Lihong, "Elitism and Equality in Chinese Higher Education", Institute of International Education, Stockholm University, 2005

[130] United Nations Development Program 1997b

[131] China Education Yearbook 2002: 217, Beijing

[132] China Education Yearbook 2002: 217, Beijing

market that is still developing but already suffers from high rates of unemployment. The government is clearly aware of the problem and is looking for solutions. The 2003-2007 Action Plan includes under No. VI the "Project for Promoting the Employment of College and University Graduates". It calls for start-up support schemes, support systems for job-hunting and the development of an "employment network" with a focus on online databases. It also emphasizes the responsibility of the HEIs to provide adequate career services and to implement practical skill acquisition into the curricula. As an example, because of the mentioned need for highly skilled workers, many graduates choose to receive a vocational education in addition to their university education in order to increase their chances of finding adequate jobs. Another initiative, based on the more ideological community-oriented fundament, is the calling to graduates to go to West China and invest their special skills in regions of greater need[133].

Three sorts of data can be used to analyze the situation in labor market: 1) if they have decided what they are going to do after graduation, including "to go to study continuously", "have found the workplace", or "to stay at home"; 2) what kind of occupation they choose after graduation and where they hope to work; and 3) the starting level of the salary[134].

Regarding the first point, among graduates with Bachelor degrees in 1998, 75.4 percent of male students and 70.8 percent of female students have made the decision before graduation— a gap of 4.6 percent. In 2003, the percentages were 82.1 percent and 78.7 percent, respectively— the gap became 3.4 percent, only 1.2 percent lower than 5 years prior. Such numbers present that, in total, the gap between male and female students in terms of making decisions before graduation did not have any obvious changes. However, in terms of different subjects, the great gap between the

[133] Brandenburg, Uwe, and Zhu, Jiani, "Higher Education in China, in the light of massification and demographic change", CHE Centrum für Hochschulentwicklung GmbH, 10, 2007

[134] Wen, Dongmao, "A Comparative Study on the Gender Differences of Higher Education Opportunity", http://www.tc.columbia.edu/centers/coce/pdf_files/c10.pdf

sexes still exists. This means that in some fields, such as engineering courses or agriculture, the percentage of males in terms of making decisions before graduation is much higher than females; in contrast, the percentage of females is higher in such fields as literature and economy.

The second point was regarding what kind of occupation they choose after graduation and where they hope to work. Regarding this point, in 2003, 74.7 percent of male graduates chose professional work, 59.6 percent of them did vocational work. The percentages of women were 72.6 percent and 53.9 percent, respectively, a little bit lower than the males' percentages. The data of their workplaces showed that in 1998, 76.9 percent of women worked in big or medium-sized cities after graduation, 4.6 percent more than men (72.3 percent). However, in 2003, fewer women (73.8 percent) than men (78.3 percent) had occupations in big or medium-sized cities.

This point also shows that most males worked in state companies, but women were the majority in schools. In 1998, 8 percent more men than women worked in state companies, but 13 percent more women than men worked as teachers. The situation in 2003 was the same as in 1998.

Currently in China, the employment rate of female students is lower than the rate of male students. In 2004, there were 280 millions graduates in China; about 35 percent of them could not find jobs, and most of them were women. In 2005, 44 percent among 338 millions graduates were women; their employment rate was 71.2 percent, compared with 77.1 percent for their counterpart.[135]

Finding a job for female graduates is more difficult than for male graduates. According to a survey by the Research Institute of Female Development in Fujian[136], among 1068 graduates in Xiamen University in 2002, under the same conditions, the opportunity of being hired between men and women was 1:0.87. This means that employers prefer to hire male graduates. Furthermore, the employment rate of women

[135] Chen Qian, "The solutions for the female students", Hua Zhong University of Science and Technology, Wuhan, China, 2005

[136] Chen Qian, "The solutions for the female students", Hua Zhong University of Science and Technology, Wuhan, China, 2005

graduates was 63.4 percent— 8.7 percent lower than men graduates.

The labor market in present-day China influences the wage structure of graduates due to their educational level and type of education, the expected benefits of higher education as well as the demand for higher education opportunities. In terms of labor market performance, the relative competitive advantage of the graduates with certain types and levels of education will serve as feedback to the universities. For example, if graduates in a given field are in oversupply, their competitive advantage in the labor market will be reduced. Student demands for this field will decline, and universities will adjust their programs and enrollment policies accordingly. This is exactly what is happening in China today. However, the market is not omnipotent—nor is it a panacea—and market failure also occurs from time to time. Thus, the state still has a very important role to play in this market-oriented environment.[137]

The third point in the labor market is the "starting level of salary". According to Wen[138], the starting salaries for male and female graduates in 1998 were 1023.55 RMB (110 €) and 910.96 RMB (100€); in 2003, females had the same salary as males. One of the important reasons why men had higher salaries than women in 1998 was that the starting salary in state-run companies and schools was different (980.45 RMB in company and 742.09 RMB in school); this gap disappeared in 2003. However, in some cities this gap still exists. For example, based on a 2004 survey in Shanghai among 10 universities by Shanghai Women's Federation, the average salary of male graduates was 2706 RMB (280€) per month, compared with 2441 RMB (250€) per month for women[139].

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[137] Min, Weifang, "Historical Perspectives and Contemporary Challenges: The Case of Chinese Universities", http://www.tc.columbia.edu/centers/coce/detail.asp?Id=Publications&Info=%28C%29+Research+on+Higher-Education+Development

[138] Wen, Dongmao, "A Comparative Study on the Gender Differences of Higher Education Opportunity", http://www.tc.columbia.edu/centers/coce/pdf_files/c10.pdf

[139] Chen, Qian, "The solutions for the female students", Hua Zhong University of Science and Technology, Wuhan, China, 2005

Generally speaking, male graduates would like to find a scientific job, and their hope to have a family is much later in their life-course than females'. One reason is that they believe that if they had a family, it would bring their careers to an end, for they would have to take care of their wife and children. They see their long-term futures in management, or in consultancy. Some women choose teaching as subject and career because they consider that even after a break (childbirth, for instance), it is not difficult for them to return to school on the grounds of technical advances. At the same time, school teaching is a career that fits in reasonably well with holidays and the daily family routine. According to Irving Epstein, the women's perceptions of their future personal and domestic roles, as wives and mothers sometimes become a significant influence on their career aspirations.[140]

According to the latest survey by Peking University,[141] private domestic companies became the biggest employers of Chinese graduates. The number of graduates rocketed to 4.95 million in 2007, according to statistics from the Ministry of Education. In 2007, about 34.2 percent of graduates got jobs at private companies, up 17.9 percent over that of 2005's figures, said the survey. At the same time, 9.5 percent were hired by Sino-foreign joint ventures and foreign companies– both figures were higher than 2005.

The percentage of employment displays that job offers from enterprises has grown faster, driven by the booming economy, than other sectors such as schools and government departments. But more graduates entered government departments as well. About 12.7 percent of graduates entered government departments, up 3.5 percent from 2005, according to the survey. This was partly because the administrations were trying to recruit more young talent with higher education. Government jobs also

[140] Epstein, Irving, "Chinese Education, Problems, Policies, and Prospects", Garland Publishing, INC. New York & London, 1991

[141] "Private Firms: biggest employer to graduates " http://english.cri.cn/3100/2008/02/18/1261@324382.htm

provided the graduates stable income, high social status and good welfare insurance.

In 2007, on the one hand, as many as 42 candidates competed for one position as a civil servant; on the other hand, the number of college graduates working for schools dropped by 13.9 percent, as stated by the survey.

According to the survey, schools offered lower pay than the average salary level. The monthly salary of 2007 graduates averaged 1,798 Yuan (US $246), but primary and middle schools only offered 1,448 Yuan a month. Universities gave better pay—2,231 Yuan a month— but they mostly took in those with Master's or Doctorate degrees. According to the survey, these graduates earned from 3,252 to 3,469 Yuan a month on average.

The survey also found that each graduate spent about 1,132 Yuan in job seeking, which might go towards an expensive suit or well-printed résumés.

However, the survey did not link the expense to successful interviews. Those getting jobs spent less than those who did not succeed, said Yue Changjun, Associate Professor at Peking University who led the survey. “Excessive spending on job seeking is not bound to increase the chances of getting a job,” he said.

The university has conducted the survey every two years since 2003. In 2007, they sent questionnaires to graduates at 28 universities in 15 provinces and received 16,388 responses.

In order to distribute the graduates reasonably, the government and Ministry of Education have also made it a policy to lead the students to work in undeveloped western regions of the country. They will also establish some pilot programs to encourage students to start their own businesses.

2.6. Differences between male and female graduates

For thousands of years, Chinese history has been basically men's history. Women were ignored by the society in terms of their political, economic, and social positions. Being dominated by Confucian ideology that women have a lower position than men, women were generally excluded from formal education and participation in policy-

making, the military, and other activities in public spheres. Their place was mostly inside the household, acting as mothers, wives, and daughters[142].

In Chinese universities, there are generally fewer females than males in terms of students, teachers, professors, leaders of department, as well as directors of universities, although their proportion increases rapidly and steadily. We can use the proportion of female students as an example.

Table 2.4 The proportion of female students in China from 1980-2006 (unit: %)[143]

Year	Percent	Year	Percent	Year	Percent	Year	Percent
1980	23.44	1987	33.00	1994	34.50	2001	42.00
1981	24.42	1988	33.37	1995	35.40	2002	44.00
1982	26.50	1989	33.70	1996	36.43	2004	45.65
1983	26.90	1990	33.70	1997	37.32	2005	47.08
1984	28.60	1991	33.40	1998	38.30	2006	48.06
1985	30.00	1992	33.70	1999	39.20		
1986	31.50	1993	33.60	2000	41.00		

(Source: China Statistic Yearbook 1982-2007)

According to the table, one tendency has to be noticed, and that is that more and more female students are recruited in universities. From 1980 to 1990, the number of female students increased by almost 10 percent, and then it developed steadily, until it reached 39.20 percent in 1999. After entering the 21st century, in 2000, 41 percent of students in Chinese universities were females. In 2006, the percentage of female students in higher educational institutes became 48.06 percent— almost half of all students. In the short period between 1980 and 2006, the percentage of female students in Chinese universities increased a total of 24.62 percent, which means that each year the percentage would increase by 0.95 percent.

[142] Wang, Shuo, "The new social history in China: development of women's history", http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/ht/39.3/wang.html

[143] "The relationship between the open policy and the proportion of the female college students" http://www.hnshx.com/Article_Show.asp?ArticleID=3936&ArticlePage=2

Table 2.5 Graduates with Master's and Doctorate degrees in 1991 -2002 (unit: %)

Year	Master			Doctor		
	Number	Sex distribution		Number	Sex distribution	
		F	M		F	M
1991	30392	20.0	80.0	2532	9.0	91.0
1995	27213	28.0	72.0	4641	12.0	88.0
2000	47565	34.1	65.9	11004	21.5	78.5
2002	66203	38.7	61.3	14638	26.0	74.0

(Source: Education Statistic Yearbook 2002, Beijing)

In having either a Master's degree or a Doctorate degree, women's rates are in a lower position than men's, but with the improvement of their awareness of "self-confidence" and against the discrimination in educational fields, their percentages increased slowly: from 28 percent in 1995 to 38.7 percent in 2002— 10 percent more women achieved their Master Degrees. The percentage of women who achieved their Doctorate degree also rose from 12 percent in 1995 to 26 percent in 2002— a 14 percent raise within 5 years.

At the same time, the percentage of female postgraduate and doctoral students also increased. In 2004, it was 44.2 percent and 31.4 percent respectively— 13.6 percent and 15.9 percent higher, respectively, than the figures in 1995[144].

The improvement of the female's percentage in higher education is first of all due to the development of society. Following this improvement, the educational level of women will also be raised; this is a normal progress around the world. The higher the percentage of females in higher education, the higher their qualities will be[145].

[144] "Women and Education", http://www.china.org.cn/e-white/20050824/5.htm

[145] "The relationship between the open policy and the proportion of the female college students" http://www.hnshx.com/Article_Show.asp?ArticleID=3936&ArticlePage=2

Table 2.6 The percentage of women in higher education in 1998 and 2003 (unit: %)

Year		1998	2003
Total		38.2	41.0
Degree	Bachelor	38.1	37.2
	2-3 Years' study (short circle study)	38.4	48.0
Origin	Big and secondary cities	48.5	47.8
	Small cities	40.1	43.2
	Countryside	27.9	32.0

(Source: Wen, Dongmao, "A Comparative Study on the Gender Differences of Higher Education Opportunity", http://www.tc.columbia.edu/centers/coce/pdf_files/c10.pdf)

Table 2.6 shows that the percentage of women in higher education is much lower than men's, but as the time went by, it increased step by step: in 2003, 41 percent of graduates were women, compared with 38.2 percent in 1998— about 3 percent more within 5 years.

This table also presents the female students' situation with degrees and origins:

1) from the aspect of the degrees. In 1998, there is no obvious difference between those who achieved a Bachelor Degree and those with 2-3 years' study, whereas in 2003, the number of females who finished the 2-3 years' study was 10 percent more than 5 years before. This means that with the expansion of universities, women obtain much more opportunities to achieve higher education, although these opportunities exist only in the field with 2-3 years' study.
2) from the view of origins. The percentage of female students who are from cities reaches 48.5 percent, almost the same as the males. However, in other fields— especially in the countryside— the proportion is very small: just nearly 1/3. This implies that very few countryside women have the opportunity to receive higher

education. It should be seen as an inequality in higher education in China.

2.6.1 Humanities students vs. Science students

Normally, for the Chinese students who hope to study in university after the middle school, they have three kinds of subjects from which they can choose: sciences, humanities, and the subjects in between. As a matter of fact, the National College Entrance Examination (NCEE) is very competitive, and students in senior middle school have pressure from schools, teachers and parents to do well on this exam. Wang[146] chose the data from Jiangsu Province as evidence, stating that the yearly-admitted rate in recent years (before 2006) is around 20 percent. The science subject admitted rate is higher than the arts subject and the number of admitted male students is larger than the number of admitted female students. After analyzing the results, he concluded that rural students have higher pressure than city students; science class students have higher pressure than arts class students, and the difference in pressure between male and female students is not obvious.

The students' decision to study humanities or science is not merely a consequence of their preferring it to other subjects or even being good at it, but sometimes the result of schooling and family influences. Despite the personal inclination that it is important, it can often also arise from having been taught by teachers or parents who tell them that a science qualification leads to success[147]. Many students choose science at university because some parents have the idea that studying science could bring their children success more easily than humanities, or other members of their family were scientists, or at least they had studied the same discipline. As a conclusion, 4 reasons[148] can be seen as the elements that influence the students in terms of choosing disciplines: 1) interest, 2) which discipline she or he is good at, 3) parents' opinions, and 4) job perspective.

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[146] Wang, Yanan, "Pressure of national college entrance exam on senior high school students and status of their personality", Teachers College, Columbia University, 10, 2006

[147] "Boys and Girls, Another Mode of Thinking", the Enrollment of Higher Education, 05.08.2006 http://edu.cyol.com/content/2006-05/08/content_1376806.htm

[148] Bao, Rongrong, "Elements which influence the ideas about discipline choosing", http://info.jinhua.gov.cn/jhzfxxgk/web/szqsydw/jy/txzx/xxml/kyxm/29365.shtml

Table 2.7 The percentage of female graduates in different subjects in 1998 and 2003 in China (Unit:%)

Year		1998	2003
Subjects	Economics	52.9	43.8
	Law	42.0	54.7
	Literature	69.8	64.4
	Natural Sciences	34.0	41.8
	Engineering Courses	20.9	21.2
	Agriculture	34.8	26.4

(Source: Wen, Dongmao, A Comparative Study on the Gender Differences of Higher Education Opportunity, http://www.tc.columbia.edu/centers/coce/pdf_files/c10.pdf)

Table 2.7 demonstrates the distribution of female students in Chinese universities. All data were based on the questionnaires, which were collected from 49 higher education institutes in China. According to the two surveys in 1998 and 2003, female students in Chinese universities prefer studying humanities. Their percentages among humanities such as literature, law, or economics are higher than those among sciences such as engineering courses or agriculture. In 1998, 69.8 percent of female students in Chinese universities studied literature. Although it decreased to 64.4 percent in 2003, literature can be regarded as one of the traditional “girl’s disciplines”; the other two disciplines which are attractive to girls were law, especially and economics. The percentage of female students improved very rapidly. In 2003, it was higher than 50 percent; in contrast, although fewer female students studied economics in 2003 than in 1998, its rate was still more than 40 percent.

However, another trend can be found as well from this table, and that is that more female students choose to study natural sciences than ever. During the course of 5 years, the percentage increased around 8 percent, from 34.0 percent in 1998 to 41.8 percent in 2003.

At the same time, the percentage of male students is very distinguishable in

different kinds of universities. In some universities for teachers and institutes of foreign languages, male students are in a lower position than females— sometimes merely 30 percent compared with 80-90 percent in technical universities[149].

Almost 10 years ago, some dormitories for female students in the technical universities in China were called "panda buildings" because of the small proportion of young women who enrolled in these colleges. Such a small proportion of women is like the small proportion of pandas in all of China[150]. The reason for the situation is because a lot of young girls choose to study humanities such as foreign languages, business, arts, or teaching subjects instead of sciences such as physics, chemistry, or engineering courses. On the one hand, some of them are not interested in science; they think it is too difficult and too boring to study, and some female students' notes in science are not good in their senior middle school. On the other hand, others are influenced by the conventional idea that sciences are not suitable for women, and they are only for men; those women who study sciences are somehow like men, including their short hair styles and their boring clothes. Generally speaking, they are not as attractive as those who study humanities. These two reasons caused females not to choose to study science in the university.

However, in today's China, more and more young girls go to study science after the senior middle school. For example, in Tsinghua University, one of the best technical universities in China, only 19 percent of the new students in 1991 were women. The ratio between males and females was about 5:1; in 1998, the ratio became 3.7:1; and in 2006, the ratio was 2:1. This means that the number of female students who choose to study science increases year by year. In other famous technical universities, Nankai University in Tianjin for instance, about 49.2 percent of women in 2007 were enrolled in college— 4 percent more than in 2006. This is the first time in this university that the women's enrollment rate is the same as men's[151]. In some comprehensive

[149] Wen, Dongmao, "A Comparative Study on the Gender Differences of Higher Education Opportunity"
http://www.tc.columbia.edu/centers/coce/pdf_files/c10.pdf
[150] China Education Newspaper, 02.2006, Beijing
[151] "Why there are more female teachers than male teachers in Universities"
http://my.icxo.com/viewthread-183414.html

universities, the proportion of female sciences students increases as well. This trend shows the proportion of women students who choose sciences increases year by year.

Several reasons have been analyzed for this tendency, including gender differences in academic achievement, educational equality for women, changes and development in social values and conventional ideas, and women's expectations for future employment.

In today's educational system in China, female students should learn to fit into the male scientific subculture, which means that more women should be accepted in higher education, especially in science disciplines. The lack of a feminine perspective, the almost complete lack of female professors and teaching assistants, and the low numbers of female students, should be avoided. In recent years, the situation has changed positively. According to a survey by China Renmin University[152], up until 2006, 4.5 percent of university presidents were women, and the number reached 7.9 percent in 2007. In addition, there are also many more females working as leaders of departments as well.

Chinese researchers predict that the entrance of large numbers of women into scientific fields will ultimately help make science become a more humanized field[153]. This is, however, a classic chicken-and-egg situation. The more the field changes, the more women will enter it, and the faster they enter, the more it will change.

Some researchers, especially some female researchers[154], have criticized earlier that many biases and injustices against women exist in higher education, but since 1977 this situation has been changed very much. Today, one of the responsibilities of the Administration of Education is to encourage young women to go to college in order to make full use of their talents.

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[152] Hu, Juan, "Consciousness and Development", 03.18.2008
http://www.clner.com/Html/gaodengjiaoyu/renshishizi/4730666254.html

[153] Journal of higher education, 07.1999

[154] Chen, Qian, "The solutions for the female students", Hua Zhong University of Science and Technology, Wuhan, China, 2005

In present-day China, the females have achieved more social, economical, and political equality than before. These changes emerged at first in 1977 after the National College Entrance Examination was restored. Everyone could go to colleges by passing this test, whether male or female. One of the most powerful of these changes in setting the stage for women to expand their participation and influence in higher education was the force of the law. Later numbers of laws, regulations, and executive orders have been promulgated to advance the cause of equality for women in education. Some of the major ones include:

1) 'The educational law of the People's Republic of China'[155]:

   The Chinese people can go to school, regardless of sex, nationality, race, property, and religion. (Chapter 1, article 9)

2) 'People's Republic of China Law on the Protection of the Rights and Interests of Women'[156]:

   Males and females have the same equal right to go to school. (Chapter 3, Article 15)

   The female students have the same rights to go to the colleges, graduate, and get degrees as the male students…. (Chapter 3, Article 16)

2.6.2. Number of students with different academic level

The increased awareness of women in all segments and at all levels of society has intensified the focus on female students. Along with making higher education, especially, more accessible to women, many concerned persons have sought to make it responsive to them in every possible way. Indeed, great progress has been made.

[155] "The educational law of people's republic of China", 01,09,1995
http://www.nuaa.edu.cn/xcb_web/law_study/jiaoyufa.htm

[156] "Chinese women's rights"
http://www.chinacourt.org/flwk/show1.php?file_id=104075

Table 2.8 Number of Students in Colleges in 2004

	Total	Males	Females	
			Number	Percentage (%)
Doctorate degrees	23446	16739	6707	28.6
Master's degrees	127331	76997	50334	39.5
Bachelor's degrees	1196290	685359	510931	42.7

(http://www.moe.gov.cn/edoas/website18/12/info25912.htm,

http://www.moe.gov.cn/edoas/website18/66/info25866.htm)

Table 2.9 Number of Students in Colleges in 2006

	Total	Males	Females	
			Number	Percentage (%)
Doctorate degrees	31653	21096	10557	33.4
Master's degrees	213831	116982	96849	45.3
Bachelor's degrees	1726674	969164	757510	43.9

(http://www.moe.gov.cn/edoas/website18/45/info33545.htm,

http://www.moe.gov.cn/edoas/website18/27/info33527.htm)

The two tables above (Tables 2.8 and 2.9) display the number of students in Chinese colleges in 2004 and 2006. According to the tables, the number of female students did not play a dominant role in different academic levels, although their proportion in each field increased. However, these two tables also show that more and more female students chose to achieve a Master's or Doctorate degree after achieving a Bachelor's degree. The percentage of Master's degree and Doctorate degree all increased more than 4 percent. However, their proportions are still lower than men's. One of the reasons is that although state policy in theory provides equal educational opportunities for men and women, the support of the family— in the form of fewer chores or more private tutoring for sons than daughters— influences the educational opportunities of sons and daughters differently[157].

It has been more than twenty years since the doors of universities and colleges

[157] Bauer, J., Wang, F., Riley, N., and Zhao, X., "Gender inequality in urban China: Education and employment", Modern China, 1992, 18 (3), p349.

widened to admit any students desiring to pursue higher education, regardless of economic circumstances.

Women have always been a major force in our society, yet their history, psychology, sociology, art, literature— and, indeed, women themselves— have for centuries been relegated to second-class status or ignored. This has been true in Chinese society, in the world, and, as these reports demonstrate, in higher education. Countless theories and explanations have been proffered to explain and even justify this "condition of women". Women have rarely been the focus of higher education observers, except as related to women's colleges or as a special case in colleges and universities dominated by men[158].

2.6.3. Attitude towards the occupation as teacher

To be a teacher as a career is seen as a traditional job for women in China. Hence it is necessary to persuade young girls and women that science is not just a "masculine" subject, for sometimes they choose to study humanities at the university only because they are lacking self-confidence. However, this problem could not be solved in a short time. According to some surveys, it is easy to find that the ratio between male and female teachers is about 1:3, whether in vocational schools or universities. The reasons can be summarized as:

1) Young people, especially young men, don't think that being a teacher is a suitable career for them. Sometimes the first idea for them of a successful job is one with a high salary, but being a teacher is too difficult to reach this idea. For example, a college teacher with 3 or 4 years of work experience can be paid about 5000 RMB (500 euro) per month, higher than the schoolteachers' wage. However, a new clerk in a company with a university degree earns the same as a college teacher.[159] Therefore, for most male graduates, their first choice is to go to a company or to be an official.

[158] Zhao, Yezhu, "An Analysis on the Status of Women Faculty on Higher Education in China", Higher Education Research & Evaluation, 2007

[159] "Why there are more female teachers than male teachers in Universities", http://my.icxo.com/viewthread-183414.html

For young males, being a teacher is a boring job, and in schools, there exists relatively less competition than in companies.

2) From a traditional point of view, being a teacher is a good job for a woman—not for a man. Overall, female aspirations are generally regarded by both men and women as being lower than those of males. In addition, women have continued to aspire to gender-typed occupations that are often of lower status and less well paid than those aspired to by males, such as to become a teacher. For instance, a 1983 survey among nine hundred junior and senior middle school students showed that over twice the percentage of males over females wanted to be scientific and technological personnel (16.7 percent to 7.9 percent), while more than twice as many females than males wanted to be teachers (14.6 percent to 7 percent).[160] In order to recruit more male students in the Normal Universities, some new regulations for the recruitment are formulated. For instance, male students could be recruited with relatively lower notes than female students[161]. However, this situation does not change very much up until this day through such regulation. According to a 2009 survey[162] in a province in northern China, 78 percent of all students who want to study in teaching colleges are still females.

Of course, this gender-bias is supposed to be avoided; some professors of education suggest that the recruitment of male teachers plays a significant role in school, because the children need the "masculine model" as well.

2.6.4. Gender differences in other fields of higher education

1) The access to higher education. Regarding this point, parental education levels play an important role. According to Zhao and Wang,[163] fathers or mothers who

[160] Epstein, Irving, "Chinese Education, Problems, Policies, and Prospects", Garland Publishing, INC. New York & London, 1991

[161] "New regulations for male students", 29.04.2003 http://www.ruiwen.com/news/12723.htm,

[162] "Too many female teachers in schools", Shenyang Newspaper, 19.10.2009 http://news.syd.com.cn/content/2009-10/19/content_24602081.htm,

[163] Zhao, Yezhu, and Wang, Jianjun, "An Empirical Study of Contextual Factors on Chinese Female Access to Higher Education", American Educational Research Association, San Diego,

received education below high school are less likely to have their daughters in colleges or universities, since education and training for daughters may be seen as a less viable proposition since most daughters will leave the household upon marriage. Differences in gender equality are also related to family leadership settings: if parents are the only decision makers, or if students have nothing to do with a family decision, female students have much less of a chance to access college education.

2) Female students have better grades than their counterparts. The discipline English may be taken as an example, because it is the subject that takes the university students more time than other subjects, and also an important point for the career in China. Based on a survey by Wen[164] and his colleagues in 2003, within the students who achieve a Bachelor degree, more than 80% of female students passed the English Test in 4th or 6th Grade (English test in China to justify one's English level), in contrast with 76.4 percent of male students.

3) After graduation, some students choose to study abroad or to achieve higher degrees, and the gender difference is obvious. In 2003, more women than men wanted to study abroad, 18.4 percent of women wanted to study continuously— 3 percent more than men (15.2 percent). Among the Bachelor students, the ratio is 23.5 percent for women and 18.5 percent for men.

4) The attitude towards part-time jobs alongside studying reflects the gender difference as well. 18.8 percent of men have part-time jobs— around 2 percent more than women (16.7 percent). This phenomenon somehow means that women pay more attention to their study than their practice during the 4 years; in contrast, men hope to increase their abilities through practice.

2.6.5. Gender differences among postgraduate students

Higher education policies should also cover postgraduate admissions. Institutions of higher education are supposed to wish to consider ways to recruit, and keep, female

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2004

[164] Wen, Dongmao, "A Comparative Study on the Gender Differences of Higher Education Opportunity" http://www.tc.columbia.edu/centers/coce/pdf_files/c10.pdf

staff.

Finding out what happens in higher education is of utmost importance in understanding the patterns of gender inequality that exist. Until recently, in spite of this gender inequality, the male students at postgraduate level in every subject grouping remain the majority, while the number of female postgraduates increase year by year.

Table 2.10 Number of Postgraduate Students by Academic Field (Research Institutes) in 2000

	Master's Degrees	Doctorate Degrees	Total
Total	47565	11004	58569
Female	16226 (34.1%)	2361 (21.5%)	18587 (31.7%)
Male	31339 (65.9%)	8643 (78.5%)	39982 (68.3%)

(Source: Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, http://www.moe.gov.cn/edoas/website18/35/info11535.htm)

Table 2.11 Number of Postgraduate Students by Academic Field (Research Institutes) in 2006

	Master's Degrees	Doctorate Degrees	Total
Total	213831	31653	245484
Female	96849 (45.3%)	10557 (33.4%)	107406 (43.8%)
Male	116982 (54.7%)	21096 (66.6%)	138078 (56.2%)

(Source: Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, http://www.moe.gov.cn/edoas/website18/27/info33527.htm)

The two above tables (Tables 2.10 and 2.11) describe the number of postgraduates in 2000 and 2006. In 2006, 33.4 percent of the total students who got a Doctorate degree were women, compared with 21.5 percent in 2000— about 12 percent more during 6 years. This shows that the educational level of women in China increases very quickly, especially in the high education realm. More and more women continue

to achieve higher degrees after studying at university. However, it also shows that male students are still the highest percentage; although their numbers decreased little by little, they are more represented than women among the higher degree students.

Female postgraduates have difficulty in the labor market. For those who study humanities, such as history or literature, it is very problematic. For example, in an elite university in Guangxi, among 33 postgraduates with Master's Degree in the history department in 2007, less than one third have found jobs, and most of them were men. One reason is the "embarrassment of age". As a result from some interviews,[165] almost all female postgraduates would be asked if they are married or if they have children. Some companies even required daringly that "women cannot be allowed to marry or have a child within 2 years" if they became employees. Such regulation is called "potential regulation" because it would not be seen in the contract. This discrimination is always against those women who study in Normal Universities. However, companies have reason for such a regulation: the ages of most post-graduate women are between 26 and 32; marriage and childbirth will take them at least 2 years after being hired. They will not bring the companies profit during this period, and companies have to pay them. At the same time, new people have to be found to substitute them during this period. Therefore, hiring a man is much better for the company.

One result of this is that most females with Master's degrees in humanities study continuously to achieve a Doctorate in order to find a job easily. However, today in China, even as a doctor, in order to find a good job, one must face many competitors as well. In China, a doctoral student not only studies every day, but also teaches Bachelor students. They do not have much time for entertainment. At the same time, they have to have some publications, such as academic papers. They also have to worry about their dissertation, because not all of these students can pass the final

[165] http://www.lawtime.cn/info/funvquanyi/nxjy/nxjyqs/20100328231.html, "The real life of the female doctor", http://oligarchy.blog.hexun.com/48118000_d.html

examination; some of them must do it again or postpone it. For some humanities doctoral students, such as Sociology or History, finding a suitable topic takes much time, for they have to do some projects with other people or take part in some workshops at first. After obtaining experiences, they might be sure in which field they will research.

Currently in China, because of the changes in the Chinese labor market, some doctors cannot find a suitable job after their study. On the one hand, as a doctor, they themselves believe they must find a good job as "payback" for their effort; on the other hand, some workplaces, such as universities or institutes, are full, and even if there is place, high conditions are the obstacles for those recent doctors. For instance, they need only those who achieved their doctor title in Europe or America. Facing these difficulties, what should they do? Although they reduce their requirements, some of them cannot even find a workplace.

Women doctors have more difficulties than their counterparts. One of them is marriage.[166] After achieving a Doctorate degree, most women are nearly 30 years old. They want to find a person with the same background and with the same age to be their partner. Therefore, the men with lower titles, such as Bachelor or Master, have no chance. Because of the influence of conventional ideas in China, a Chinese male hopes to find a wife who is not better than him. Hence marriage becomes a problem. That is why some of those female doctors feel lonely when they see couples or families.

Of course, the weaknesses of doctoral students are partially affected by the system of higher education. Actually, what they learn from higher education should not merely be qualifications, but development of their own character, such as communicational ability, self-confidence, openness, and so on. Otherwise, they will be seen as a group of qualified people without any ability.

[166] "The life of female doctors" http://www.eol.cn/yan_lun_1868/20070119/t20070119_215499.shtml

In order to reduce the gender gap, such as the employment rate between female and male graduates, and to avoid the bias against female graduates in the labor market, the Chinese government made some progress.[167]

On the one hand, based on the constitution, some new regulations, such as Regulations of Protecting Female Workers, were formulated. Female workers should not be fired because of marriage or childbirth.

On the other hand, the government pays more attention to changing the influence of the Chinese traditional view of women, because a few people in Chinese society today still have the idea that "females are worse than males". It sometimes might lead to the phenomenon that female graduates have no opportunity to work in some state-owned factories. At the same time, the government also encourages female graduates to be much more independent. This means that the government can support those who want to found companies by themselves if they need help, and they can have some privileges.

[167] Chen, Qian, "The solutions for the female students", Hua Zhong University of Science and Technology, Wuhan, China, 2005

Chapter 3 Teaching professions: hierarchies, social conditions, and qualifications among Chinese university teachers

With the expansion of higher education in China since 1999, a high amount of new university teachers is needed, including a large number of young teachers. According to the Chinese education newspaper[168], in 1998 there were 407,300 university teachers in China. In 2005, the number reached to 965,800 and 29.32 percent among them were young teachers under 30 years old, while 65.23 percent were between 30 and 40 yeas old.

There is no definite age limitation between young, middle-aged and old teachers in China. But in order to compare those two groups, it is very useful and necessary to have a limitation. However, Chinese researchers have different ideas about the limitation. Some researchers[169] divide all teachers into two groups, namely: over 50 years old and 30 to 50 years old. According to these standards, those over 50 are old teachers, and those from 30 to 50 years old are called young and middle-aged teachers. Others do not agree with this division; they think the young teachers should be those between 30 and 45 years old, and those over 45 belong to the group of old teachers[170]. In this dissertation, the interviewees will be divided into two groups based on the second limitation.

In the empirical study of this dissertation, male and female interviewees mentioned some problems they faced at work or in their private lives. Those problems can also be found in this chapter. Therefore, in order to understand this chapter much more easily, it is useful to mention some information that is summarized in the interviews.

Generally, according to Zuo[171], in today's Chinese higher education, in terms of the graduating year, the structure of the university teachers could be divided into four

[168] http://www.cdvtc.edu.cn/cdvtc07/zzrs/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=3324
[169] "The age limitation between young and old teachers", 03.10.2008 http://www.zgfanwen.com/article/sort05/sort057/info-19550.html
[170] "Pay more attention to young university teachers" http://www.moe.edu.cn/edoas/website18/43/info12343.htm
[171] Zuo, Dongling, "The situation of young university teachers", 08.03.2009 http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_4a8d953d0100ckgk.html

hierarchies: 1) The teachers over 60 years old. They normally graduated from universities before the Cultural Revolution. Most of them are retired; only a few still work in the university as professors. However, they usually are regarded as being of noble character and prestige and seen as important people in their branches; 2) Those who were permitted to study at the universities after the reinstatement of the NCEE in 1977. Their average age is between 50 and 60. They usually possess a Master's degree and are the professors with outstanding achievements. Most of them are leaders of the department; 3) The postgraduates between 1980-1990 belong to the third hierarchy. They are normally 40-50 years old. They could be considered as the main teaching and researching groups in the universities with a great deal of experience; 4) In the bottom are the young postgraduates after 1990. Some of them are not even over 30 years old. On the one hand, the young teachers have advantages such as activity, creativity, or reasonable knowledge structure; on the other hand, they also have some obvious weaknesses such as lack of experience and less responsibilities. Of course, there are some objective elements that influence them not to have enough time to further their academic knowledge. For instance, some of them— especially some female teachers— have to take care of their child and family, while others pay more attention to their material lives.

At the same time, Zuo points out some problems and gives some suggestions for young teachers. They could be summarized in the following three aspects:

1. Young teachers should be helped after being recruited by the university. At present, a large number of young teachers hold Master's or Doctorate titles in universities. However, some of them are lacking work or research experience because their studies were not interrupted from Bachelor to Doctorate. Examples of this are female interviewees FB and FF, as well as male interviewee MI. As a consequence, regardless of their accumulations of academic knowledge or teaching experience, it is not enough to accomplish their duties as university teachers. As the old teachers have to pay attention to their own teaching or research projects, they have no time to help the young teachers quickly adapt to the phenomenon of university. In addition, young teachers have many seminars every week. Because they have no enough experience in

teaching, it takes them much time to prepare seminars. As a result, they have no time to involve themselves in research; it is an obstacle for their development.

Zuo suggests that the Ministry of Education constitute some regulations for young teachers. For instance, the number of seminars per week should be reduced so that they have more time for research or further study. In addition, young teachers should be coached by old teachers in terms of teaching methods or research at the beginning of work so that they could become used to their role as university teachers.

2. Housing is a problem for young teachers. In the past, after working in university for a certain number of years, teachers could be assigned an apartment as a welfare regulation. According to this welfare regulation, most old teachers have no housing problems. Even though some of them are employed by a university in another city, one of the preconditions is a big apartment.

In contrast, young teachers have to find solutions by themselves— especially after this welfare regulation was abolished in 1998. After being recruited in the university, they have to face the housing problem. It is especially difficult for those who are from other cities. Some of them have to share one apartment together because they cannot afford it independently with their monthly salary due to the high prices of real estate. In the interviews, FE told us that in her department, a young vice professor has to share one small room with his wife and their 11-year-old son. Some of her colleagues rent apartments off campus; they have to spend more than 30% of their monthly salary to pay for it. Such a housing problem somehow influences young teachers' lives and motivation at work. According to MK, another interviewee, his department wanted to recruit two teachers with Doctorate degrees last year, but in the end both of them chose another university. One important reason was that another university promised to provide them with big apartments if they worked there. Therefore, the housing problem might lead to the brain drain in university.

Zuo's suggestion is that the local government builds affordable apartments for young teachers to buy, which can be paid in monthly installments from their salaries. Another option is that the university can afford some parts of the rent so that young

teachers can live in apartments with good living conditions while at the same time saving some of their monthly pay.

3. The evaluation of professional titles for young teachers should be reformed. In most Chinese universities, old teachers hold most of the professional titles, and free positions for young teachers can be offered only after the retirement of old teachers. This might lead to disappointment among the young teachers, effecting their motivation of the work.

To solve this problem, Zuo suggests that some regulations should be established by the Ministry of Education, such as a limit on the percentage of people who hold professional titles in each age group. This means that in a university, among all teachers with professional titles, 60% of them are over 50 years old, 30% are teachers over 40 years old, and 10% are young teachers under 30 years old. It might encourage young teachers to work hard to compete for a title.

According to the empirical study of this dissertation, the main differences between the young and old university teachers can be summarized as:

(1) Young teachers prefer to use modern teaching technologies and foreign languages

Young teachers have more advantages than old teachers. Based on what the interviewees said, whether female or male, young teachers are good at using modern teaching technologies, such as computer software instead of writing on the blackboard. Computer technologies and modern technologies were widely used at the end of the twentieth century in Chinese universities. However, although new technologies are available for all university teachers, it is somehow much more difficult for the old teachers. The young teachers learned some basic computer knowledge in school, and then they studied the computer systematically in seminars at university. As a result, they could master and use it very well at work. Even some teachers who came from rural areas did not learn computer knowledge in their schools, they are young, and so they could master it quickly at work.

Not all old teachers have interest in the computer. They are used to writing on the

blackboard; to them, the computer is a new technology. However, using the modern teaching methods in seminars is an important element of the reform among higher educational institutes. Some of the old teachers are forced to learn it from very beginning, and they cannot master it as quickly as young people.

Young teachers master foreign languages better than old teachers because most of them have experience studying abroad and they could read and write in foreign languages. In contrast with them, some old teachers have no such experiences and do not use foreign languages often in seminars; their foreign language levels are low. Young teachers have to promote their professional titles at work, and besides publishing works, passing the foreign language exam is one of the important conditions for promotion.

As previously stated, old teachers left schools many years ago. At the same time, they do not often use foreign languages in their work; as a result, they forget them easily. In addition, passing the foreign language exam was not previously a necessary condition in order to be promoted. Therefore, some of them paid no attention to continuing to learn a foreign language at work.

(2) Old teachers have better teaching abilities than young teachers

The old teachers have already worked many years in the university and they have much experience in how to teach and guide the students. They can give young teachers advice or help them in terms of teaching or researching. They also have more active energy at work.

Most young teachers work at university after achieving their degrees, like most of the female interviewees in our study. Young university teachers tend to experience psychological confusion during their role transformation. Because they are in the same age group as their students, they sometimes fail to establish an authoritarian image. Hence, their professional knowledge or teaching methods need to be guided by the old teachers.

At present, most university students are the only children in their families. Due to the popularization of communicative technology, such as Internet, they are able to get

all kinds of information easily. In some fields, they even have more knowledge than their teachers. At the same time, because they are lacking in social experiences, they sometimes have extreme ideas. Some young teachers are in the same age group as their students, so it is easy for them to have good relationships with their students. However, sometimes this kind of close relationship makes it hard for them to establish an authoritarian image, so that they cannot distinguish between the roles of teacher and student.

Not only the teaching field, but the researching field as well brings some pressures to young teachers. For teachers in today's Chinese higher education institutes, scientific research is an important assignment, which influences promotion and income. Hence, some young teachers treat it as the most significant work in their career, neglecting the basic teaching task. As a result, the quality of their seminars are worse than ever, even though they publish some papers each year.[172] In order to reduce this kind of phenomenon, the Ministry and some higher education institutes make some progresses. For example, they reform the regulations for promotion. The number of publications will not be regarded as one of the most important preconditions any more; the students' evaluations of the seminars will be given as feedback to the executive office of university regularly.

(3) Young teachers have more pressures than their old colleagues

This means that they have more things to worry about— whether at work or in their private lives— than old teachers. For example, at work, they have to learn foreign languages in order to pass the exam for promotion, or they have to publish certain papers in professional magazines every semester in order to get a professional title quickly. Such tasks take them much spare time. In contrast with them, most old teachers already have professional titles.

In the interviews, some young teachers around 35 years old mentioned that they

[172] Zhang, Fengxia, "Young University Teachers and Psychological Confusion during Their Role Transformation and Strategies to Mitigate Such Confusion" jiaoyu.ustc.edu.cn/qkln/2008/2/2008xdh2-10.doc

sometimes have too much work to be able to have leisure time, such as FD, FF, and ML. They all said that they had many seminars every week, and it made them feel exhausted. According to Zhang[173], some main reasons include: 1) the imbalance between teachers and students in terms of numbers. This means that in some departments, one teacher has to teach many students in each seminar. They have to spend much time preparing their seminars, such as finding teaching materials, thinking about teaching methods, as well as the final test which they need to correct at the end of the semester; 2) financial problems. At present, the university needs some ways to get more income in order to improve the conditions of university and the teachers. One way is to launch some tutoring schools for the public. Therefore, some teachers will be arranged to teach them, and most of them are young teachers. The positive point is that they get more income, but the negative point is that such schools take their extra time; they have less time to rest.

Young teachers around 30 years old have to face some necessary problems, such as marriage and childbirth. They have to spend more time to care for the family and children than the old teachers. The children of old teachers have already grown up; the old teachers do not need to spend much time for their children. As a consequence, some young teachers put off their marriages or childbirth so that they have more time for scientific research or academic achievement.

[173] Zhang, Fengxia, "Young University Teachers and Psychological Confusion during Their Role Transformation and Strategies to Mitigate Such Confusion" jiaoyu.ustc.edu.cn/qkln/2008/2/2008xdh2-10.doc

Chapter 4 Women as teachers in Chinese higher education

Historically, women in China have long been at the bottom of the social order. However, great changes have taken place since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949. This new government claimed that Chinese women 'hold up half the sky' and needed to be emancipated. An essential element in women's progress toward equality has been their expanded access to all types and all levels of education. The experiences and status of female teachers in higher education is symbolic in many ways for many Chinese women[174]. Higher education does not actively discriminate against women; rather, based on some special values and beliefs, it is meant for women to be successful. Among university teachers, female university teachers play a difficult role. On one hand, they have to carry on their traditional role, including taking care of the family and doing housework; on the other hand, they want to develop their own career in order to be successful as a university teacher.[175] However, the accurate number of female university teachers in terms of titles, such as professor, vice professor, or lecturer, cannot be found in the records of the Ministry of Education.

It is known that women have a higher standard of participating in politics when they have a higher educational level. For example, in northern Europe, women possess high educational levels; hence, they have strong emotions to take part in politics and have strong effects on the decision-making.

In the work fields, women with high educational levels have more advantages than those with low educational backgrounds. They even can find their positions in some traditional “male jobs”, such as lawyer, engineer, official, and so on.

4.1. Few women in Chinese higher education

Although under the Constitution women and men were entitled to an equal chance of promotion, in reality men were always prioritized for upward mobility[176]. Women

[174] http://digitalcommons.libraries.columbia.edu/dissertations/AAI9724841/

[175] “Conflict and development of dual roles”, Higher education studies of RUC, 5. Vol. 2007

[176] Zheng，Xiaoying, ‘Chinese Female Population Problems and Development’, Beijing，Beijing University Press, 1995

were at the lowest positions in the universities' hierarchy and, as normal teachers, were institutionally segregated from leaders.

Table 4.1 Number of Female Teachers, Staff & Workers in Colleges in 2000
Unit: 10 thousand

	Female teachers, staff & workers		Female Full-time teachers	
	Number	Percentage (%)	Number	Percentage (%)
Universities and Colleges	45.66	41.03	17.70	38.24

(Source: Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, http://www.2124.cn/tong_ji_366/20060323/t20060323_25246.shtml)

Table 4.2 Number of Female Teachers, Staff & Workers in Colleges in 2004
Unit: 10 thousand

	Female teachers, staff & workers		Female Full-time teachers	
	Number	Percentage (%)	Number	Percentage (%)
Universities and Colleges	69.09	42.89	36.46	42.47

(Source: Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, http://www.moe.gov.cn/edoas/website18/51/info25951.htm)

Table 4.3 Number of Female Teachers, Staff & Workers in Colleges in 2008
Unit: 10 thousand

	Female teachers, staff & workers		Female Full-time teachers	
	Number	Percentage (%)	Number	Percentage (%)
Universities and Colleges	92.08	44.90	56.46	45.62

(Source: Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, http://www.moe.gov.cn/edoas/website18/47/info1261558517304147.htm)

The three above tables (Tables 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3, namely) represent that in China, fewer women than men have been employed in colleges, although the numbers of staff and workers increases rapidly. In 2004, 42.47 percent of full-time teachers in university were women, compared with 38.24 percent in 2000— an increase of more than 4 percent. In 2008, it reached 45.62 percent— around a 3 percent rise within 4

years. This trend shows that Chinese universities and colleges regard the female teachers' development as an important task. More and more females are recruited to work as teachers and not only as staff. However, it should also be noticed that their male colleagues still dominate the realm. This means that the males are still over-represented in the senior and influential levels of the university hierarchy, and also in the research field. Normally there are only a few women principals among the directors in the Chinese universities.

The proportion of female faculty in technical universities also increased, especially in the engineering field. This means that women hope to be a part of this male-dominated profession, even if they have to work much harder to prove their ability and quality of their work. They do this in order to gain the respect that they deserve from their male counterparts in the same profession.

There is a male bias both in the choice and definition of higher education in China. It is most obvious in the high positions in most universities. For example, most department leaders are male, and there are some subjects dominated by men. In order to study science in such a milieu they must, as women, accept them— the tacit elimination of women from fields of study, or the denigration of women by science— the equivalent to laughing at sexist jokes[177].

4.1.1. Historical reasons

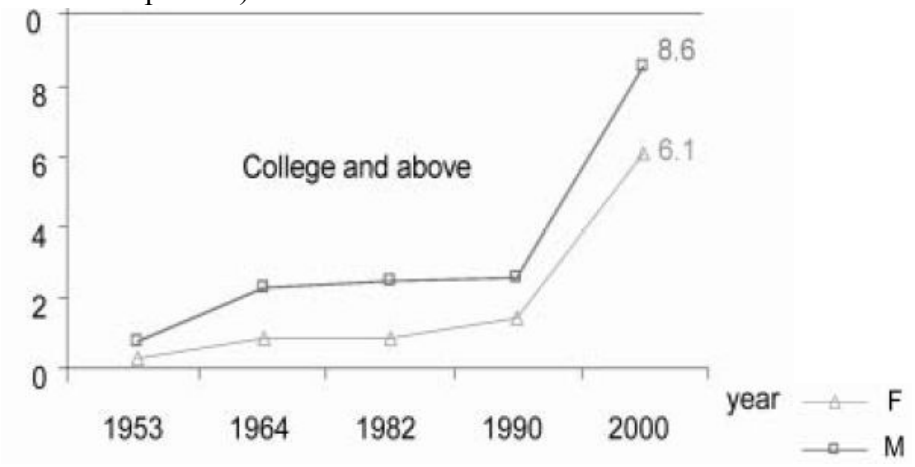
Traditional Chinese undergraduate women have to face a dilemma that their male colleagues never have to consider: will becoming powerful lessen their chances for marriage? The answer is still open. Becoming powerful includes developing leadership skills, initiating relationships with men and women, holding positions of influence, being committed to their education, and basing their personal and career decisions on their goals and abilities and not on their fears and concerns. How or if a

[177] http://www.hie.edu.cn/jsdw/news.asp

woman reconciles these problems will depend on a number of factors. What educators need to keep in mind is that these are central concerns that cannot be ignored.

Historically, Chinese culture has valued boys more than girls. This is evident in the privileges and advantages afforded to boys and men in the Chinese society. Traditionally, Chinese women have been viewed as caregivers within the family. Such traditional Chinese values embody Confucian patriarchal ideology, where male superiority and female inferiority have long been endorsed[178]. But now that this situation has changed, women have the same rights and status as men.

Table 4.4 Enrollment rates of higher education of women in China, 1953 -2000 (Unit: percent)



(Source: Calculated according to population statistics and education statistical reporting.)

Table 4.4 shows that women's enrollment in higher education is always lower than men's. Although the enrollment rate of higher education increased rapidly between 1990 and 2000 because of the expansion of higher education in 1997, until today women are still underrepresented in Chinese Universities. In 2000, the enrollment of female students was 6.1 percent, compared with 8.6 percent by male students. However, more women are needed among the students' organizations and faculties in order to develop universities in every field, such as balancing the structure among teachers and professors, or encouraging them to develop their productivity. Modern

[178] Zhao, Yezhu, "An Analysis on the Status of Women Faculty on Higher Education in China", Higher Education Research & Evaluation, 2007

society requires a large proportion of its population to be highly educated and the inclusion of women is necessary to reach that proportion; this goes for universities as well. One way this could happen would be if they permitted women to be teachers in addition to men.

4.1.2. Gender reasons

Based on an article by Wan[179], 66.1 percent of female teachers do housework at home, but the rate among male teachers is only 11.4 percent. 54 percent of female teachers admit that they could not be successful both in family and career at the same time; all of them think that the family is the biggest obstacle for a successful career. In the same article, among the female college teachers in the Xinjiang province, 52.7 percent of them do housework in their spare time, and 29 percent of female teachers think that they could not handle the relationship between family and career. At the end of the article, Wan points out that female university teachers always have to face the choice between family and career; sometimes they have to give up one of them. In other words, they are in a predicament: if they want to be high-qualified people, they would be cast away from the community of "normal women", or vice versa.

In present-day China, some universities operate primarily on an internal promotion bias rather than hiring its senior faculty from other institutions, as some American universities do[180]. Promotions, rather than external hiring, are the principal source of senior faculty. The time limits imposed on the status of junior faculty contribute to the danger that minorities and women will be recruited to the status of assistant professor but will not receive promotion and tenure. The consequence is that they then sometimes have to leave this university. When this happens, additional women and minorities will be hired into the junior ranks to replace them. This process may

[179] Wan, Qionghua, “Negative effects and solutions of traditional fender role on women teachers in higher education institute”, Human Institute of science and technology, Yueyang Hunan, China, 2005

[180] Welch, Lynne B. “Women in Higher Education: Changes and Challenges”, New York. Westport, Connecticut. London, 1990

explain why the percentages of such individuals remain high at the entry levels but rarely increase at the senior and total faculty levels. The data from the National Bureau of Statistics of China shows that the rate of the Master's and Doctorate degree between male and female teachers in 1997 was 1:12, which means that only 8.3 percent of female teachers held a Master's or Doctorate degree. From the same data, we can find that there are 14.6 percent female professors and 27 percent female vice professors in 1997 in all Chinese universities, compared with 35.7 percent of female teachers[181]. The numbers of female teachers in such fields increase year by year. According to the data of the National Bureau of Statistics of China from 1995 to 2004, a conclusion can be made that the proportion of female teachers in terms of teaching assistant and lecturer rises rapidly. Nevertheless, the higher the professional title, the fewer the number of females, and the lowest rate is the title as professor[182].

Another potential reason is that there is a low level of productivity from female staff in university. Few female project leaders appear in Chinese universities. From Zhu's research[183], in all higher educational institutes in the Hubei province, only 24 percent of the teachers who joined projects or workshops are women; the percentage of female project leaders is 16.7 percent. Male teachers are in general named as the first authors of papers or books, while most females work as assistants. Also from the same research, in every age group, male teachers have advantages in terms of academic degree and professional title. In all age groups except 50-60 years old, male teachers are more successful than female teachers in terms of careers.

Normally, in Chinese universities, if a lecturer wants to be promoted, a certain number of publications are required. After reaching the requirement, which is different from university to university, he could be promoted. Otherwise, he would always be a lecturer. For women, it is much more difficult. Culturally, they are somehow underrepresented in almost all fields in society because of their sex. Their

[181] China Statistics Year book 1997, Beijing
[182] "Conflict and development of dual roles", Higher education studies of RUC, 5. Vol. 2007
[183] Zhu, Pingyan, "Female's achievements in the market-oriented economy, a research among females in higher educational institutes in Hubei province", Wuhan University, China, 1997

social role limits their opportunities; they have to take care of their family or their children more than men do. Hence, they do not have enough time for their work or publications. Chinese universities can be seen as male-centered organizations. Women are subordinate; even if they are very capable, there must be always someone— a man— over them.

Compared with men, women's earnings have not kept up with their gains in educational attainment. This difference reflects the higher concentration of men in higher-paying fields, including the natural and physical sciences, mathematics, and engineering.

The different retirement age in China (60 years old for men and 55 for women) might be another barrier for the female university staff. It puts women at a disadvantage for promotion to higher management and for participation at the higher levels of the bureaucracy or leadership in higher education. In addition, because women have to retire earlier than men, their total of "service years" is less than men and hence their pension benefits are lower than men's.[184] However, a discussion about whether the retirement age of women is supposed to be postponed or not came into being recently in Chinese society; the government has focused on it. This regulation was enacted in 1950s in order to protect female workers, because their physical strength was not as good as a man's. However, some representatives— especially female representatives in central committee— thought the regulation should be changed, for there is no longer a physical difference between the two sexes today. They stated that after the age of 50, women face their "second springs"; they possess much more experience and are not tied up with family as before. Hence, they have much more time for their work, and their abilities will be stimulated[185]. If the regulation still exists, it will be seen as a discrimination against women.

In fact, whether men or women, they both have some similarities when they decide

[184] "China Country Gender Review", East Asia Environment & Social Development Unit, World Bank, June 2002

[185] "Women's policy"
http://www.people.com.cn/GB/14641/14644/2008472.html

to apply for PhD candidacy in China as well. For most women, a PhD is a necessary qualification for a successful academic career. To hold a PhD shows their career motivation. The majority of them are clear about their occupational aspirations before they start their doctoral study, and their motivation becomes strong during the period of the study. In China, more and more teachers want to improve their educational degree because it relates with income and professional title or welfare. Therefore, more and more teachers study for a Master's or Doctorate degree at work. In China, if a university teacher wants to hold a high professional title, he must have a high educational degree. A high professional degree means a high salary and more welfare from the university. At present, to hold a high educational degree is one of necessities to work in universities in China[186]. In general, in Chinese universities, the structure of educational degrees among female teachers is lower than among male teachers, especially among teachers who hold a Doctor title. This means that the higher the educational degree, the lower the percentage of female teachers. However, the female teachers want to change the situation; their percentages among all levels of academic degree rise continuously.

After the doctoral study, some authors believe that gender will affect the likelihood of their receiving sponsorship from academic staff, so that male students have a better chance of being sponsored than females.[187] This might explain why most professors in universities or departments in China are men, not women. Among female supervisors, we can find the same trend. In 1991, among a total of 41480 supervisors, 6046 were women— a percentage of 14.58 percent. In 1995, it became 14.92 percent. In 1999, the percentage was 16.83 percent. After 2000, the percentage improved relatively rapidly. By 2004, around 22 percent of all supervisors were women[188]. However, they still remain the minority.

[186] "Gloomy Life of Two College Female Teachers", Shishang Zixun, Xiong Mao, 3.18. 2009 http://www.tianya.cn/publicforum/content/no11/1/689915.shtml,

[187] Acker, Sandra, "Is high education fair to women", SRHE&NFER-NELSON, University Guildford, 1984

[188] "Conflict and development of dual roles", Higher education studies of RUC, 5. Vol. 2007

Although Chinese women have made significant gains in education at all levels, their greater participation is marred by a combination of cultural, socioeconomic, and psychological factors that influence the fundamental choices they have made—choices that seem to be free but are to a large extent influenced by others concerning their personal and occupational future. It should not be surprising to find among women academics a certain ambivalence and uneasiness with their own achievements; for instance, issues of professional opportunity and social recognition, academic careers and marriage and family relationships[189]. According to Zhao's research, there are three kinds of female staff in contemporary Chinese universities and colleges.

Table 4.5 Three sorts of female staff in Chinese higher education

	A: non-traditional female staff	B: traditional female staff	C: neutral female staff
The relationship between career and family	Career is more important than Family	Career is less important than Family	Career = Family
Who takes care of the children	Grandparents or babysitter look after the children	They take care of the children themselves	Grandparents, babysitter or they themselves look after the children
Value between man and woman	Women could be better than men.	Women are less able than men.	Women should be as good as men.
Their marriage	They postpone marriage and childbirth.	They marry earlier than the other 2 kinds of women.	They marry after working for around 3 years.
The arrangement of time	They need much time for themselves.	They need much time for their families.	They do housework with their husband.

[189] http://digitalcommons.libraries.columbia.edu/dissertations/AAI9724841/

Their attitudes toward husbands	Wife and husband are equal.	Their husband is the main power in the family.	Wife and husband are equal.
The relationship with colleagues	They always have conflicts with colleagues because of their character.	Work force is a potential threat to marriage and family because of conflicts, role blur, and marital dissatisfaction.	They have a good relationship with colleagues.
Their positions in higher education	Some of them are in a high position for they have self-confidence and ambition.	They are normal teachers.	They are normal teachers.
Their attitudes toward university	University is the place where they can achieve their destination.	University is only the work place.	Work place is as important as family.
Their expectations for their children	Their children should be better than others.	Their children should be better than others.	Their children should be better than others.

(Source: Zhao, Yezhu, "An Analysis on the Status of Women Faculty on Higher Education in China", by Higher Education Research & Evaluation 2007; Beijing Entertainment Newspaper, Bai, Chenggang, 2005)

The women in type B in this table see family life as the most important and work is the second most important. They ignore competition at work. On the contrary, the desire for a successful career is the most important element for type A; they have more confidence in their own abilities than the others, and they hope that they are better than the men. The women of type C do not want to lose neither career nor family. There is a strong relationship between childcare plans and resolution of the dual-career conflict; the women in type B would expect to spend much more time at home than type A and C.

One similarity of these 3 types of female teachers is that they play their role either as staff in higher education or as mothers/wives sooner or later. Another similarity is that they all hope their children can live better than them[190].

4.2. Why are there few women leaders in Chinese universities?

In China, being a member of the Communist party is the prerequisite for becoming a candidate for leadership. This means that a non-Communist-party member has less of a chance to become a leader[191]. Being a party member is "a significant predictor of job change and upward mobility"[192]. However, there are fewer female party members than male party members in China. According to the data of women's status in China, in 2000, 15.7 percent of all Chinese males were members of the CCP, compared with only 5.2 percent of all Chinese females— around a 10 percent difference. Besides CCP, within the other 8 democratic parties, the proportion of women is relatively high; more than 30 percent of their members are women in 7 parties. In local cities or the countryside, the percentage of female party members is also a minority. For example, in the Yiyang District, Hunan Province, an investigation of nineteen townships in six counties showed that in 1988, out of a total of 9,597 party members, only 736 or 7.7 percent were women. The highest percentage of women party members per township was 11.8 percent. In some villages, there were no female party members at all, and 31.6 percent of townships have not had a new female party member since 1987.[193] Media reports claim that the lack of females newly joining the party is a main reason why the percentage of female cadres is declining at all levels; the average age of female cadres is relatively old. In actuality, becoming a party member is usually granted after a lengthy period of observation. In the countryside, if a woman does not gain entry between the age of eighteen (the minimum entry age) and the time of her

[190] "Working women do more homework than men" http://www.gd.xinhuanet.com/newscenter/2008-03/08/content_12645233.htm

[191] Song, Fufan, "From the historical view to see the contribution from the theory of Deng Xiaoping", Qiu, Shi, 2004

[192] Bian, Yanjie, 'Work and Inequality in Urban China' Albany: State University of New York. 1994

[193] Zhang, Jinyun, and Hu, Zhaoqing, "The problem of old age and scarcity of women Party members must be given attention", women's magazine, 07.1988

marriage, the party will reconsider her, and she may be very busy with domestic work. That can be seen as a reason why the percentage of female party members in the countryside is lower than the percentage of male party members[194].

Bian[195] analyzed the quality of the party membership between men and women. He found that during their first job or current job, the number of male party members was always more than that of female members. Party membership therefore is another indicator of gender segregation in the workplace. Though it sounds like a political term, in fact party membership is an economic resource in the university, similar to other awards and chances of promotion; but unfortunately, most party members in the universities are men. As being a party member is considered a prerequisite or accelerator for career development, party membership has its original influence, so Communist party membership is equally good from all aspects.

According to a survey[196], there are 5 factors which could explain why few female leaders appear in China, including "discrimination against women", "few opportunities to be promoted", "women have weak leadership", "cannot be supported by family", and "few women hope to become leaders". Some of these factors might be the reasons why there are few female professors and leaders in Chinese universities.

Perhaps most troubling is the thought that a skilled, confident female teacher in the university could climb to the top and still face discrimination when she gets there. Nevertheless, plenty of researches suggest that people's perception of a job as stereotypically masculine or feminine results in a bias in hiring and compensating candidates or employees who are male and female, respectively. The real-world impact of covert biases on female achievement in education is not well studied because of the shroud of secrecy surrounding peer review, the process by which many aspects of a university teacher's career—awarding of grants, acceptance of academic

[194] Jacka, Tamara, "Women's work in rural china, change and continuity in an Era of Reform", Cambridge University Press, 1997, p80

[195] Bian, Yanjie, 'Work and Inequality in Urban China' Albany: State University of New York. 1994

[196] "A few female leaders" http://women.sohu.com/2003/12/17/04/article217020441.shtml

papers for publication and decisions about hiring—are judged by a panel of other, often anonymous, teachers[197].

[197] Acker, Sandra, "Is high education fair to women", SRHE&NFER-NELSON, At the University Guildford, 1984

Table 4.6 The teachers' situation in the Capital Normal University English Department in 2007

	Total	Prof.	Vice Prof.	Lecturer	Assistant	Dr.	M.A.	B.A.	Studied abroad	Supervisor for Master candidates	Supervisor for Doctoral candidates	Leader of the departme nt
Female	44 (70%)	2 (29%)	14 (74%)	25 (83%)	3 (43%)	1 (14%)	41 (77%)	2 (67%)	22 (73%)	12 (67%)	0	0
Male	19 (30%)	5 (71%)	5 (26%)	5 (17%)	4 (57%)	6 (86%)	12 (23%)	1 (33%)	8 (27%)	6 (33%)	1 (100%)	1 (100%)
Total	63	7	19	30	7	7	53	3	30	18	1	1

(Source: http://www.cnu.edu.cn/acadamic/foreign.asp)

Table 4.7 The teachers' situation in Beijing University Sociology Department in 2007

	Total	Prof.	Vice Prof.	Lecturer	Assistant	Dr.	M.A.	B.A.	Studied abroad	Supervisor for Master candidates	Supervisor for Doctoral candidates	Leader of the departme nt
Female	8 (22%)	4 (20%)	4 (25%)	0	0	7 (22%)	1 (20%)	0	6 (21%)	4 (21%)	4 (24%)	0
Male	29 (78%)	16 (80%)	12 (75%)	1 (100%)	0	25 (78%)	4 (80%)	0	22 (79%)	15 (79%)	13 (76%)	1 (100%)
Total	37	20	16	1	0	32	5	0	28	19	17	1

(Source: http://www.disa.pku.edu.cn/teacher/index.html)

Table 4.6 and 4.7 show that in most cases, the percentage of women in university is relatively small, and is very low at the higher levels. Only 2 Professors (29 percent) of the English Department in the Capital Normal University and 4 Professors (20 percent) in Beijing University Sociology Department are women, compared with 5 (71 percent) and 16 (80 percent) male Professors. In the head of the department there is not one woman. The same situation can be found in terms of academic levels; fewer women than men hold Doctorate degrees. The proportion is 1(female): 6(males) in the English department and 7(females): 25(males) in the Sociology department.

At the same time, some differences between these two kinds of departments can be found according to these two tables. Firstly, in the Foreign Languages Department, female teachers are a majority: 44 (70 percent) female teachers in the Capital Normal University English Department to only 8 (22 percent) female teachers in Beijing University Sociology Department. Secondly, females with Master's or Bachelor's degrees play a dominant role in the English department. And the similar tendency can be found in the teaching field, for instance, the number of lecturers. In contrast with them, the situation in the Department of Sociology is opposite.

There are some elements that prevent a woman from becoming a leader, such as: 1) The influence of traditional ideas. This means that the Chinese tradition is somehow against equality between the sexes at work; males obtain more opportunities, females are always in a subordinate position; 2) Membership of the Communist Party. In Chinese universities, more males than females are members of the Communist Party; 3) Age. Based on the retirement policy, female teachers must retire at 55 years old regardless if they are a professor or leader, while male teachers must retire at 60 years old; 4) Educational degree.[198]

In the last two decades, some female college leaders appeared. Today, the proportional representation of women in top-level administrative positions is

[198] Wan, Qionghua, “On enterprising consciousness of female teachers in universities and colleges”, Ed, Hunan Social Sciences, 02.2002

substantially greater than it was ten years ago.[199]

What are the overall causes of women's under-representation of the level of academic leadership today? Chinese researchers[200] have some explanations and conclusions:

1) The influence of conventional awareness

In traditional Chinese society, according to Confucian philosophies, women are seen lower than men. They are responsible for work *inside* the walls of the family house or compound. Their movement beyond those walls was restricted, while men's domain was *outside*[201]. Therefore, some researchers consider women in higher education as an example that stands on the line between history and reality, between conservation and innovation.

Entering colleges and universities and building a successful career still remains a difficult task for women. Professional prejudices are also against the female leaders. Some people still have the idea that women have lower abilities than men. They also feel that women's success is more due to luck than their efforts and skills; sometimes they are promoted only in order to make up for the lack of faculty. At the same time, there is the lack of role models in the form of senior women teachers, which seriously hampers their progress. A few male teachers mentioned that young women teachers should try to use male teachers as role models[202].

However, laws and the structure of work can provide each individual with an equal opportunity or an equal chance at success. For women, this means being able to choose. Gender equity is essentially the liberty to choose. It also means that the choices made by women must be viable. The essential difference is that women have the capacity to bear children. This capacity is both their special privilege and their special burden. It is already steady in Chinese hearts— the man works hard in the

[199] Zhao, Yezhu, "An Analysis on the Status of Women Faculty on Higher Education in China", Higher Education Research & Evaluation, 2007

[200] Zhao, Yezhu, "An Analysis on the Status of Women Faculty on Higher Education in China", Higher Education Research & Evaluation, 2007

[201] Jacka, Tamara, "Women's work in rural china, change and continuity in an Era of Reform", Cambridge University Press, 1997, p3-4

[202] Wan, Qionghua, "On enterprising consciousness of female teachers in universities and colleges", Ed, Hunan Social Sciences, 02.2002

society, and the woman is in charge of the family. Although female university teachers are somehow influenced by such ideas, they have different opinions. They realize that they are different from housewives because they hold a high educational degree. As a result, they are not reconciled to live the role as mothers or wives. Hence, the conflict between the role as a family member and the role as a university teacher appears. Sometimes female university teachers are not sure which role they should play; if they devote themselves to their career, they think it is not fair to the family. On the contrary, if the pay all of their attention to the family, they think their values cannot be realized[203].

In university, male teachers feel that for a similar success, the rewards are greater for men than women. Therefore, women have to provide more evidence than men as proof of success. Women have to work much harder for promotions as compared to men with comparable qualifications. It is clear that women academics tend to be less satisfied with their colleagues than their male counterparts are, and more dissatisfied with promotion[204].

It is clearly seen that women do find the workplace less friendly as opposed to their male counterparts specifically in a male-dominated profession, such as teaching in higher education. Even though female teachers have come a long way since the early years, they still have far to go before they will indisputably be accepted as professional teachers of the highest quality.

2) The relationship between family and career

The notion of *inside/outside* dichotomy by Tamara Jacka[205] refers to a division between family and non-family. Women should be involved in family business, but men should undertake activities outside the house. This dichotomy could be seen as a

[203] "Conflict and development of dual roles", Higher education studies of RUC, 5. Vol. 2007
[204] Pu, Zaiyuan, "Teachers in Universities should Strengthen Five Points in Consciousness". Ed. Higher Education Development and Evaluation. 03.2001
[205] Jacka, Tamara, "Women's work in rural china, change and continuity in an Era of Reform", Cambridge University Press, 1997

distinction between “care for the family” and “work”. These two aspects depend on each other and at the same time contradictorily exist between them as well. Such a theory is the same as the Chinese traditional idea about women: they should be always “inside” the family to play the role as wife and mother. However, in present-day China, women have the same rights as men; they can also be “outside” the family to work. Perhaps the female university teachers could be regarded as pioneers of the “outside” women, because they hold high educational degrees, they have a strong awareness of independence, and they hope to care more about individuality. Nevertheless, some conflicts between the two kinds of roles will appear inevitably while they recognize, accept, and imitate them[206].

In Chinese society, there is a collective value system, or set of assumptions, that still supports traditional roles for men and women. For the most part, this value system views women who achieve in non-traditional ways as extraordinary performers, as exceptions to the rules. Each individual is responsible for building his or her life career according to individual needs. This would be finding some balance among work roles, family, social contributions, leisure and play, friendship, and so forth.[207] Perhaps the reason so many women feel like “superwomen” is that the role is expected of them! Most female executives, for example, are expected to perform as professionals as well as chief caretakers in the family, as statespersons or politicians and primary parent as chief executives and nurturers.[208] According to Zhou[209], she found them moving from “selfishness” to “selflessness” to “interdependence”. To encourage women’s career development adequately, it is essential to look at the developmental issues of women and to examine the social attitudes and conventions that affect women’s choices as well as their experiences in the work world.

In the Chinese family, a woman’s position is generally lower than her husbands’ because they subconsciously are still influenced by the traditional awareness of the

[206] “Conflict and development of dual roles”, Higher education studies of RUC, 5. Vol. 2007
[207] “Definition of career”
http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_56c9224501009w1u.html
[208] Hu, Juan, Chinese Education Newspaper, 2008
[209] “Definition of career”
http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_56c9224501009w1u.html

role of women. Even when husbands and wives both work full-time, women continue to assume most of the child care duties and to shoulder most of the responsibility for tending to sick and elderly family members. Women work, on average, fewer hours per week and spend more time on family and household tasks than comparably educated men do. For women, having children is associated with lower income and a reduced probability of attaining tenure. Normally wives spend more time than husbands in terms of taking care of the both sides of parents when they need help. In contrast, men show a slight tendency to benefit professionally when they become fathers. Thus, the different roles women and men play in family care can also explain their differential participation in demanding careers.

Chinese culture has already lasted 5000 years. The role of women was limited from the very beginning and it cannot be changed quickly; it needs time. Therefore, in their thinking, women believe their husbands should be stronger than them. One consequence is that when they face the contradiction between the role of society and the role of family, they are confused. As a result, most of them would rather choose the latter[210]. That is why some women give up their chance to be promoted in higher education; what they want is to keep their status quo in order to take care of their families, and their own development would slow down or be stopped.

Women who were likely to take longer off work with their children tended to support more conservative ideas and to be less egalitarian. In contrast, those who were likely to return to work sooner endorsed the social provision of welfare, believed in the importance of the individual's autonomy, and were more egalitarian – especially on sex role issues[211].

4.3. Female's behaviors at work in higher education

In China, most women work because of economic necessity, but the importance of work extends beyond the income it provides. It is not enough in one family to have

[210] Cui, Hong, "Husband earns more than wife", Beijing Morning Post, 06.07.2002
[211] Jacka, Tamara, "Women's work in rural china, change and continuity in an Era of Reform", Cambridge University Press, 1997

only one earner; hence most wives also work like their husbands. Work increases their self-confidence, feelings of independence, autonomy, and powerfulness.

Managing a home, career, and being an effective parent is difficult. While women's roles and their expectations for their lives have changed, social policy has not. The social support system for women's new role is not yet in place. For many Chinese women, the dual roles of workers and mothers are overwhelming; most of them are choosing full-time careers. At the same time, being a mother means being constantly interruptible and continually responsive to the needs of someone else.

In China, there is a very famous idiom "man cannot get fish and meat at the same time". While man gains one thing, he must lose another. It has the same meaning as the English idiom "you can't have your cake and eat it, too". This applies also to the women: they cannot be successful in careers and the family at the same time. Sometimes they have to make a decision between the two. Hence, in order to care for the family and children, most women give up the competition and involve themselves in their households. The same phenomenon can be seen in higher education; some female staff would rather work as lecturers than as professors in order to have time for their families, because lecturers have more spare time than professors.

Women experience intense feelings of guilt when they are not adequately fulfilling their maternal role; they also experience frustration and guilt when they feel they are not spending enough time on their work. Chinese society expects women to be good mothers; if they are also good in their work, it is an added benefit. Men, in contrast, are expected to be successful in their careers but there seldom is a talk about paternal neglect as a result of spending too much time at the office. This is inevitably influenced by the traditional views, and could be seen as potential awareness among Chinese people.[212]

Besides working, women spend the rest of their hours doing housework and taking

[212] Xu, Shan, **"**The survey of professional women", Guang Zhou, China, 2006

care of children. Men spend few hours per week in the home.[213] In many Chinese families, men spend less time than women for family. One of their duties is to work for the family, not to do housework or take care of children, while women as wives stay at home handling housekeeping and childcare responsibilities.[214] If a woman is married, it is likely that her husband has a career of his own and has little time to support his wife's career. Even men who have working wives are at an advantage over professional women because their wives are more likely to be working at non-professional or less competitive jobs. It is said that a professorship is a two-person career. When a woman is in the position, it is a one-person career and she may be psychologically divided between home and career[215].

4.4. Gender politics in China

4.4.1. Women's center in the college

There are also some women's centers in the campus for the female staff and students currently in China. There are various organizations. One excellent example is the Taiwanese Feminist Scholars Association (TFSA)[216], which was formed in 1993 in Taiwan. The goal of the association is to fuse theory with practice, and research with movement. The feminist scholars work together with female staff and students to confront and negotiate more effectively with universities administrations regarding actions on behalf of women.

The creation of women's centers as well as organizations on college campuses was a natural response to the growing awareness in the late eighties and early nineties of the unmet needs of women. Acknowledging the extent and the depth of discrimination against all women, campus women's centers were created to raise and examine new questions about women's lives, roles, and expectations; to help women develop a

[213] Brown, D., and Brooks. L. "Career Choice and Development", San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1984

[214] "The duty of father", 16.01.2009 http://yuer.39world.com/view/267054.html

[215] Welch, Lynne B. "Women in Higher Education: Changes and Challenges", New York. Westport, Connecticut. London, 1990

[216] Chen, Peiying, "Acting 'Otherwise' The institutionalization of Women's/Gender Studies in Taiwan's Universities", Routledge, NY, 2004

feminist consciousness to combat feelings of isolation; and to establish a sense of community among women. The goal was to provide support and services that would enable women to achieve equality in all aspects of their education, work and life.

Women's centers focus on general services for female students; they try bringing together women who are active in the community with women on campus. Some provide a place for women to be together to raise questions, address issues, and 'be themselves'; some are mainly concerned with helping women develop their careers and deal with the concomitant issues of family and life-style; some are dedicated to giving women control over their bodies by providing health information and helping them try to be more assertive with the health establishment; and some try to play many different roles. From the start, the women's centers played an important role in providing a new space for women's concerns.

No matter what the focus of the center was, it almost inevitably had an impact on the campus. Of course, there were some success stories and some failures. But for the most part the centers played crucial, catalytic roles on many campuses. Individually and collectively, women's centers raised the general level of consciousness and concern about issues of women's equality while providing a safe haven for women to clarify their own ideas and positions. By providing this place, they enabled women to discover the power they had collectively to make changes within the institution as well as in the larger society.

Centers need to continue being a voice for women on campus. Part of monitoring the well being of women on campus is keeping tabs on statistics on gender relationships affecting faculty, students, staff, and administration, as well as information on incidents and their resolution.

In the current climate of conservative attitudes about women in higher education, it is difficult for many women in higher education to feel efficacious about their studies and work. The networking model supports women by giving them opportunities to see their ideas develop into successful performance accomplishments and the opportunity to see women role models and mentors demonstrate the kind of behavior that results

in rewards in the university environment. Moving from the individual perspective to the larger campus community, the networking model provides the women' s community with access to information, power, and support so that women are actually able to change their campus environment.

4.4.2. Occupation

In the past, the career paths of male and female graduates differed widely. But it is hardly adequate to say that higher education is concerned only with reproducing inequality; greater access to higher education has resulted in a growing number of women obtaining degrees and entering professions. At present in China, some excellent female bachelor students become part of the staff in the universities after graduation; their percentage increases little by little.

Some regulations in universities restrict female teachers' development as well. For example, only a small proportion of women could be permitted to work in the technical universities, too many limitations for women to be promoted, less chances for women lecturers than their male counterpart to study abroad, and so on. As previously stated, one of the focuses in today's Chinese high education is that female teachers in universities must retire if they are 55 years old, compared with a retirement age of 60 for males. It may hurt their work ethic and bring them much pressure; it somehow reflects the sexual inequality in higher education.

For women, having children is a detriment to a successful career, while for men it can have a positive effect. The female teachers have to spend much time and energy on pregnancy and childbirth, although women cannot be fired because of pregnancy. They have no more energy to work successfully. After childbirth when they return to work, they might lose some chances to continue studying or become promoted.

4.4.3. Why do female teachers return to the colleges recently?

In present-day China, some female teachers who were married in their late thirties or forties, who had children, who were either completing an Associate's, Bachelor's or Master's degree, or were going for an advanced degree, return to college to study

continuously. With each decade of continuing education, the returning women got younger and had greater variation in her personal and educational background. Now, the returning female teachers category also includes single women in their twenties who are dissatisfied with the direction of their first college work as well as relatively well-educated women, often with young children, who switched fields for employment purposes. The reasons can be analyzed as[217]:

(1) They were not satisfied with their first degree, and liked the higher degree. The teachers who return to college want to change their social position, provide themselves with improved job qualifications, and assist themselves in finding more rewarding work.

(2) Some teachers are not satisfied with the assistant or vice-professor titles; they want to climb to the higher position. However, if they want to get more, they must pay more. They need to get higher degrees to compete with the others. At the same time, the teachers with different titles can get different amounts of money from colleges and universities to conduct research. The teachers with higher titles can get more chances to join some academic meetings and research. These female teachers want to show that after marriage and having a child, they will not give up working hard and competing with the male teachers.

[217] Ma, Chuanfeng, "Research on continuing education of higher education teachers", Chinese Adult Education, Vol.10.2002

Part II The empirical study: Women and men in Chinese universities

Chapter 5 The empirical study – Methods and results

5.1. Concept and methods of the study

This part of the dissertation presents the results of an empirical study with male and female university teachers concerning biographies, stages and grades in their careers, experiences, motivation and orientations in this context, the evaluation of their own current occupational situation and the organization of their private lives.

At the end of the study, the similarities and differences between male and female teachers will be analyzed; through them, the gender structures in Chinese higher education might be found out. At the same time, from the analysis of the study, the question "do gender structures play a role in the lives and work of male and female teachers in Chinese higher education?" can be answered.

According to Lorber, from the social construction perspective, "through interaction with caretakers, socialization in childhood, peer pressure in adolescence, and gendered work and family roles, people are divided into two groups and made to be different in behavior, attitudes, and emotions. The content of the differences depends on the society's culture, values, economic and family structure, and past history. The gendered social order produces and maintains these differences."[218] The interviewees in the empirical study are influenced by Chinese culture and values. It is therefore understandable that they have some similarities in their private lives and at work. At the same time, due to gendered work and family roles, as well as different backgrounds, there are also some differences among the male and female teachers. The social construction of gender in Chinese higher education can be found out through comparing similarities and differences between male and female teachers.

In order to have homogenous external conditions, we chose one sample university and twelve teachers who work there. We chose six male teachers and six female

[218] Lorber, Judith, and Moore, Lisa Jean, "Gender and the social construction of illness", Altamira Press, UK, 2002, P4 http://books.google.com.sg/books?id=Be85M4g_4XMC&pg=PA3&lpg=PA3&dq=gender+definition+lorber&source=bl&ots=dMLmS3-vHv&sig=UlcNQxFqXZ0eV1pTwRUG41EitZA&hl=en&ei=Bh7xS9qrN4mssAbSr6DbAg&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=2&ved=0CB0Q6AEwAQ#v=onepage&q&f=false

teachers in order to keep a balance between the sexes. At the same time, we designed a questionnaire on which some questions about their lives, their studies, and their work are supposed to be formulated. The questionnaire consists of several parts, including: family situation, profession, study process, problems that they faced in different periods of their life, as well as the difference between the sexes.

The sample university we chose was the Capital Normal University, not only because it is a very famous university in Beijing, China, but also because it is a comprehensive university with different humanities and science disciplines.

The Capital Normal University has 17 institutes or departments. In 2008, there were a total of 2624 teachers and staff members, 1210 of which were full-time teachers. Among them, 214 are professors and 425 are vice-professors; 470 teachers have Doctorate degrees, and 397 teachers hold Master's degrees.[219]

In the period from October 2008 to November 2008, we interviewed 12 teachers including 6 females and 6 males who were all employed by the Capital Normal University in Beijing, China from different departments. They are in different ages groups, from 28 to 59; they hold different degrees and different professional titles; they have different family situations; and they also have different personalities.

The interviews took place in restaurants, cafés, libraries, and in some of the participants' offices.

We asked for permission to record the interviews, but the interviewees did not like this idea because they were reluctant to share personal information such as family background, annual salary and other private matters. Therefore, we took a more informal approach to the interview by writing down our conversations.

In order to keep the interviews informal and friendly, we allowed the teachers to remain open and speak freely. Therefore, the questionnaire does not follow the same pattern.

We did not know all of our interviewees personally; however, all of them supported us by being active during the interview. They were interested in our research and

[219] "Introduction of the Capital Normal University" http://www.cnu.edu.cn/pages/info_details.jsp?seq=2379&classcode=70101&boardid=70101

eager to help.

We interviewed all of the teachers in Chinese, therefore our questionnaire and notes were also in Chinese. We have translated them into English. In this dissertation, we call our samples FA...FF, MG....ML. Since our interviews are anonymous, here FA=Nr.1 female teacher, FB=Nr.2 female teacher; MG=Nr.1 male teacher, MH=Nr.2 male teacher, and so on.

The method of the empirical study in this dissertation bases on the theory from Uwe Flick's "qualitative research". According to him, "in der Sozialforschung sind qualitative Interviews— teilstandardisiert oder offene Interviews— sehr verbreitet".[220] The interviews, which can be found as a supplement in this dissertation, are "offene" interviews, which means that all questions are open and there are no limited answers. At the same time, the results of the empirical study in this dissertation come from the analysis of the summarizations of the interviews. This is also one of Uwe Flick's ideas about qualitative interviews; he said "qualitative Interviews…dienen der Ermittlung von Expertenwissen über das jeweilige Forschungsfeld, der Erfassung und Analyse der subjektiven Perspective der Beobachteten".[221]

Based on Uwe Flick's idea of variations of qualitative interviews, all interviews in this dissertation are "narrative interviews". They "…wird besonders häufig im Zusammenhang mit lebensgeschichtlichen bezogenen Fragestellungen eingesetzt".[222] To follow his idea, the interviews focus on different stories of the interviewees including their childhood, education periods, work situations, etc. The questions on the questionnaire are openly formulated, so that the interviewees can express

[220] Flick, Uwe, von Kardorff, Ernst, Steinke, Ines (Hrsg.), "Qualitative Forschung, Ein Handbuch", Rowohlts Enzyklopädie, Veröffentlicht im Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag, Reinbek bei Hamburg, Oktober 2000, p 349

[221] Flick, Uwe, von Kardorff, Ernst, Steinke, Ines (Hrsg.), "Qualitative Forschung, Ein Handbuch", Rowohlts Enzyklopädie, Veröffentlicht im Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag, Reinbek bei Hamburg, Oktober 2000, p 350

[222] Flick, Uwe, von Kardorff, Ernst, Steinke, Ines (Hrsg.), "Qualitative Forschung, Ein Handbuch", Rowohlts Enzyklopädie, Veröffentlicht im Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag, Reinbek bei Hamburg, Oktober 2000, p 355

themselves freely. According to Uwe Flick, one central principle is: "Die Fragen sollen möglichst offen formuliert werden und die Befragten zu weiteren Erzählungen anregen."[223] Since the questions relate to each other, they could therefore encourage interviewees to say much more about the topic.

For any empirical study, some evaluating techniques must be used in order to analyze the results of it. In this dissertation, such techniques are based on Christiane Schmidt's theory. According to her, "als erster Auswertungsschritt wird erläutert, wie…Auswertungskategorien entwickelt werden; als zweiter Schritt wird dargestellt, wie das Material codiert; aus der Codierung ergeben sich— drittens— Fallübersichten; solche Fallanalysen werden...als vierter und letzter Schritt vorgestellt."[224]

In this dissertation, in order to find the similarities and differences among male and female teachers in Chinese higher education, the techniques above are useful. At first, the categories such as family background, motivation of work in university, educational degree, etc. will be arranged through intensive reading. According to Schmidt, "Ziel des intensive Lesen ist, die Formulierungen, die die Befrageten verwenden, zu verstehen und unter "Überschriften" zusammenzufassen"[225]. And then, as the second step, according to the interview transcripts, the materials for the categories will be found out. The third step concentrates on presenting the detailed biographical summaries of all interviews, separating the male and female interviewees into different groups and beginning with the biographical summaries of the female teachers. The forth step aims at condensing the detailed biographical summaries in a comparative manner by applying the formerly identified central categories such as family background, motivation of working at the university, significance of family and marriages, etc. all throughout the interviews. In the third and forth step, the

[223] Flick, Uwe, von Kardorff, Ernst, Steinke, Ines (Hrsg.), "Qualitative Forschung, Ein Handbuch", Rowohlts Enzyklopädie, Veröffentlicht im Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag, Reinbek bei Hamburg, Oktober 2000, p 355 356

[224] Friebertshäuser, Barbara und Prengel, Annedore(Hrsg.), "Handbuch qualitativer Forschungsmethoden in der Erziehungswissenschaft", 1997, p544

[225] Friebertshäuser, Barbara und Prengel, Annedore(Hrsg.), "Handbuch qualitativer Forschungsmethoden in der Erziehungswissenschaft", 1997, p549

female teachers and the male teachers are analyzed and presented as separate groups. The final step comprises a cross-gender analysis. It deals with similarities and differences among female and male teachers, partially applying the already used categories as well as some new categories fitting the cross-gender comparison.

5.2. Interviews with the female teachers – biographical summaries

Table 5.1 The situation of the six female teachers in the capital normal university

Gender/ Female	Art/ Science	Discipline	Age	Professional title	Education	Family	Childr en	Study abroad
FA	Art	English	45	Vice Prof.	M.A.	Married	Yes	Yes
FB	Art	History	28	Teaching Assistant	Dr.	Single	No	No
FC	Art	Education	53	Prof.	B.A.	Married	Yes	No
FD	Art	Chinese	36	Vice Prof.	M.A.	Married	Yes	Yes
FE	Art	Manageme nt	47	Vice Prof.	M.A.	Married	Yes	Yes
FF	Science	Physics	32	Lecturer	Dr.	Married	No	Yes

(In this dissertation, teachers over 45 years old are called older teachers; those between 30 to 45 years old are called young teachers.)

5.2.1. FA

FA is a very successful woman in both her career and in society. She is 45 years old and both a vice-professor and vice dean of the department.

FA has a very happy family. Her daughter will take part in the NCEE[226] next year, and FA is proud of her daughter who might go to university directly, even without taking part in the NCEE, due to her excellent grades.[227]

FA married early and had a baby one year later. She had no experience caring for children before. Both her husband's parents and her parents helped them very much at that time. After marriage, they had to live with her husband's parents because they could not afford an apartment on their own. Her husband's brother and sister could also help FA take care of her daughter. This enabled FA to have more time to pay attention to her career.

[226] National College Entrance Exam

[227] In China, some middle school students with perfect grades can be sent to universities directly instead of passing the NCEE.

FA told us that her mother-in-law was also a college teacher, and that she was very nice and always active in life. She thought that besides family, the young people ought to pay more attention to developing their careers. Therefore, she willingly took care of her granddaughter for FA and her husband. FA said she was very busy teaching at the university in the beginning of her work, and therefore she had no time to look after her family. For this reason, she appreciated what her mother-in-law did for her family. However, her mother-in-law had to stop escorting FA's daughter to and from school and cooking for the family when her father-in-law became ill. From then on, FA had to escort her daughter to and from school by herself every day. She had to look at her watch very often in the afternoon, because she was afraid that she would forget to pick up her daughter. Sometimes she even had to change her seminars with colleagues in order to pick up her daughter on time. Due to the illness of her father-in-law, FA had to help her mother-in-law with some housework after class. Some months later, FA's father-in-law was healthy again and her mother-in-law resumed helping her take care of her daughter. At that time, FA was as busy as ever.

FA told us that she and her husband bought an apartment some years later and they moved out of her husband's family's house. Her daughter stayed with her grandparents because her school was near their home, and she was able to have lunch there. On the weekends, FA would pick up her daughter to come home with her. When asked if her daughter hated her because she did not live with them, FA said her daughter was more independent than other children, and that she had learned to do everything by herself at young age. FA had classes from morning until the afternoon. This means that her daughter could sleep one more hour in the morning if she lived with her grandparents. If she lived with her parents, she would spend over two hours on her way to school, since their new apartment was far away from the school. Another benefit her daughter would receive from living with her grandparents is that she could eat lunch there and sometimes have an afternoon nap.

FA said she thanked her mother-in-law very much; without her help both FA and her husband would not be as successful as they are today in their careers. She was lucky that she and her husband's parents lived in the same city. Otherwise, she would

have had to do everything by herself, especially taking care of her child, like other teachers who were not from Beijing. She also said that if her mother-in-law could not have helped her, she would not have been able to be the vice professor or the leader in the department.

FA told us that her husband was her classmate in the university, and they married after graduation. They were not rich after marriage, because at that time the wage of teachers was not as high as it is today. Her husband ran a company with his friends after borrowing some money from relatives. Therefore, their life was normal. The two bikes that they owned were the most valuable objects in the family. Now they are over 40, and the social situation and wages for a teacher are higher than before. Her husband works in a very famous joint venture company as the manager. They have stable and high incomes, and they do not have to worry about their lives anymore. Therefore, her family is a typical middle class family in today's China. They bought a big house by themselves some years ago, and they could afford two cars. During the interview, she told us that she and her family were admired by some of her colleagues and friends. A successful family in today's China should have a house, an automobile, and wealth.

FA studied English at a Normal University after passing the NCEE in the 1980s. There were more than 20 people in her class at that time. After graduation, only a few of her classmates worked in a university as an English teacher. Some of them were English teachers in high middle schools, while others worked in companies. She told us that one of her classmates immigrated to Australia some years ago. Before that, he was sent to Australia to study for a Master's Degree with a scholarship from his university. He did not go back to China after achieving the degree because he thought that the teacher's wage in China was lower than a worker's wage in Australia. Therefore, he found a job there and his wife gave up her work in China and took their child to go to live with him in Australia. FA said this classmate persuaded her to go to Australia because of the high wage some years ago. FA hesitated for a long time, and finally gave up on this idea for her family because her husband did not want to give up his career. She told us that there was a big party that year for all of the graduates of

her university to celebrate their 25 Year anniversary, where she met all of her classmates in a hotel in Beijing. The one who immigrated to Australia was feeling regretful now, and said that he wanted to go back to China. He hoped to become a university teacher like FA. He told FA that he never thought the social status and wage of a teacher would be so high in today's China, especially as college teacher. He said that if he had continued university in China, he would have become a professor or a leader in the department.

However, among all of her classmates from university, only she and the others who became teachers are stable. Those who became teachers have not changed their jobs after graduation, while others often changed their vocations in order to earn much more money. They changed often because their jobs were not as stable as the job of a teacher. Today, however, a teacher can earn just as much as those in other fields, and can have a comfortable life because a teacher does not need to worry about the stability of the job and the salary after retirement. Sometimes teachers could even get an apartment as a benefit from the schools or universities. In contrast with them, a staff member in a different field could never expect such a benefit from their company. Nevertheless, these staff members of different companies must work hard for money because they are afraid that maybe one day they will become unemployed. FA told us that she felt very lucky and satisfied with her life now. She loves her family more than her career, and she spends more time for her family than for her work. If she could start from the beginning, she would choose to do things the same way all over again.

FA's life is colorful. She has seminars on Mondays and Wednesdays, and normally she prepares her seminars in afternoon for the next day. Every Tuesday, there is a meeting among all teachers of the department.

As a dean of the department, she does not have to work every day. Therefore, she has much time to take care of her daughter and husband and do what she likes, such as cooking or sports. Both her parents and her husband's parents also live in Beijing, and they visit them every week. As a matter of fact, like some of her colleagues, she has time to do a part-time job teaching or tutoring extra classes. However, she is not willing to do it because the salary of a teacher is higher than before, and she and her

husband earn enough for the family. She does not like a nervous and busy life. Of course, she also has some troubles. For example, she told us that she was very sick last year for three months, and that sometimes she had to lie in bed for a whole day. Even though the university afforded all of the costs for her, she wanted to go back to work as soon as possible because she missed her students. She has very good relationship with them. She says that health is the most important thing for everyone.

FA said, as a teacher, there are many opportunities to do part-time work after class, but that she did not plan to do that. Not only did she think that her salary was enough, but she also needed to spend some time with her family. However, this semester she helped her friend teach in another college every Friday. She said that she and her husband wanted to buy a big house. Therefore, she had to earn more money and the wage for the part-time job as a teacher was very high.

FA was satisfied with her life and has never regretted becoming a teacher, especially a university teacher. Compared with schoolteachers, university teachers have more time to relax. They do not need to take care of their students like the schoolteachers must do, because university students are old enough to take care of themselves. A further benefit is that as a university teacher, she has a higher social status, because being a university teacher implies that one is a knowledgeable and qualified person in society. FA gave us the following examples of her higher social status: her daughter told her that some of her classmates and their parents admired FA when they found out that she was a college teacher, and the colleagues of her husband respected her as well.

FA studied English twenty-five years ago. After graduation, she stayed in the university to teach English. About fifteen years ago, the university sent her to America to study for her Master's Degree. Now she is the vice professor, but she has no chance to become the professor unless she achieves a Doctorate Degree. FA told us that some years ago, it was not very strict to be promoted to the professional title, but now it is impossible for a teacher to be promoted unless he or she fulfils some prerequisites. From what she said, we know that the prerequisites to become a professor are not the

same among all universities in China. For example, one normal prerequisite to become a vice professor is that the person should hold a Doctor title. However, at least in Beijing, there could be an exception for teachers who were born before 1965 or who have worked for a certain number of years. Another condition to become a vice professor is to pass a language exam. For English teachers, they must pass the second foreign language exam. For the younger teachers, it is not so difficult since they have learned another foreign language in their universities. There, they must take a second language and an English course, and they have to pass the final language exam in order to graduate. However, for the teachers who have worked for a long time, or for older teachers, this kind of exam is not easy. They have no more energy to learn new knowledge like the younger teachers. Furthermore, at their age, they must care for older parents and younger children, so they have no time to learn. They see the language exam as a barrier to becoming a vice professor, even though their academic skills are excellent. The third condition is publications. Teachers must publish a minimum of four professional papers each year; one of them must be published on the journals of the province. The last condition is that the candidate must be a lecturer. Of course, the relationship with colleagues and leaders is also a necessary condition for promotion, since it somehow reflects one's way of communicating with people.

FA said she had no struggles with the other colleagues. On one hand, she was from Beijing, and therefore there was no need for her to compete with others from different cities for the limited numbers of Beijing's registration, which was related to housing and some welfare. Even if she could not be assigned an apartment by the university, she could live with her parents. The teachers from other cities have no housing in Beijing, and so they have to compete with the others for this welfare, and there were not many free apartments in one department to assign. On the other hand, her mother-in-law and mother could help her take care her daughter while she worked, but the teachers from other cities had to do it themselves. Sometimes they had to change the time of their seminars or ask to be able to leave in order to bring their children to and from school. In conclusion, FA said that she had more time for work than those from other cities, for she has relatively less troubles in her life.

In actuality, FA has no interest in becoming a professor. First of all, she is satisfied with her life now and she does not want to be very tired from her work, and she hopes to have more free time. Secondly, she has no more time to study for a Doctorate degree. After becoming a vice professor and dean of the department, she has to do some administrative things after class, which does not allow her enough time to devote to studying for the required Doctorate degree to become a professor. Finally, she wants to stay healthy because her colleague died at the work last year when he was 40 years old. She said that in fact she had no interest in the administrative things, but the leaders believed that she could be a good vice dean of the department. Therefore, she must support and help the leaders to manage the department. She also told us she was the only female leader in the department, and she had to have some achievements in order not to be looked down upon by her male colleagues. FA and her colleagues are in charge of the different fields. Her main responsibilities are to manage the students, arrange seminars for teachers, and so on.

FA acknowledged that in general, the male teachers had higher educational degrees than the female teachers, although female teachers were the majority in the department. She listed some reasons for that: 1. Most female teachers pay much more attention to their family and have no time to develop themselves. Perhaps this is influenced by the Chinese tradition that the male is the main earner in the family, and that he handles everything outside the family. In contrast, the female is supposed to take care of the family and children. 2. The different retirement ages among males and females. Normally in China, the female teachers have to retire 5 years earlier than male teachers (for females, the retiring age is 55; for males, 60). One intention of the regulation is to protect females. However, it sometimes reduces the enthusiasm of female teachers to work hard. After their children are grown up, they have more time for their career. But since they are middle aged by then, and therefore afraid that they would retire in maybe 5 or 10 years, they think it is better to maintain the status quo. As a result, some of them do not want to compete with the younger or male teachers.

5.2.2. FB

FA introduced FB to us. She is 28 years old, and comes from a small city and a poor family. She always studied hard, from primary school until university, in order to live in a big city like Beijing or Shanghai later. At the very least, she wanted to get more opportunities for a better job instead of going back to her poor hometown. This is one of the reasons why she went on studying for her Master's after achieving her Bachelor degree. She knew that the higher degree meant more opportunities to get a good job, especially for those who had no Beijing Hukou or social connections like her. Perhaps it is necessary to explain the meaning of Hukou.

In China, a newborn baby should be registered within one month after its birth. The local police station in the area of jurisdiction handles the birth residence registration to either the father's or mother's registered permanent address. This is registered in the local household registration institution, and it is the government document to protect citizen's housing permission. At the same time, each family has a household registration book, which records all family members' information. This includes their name, date of birth, the relationship in the family, address, place of work, and marital status. If married, Hukou must also indicate the spouse's name and place of work. In short, it includes the basic and necessary personal information.

With Hukou, a newborn baby can go to kindergarten at the age of 3, and go to school when he or she is 6 years old. Every Chinese citizen who is over 16 years old and living in the People's Republic of China could get the Chinese resident identification card (ID card), but the prerequisite to get the ID card is that the citizen must have Hukou. The ID card is a person's official document; it accompanies the person their whole life and it is very useful and important. For instance, a person has to show the ID card if he wants to change his registered permanent address, join the army, go to the marriage registration office, or move to another city. It is even needed in order to do some daily activities such as applying for a driver's license, buying plane tickets, opening a personal saving account, and so on.[228]

Before 1980, the registered permanent address was extremely important. The

[228] ID card's function http://zhidao.baidu.com/question/43882267.html?fr=qrl

people were limited to their place of birth (registered permanent address), and until their death, they were not allowed to move. It was permitted to leave their city of residence in order to take a holiday or to visit relatives, but it was illegal to work outside of their hometown. Children could not go to school outside of their registered address. After 1980, there was a huge change so that Hukou is not as rigid as before, and people are much more free. For instance, now people are permitted to work everywhere. Many laborers leave their homelands to go to the big cities to work. It brings some advantages to some working fields like building or the household market, because lots of workers in these fields are not local residents; a large number of them are from rural areas. However, the question of their children's education is still a major problem in today's China. Since the children have no Hukou in the city where their parents work, they must go back to their hometown to go to school. This reflects the importance of Hukou from another aspect.

FB mentioned that in Beijing, if one did not have Beijing Hukou, his or her life would not be stable at all. This means that he or she would always have the idea that they were outsiders; it would bring psychological pressure. FB always remembered what her teacher told her when she graduated. Her teacher suggested that she find a job that can help her get the Beijing Hukou– even if it was low paying– and she did so. Because of the Hukou problem, she chose a university job with a relatively low income instead of accepting one company’s offer for a job with a high salary. She did this because in Beijing, if one could be recruited as teacher, either in schools or in universities, he or she would automatically receive the Beijing Hukou. In the interview, FB emphasized the importance of this point— especially for girls— since the psychological stability plays a very important role. She gave us an example: one of her friends, a girl, could not find a stable job within one year after graduation. Her Hukou then had to be moved back to her hometown, which she regretted completely. However, she did not want to go back to her hometown and so she found a job in a company in Beijing. She often told FB that she could not sleep well at night, because she did not know how long could she work in this company without Beijing Hukou.

This friend admired FB very much because of her Beijing Hukou; she always joked to FB that if FB were a boy she would marry her in order to get the Beijing Hukou. FB told us that the residents of Beijing do not realize how important the Beijing Hukou is for those who are from other cities. FB is an official resident of Beijing, and she could have both medical and unemployment insurance in Beijing. At the same time, she could get some welfare from the university, such as a "welfare apartment". On the other hand, her female friend who worked in the company without Beijing Hukou did not have any insurance or welfare in this company. FB told us that her friend was afraid of becoming ill and that she always avoided talking about her future.

Beijing is the capital of China and it is a big city. Many people want to go there to live, study and work because there are much better chances to find a job, much better education and much better living conditions; FB is no exception. As FB said, she was born in western China and her parents were both workers. Even though she was the only child in her family, their living conditions were not good. Her family could only afford her school costs. Therefore, she had no chance to learn other special skills, like playing the piano or drawing, in her spare time. Her life was always dull and quiet because she had no hobbies. After class, she would go home directly to do homework and learn for the next day. Some of her classmates would go to hobby courses after class because their families could afford them, but FB had to stay at home alone. Time went by quickly, and when she was in the second year in the senior middle school, the students were to be divided into two classes: humanities or science. FB did not know which was better for her and which class fitted her, and so just like other girls, she chose the humanity class. This meant that her future university education would also be in the humanities. She was not like her other classmates who always had plans about their future, which university they would go to, and what career they would choose– to be a solider or doctor. FB had no expectations; the only plan was to study at the university in the city.

In the third year of the high middle school in China, students must fill out a form before taking part in the NCEE. On this form, they write down the universities and

subjects they would like to study. Parents always give their children some suggestions, because a wrong choice might affect one's life later on, including their future careers or even marriage. Therefore, the parents and the students must consider it carefully. However, FB's parents did not suggest anything to her; they respected the choice of their only daughter. As a matter of fact, her parents did not attend university; they finished their education after middle school. They worked as normal workers with low wages and the jobs were not stable due to the economic depression. Hence, they hoped that FB could study in the university and then find a good job. As her parents, they hoped that their daughter could be better than them. At the same time, if their daughter could go to university they would get more respect from their colleagues and neighbors, and their relatives would admire the family.

While the other students were busy doing their homework or choosing famous universities and hot professions, FB became a college student in the history department at a university in western China. She told us that she was sent by her middle school to go to straight to university without participating in the NCEE because her note was very good in the high school. Each year, some good students could be sent by their middle school directly to the university. There were few competitors, because few students liked studying history. Despite the fact that FB did not like history, she went because at least this university was in a bigger city than her hometown. Another reason she chose the university was because it was a Normal University. Students there could get some money from the government each month since they must work at the middle school after graduation. The tuition was very low, and therefore her parents did not need to worry about costs. Her parents thought that it was better for their daughter to be sent to the university by the school instead of taking part in the NECC. If their daughter could not pass the NECC, she had no chance to study in the university; now it meant that she could definitely go to university.

During her studies at university, she spent all of her free time in the library– even during the holidays. Although she missed her parents, she did this so that she could

save the money that would be spent to buy the train tickets to go home. During the fourth holiday, she fell in love with a boy who had a family background similar to hers. The boy came from a small town and his parents could not support him much. He had to work during the holidays instead of going home, and this last holiday he would be ready for the Master's entrance exam. After graduating with his Bachelor degree, he did not want to be a history teacher in middle school. He expected to earn more money and live in a big city. Hence, he decided to continue studying for his Master's degree and made the dream come true. He liked FB and hoped that she could study for her Master's as well so that they could be together. FB had not thought to go on studying; she just wanted to find a job quickly after graduation. Even though she did not dream to become a teacher, she would have become a history teacher in a middle school since this job was stable enough and she would not have to use her parents' money any more. Nevertheless, she did not want to leave her boyfriend so quickly. He told her that since Master's degree students could get some living costs from the university every semester and they did not need to pay tuition, maybe they could save some money during those three years. After thinking about it for a long time, FB decided to take part in the Master's entrance exam with her boyfriend.

One year later, FB and her boyfriend passed the Master's exams and studied for their Master's degrees in another university in southern China. Three years later, they both got their Master's degrees in history. Her boyfriend did not want to study any more; he wanted to find a job as soon as possible in this city. He liked this city because it was bigger and more modern than his hometown. He wanted to earn money and marry FB here. Half a year later, he found a job in a private travel agency as a tour guide. The boss would call him when there were travel groups. Even though this job was not stable, this city was a tourist city, and so he had something to do almost every day. Sometimes he even had to work eighteen hours in one day. His wage was enough for him and FB to live, but he thought it was not enough to buy an apartment and to marry. FB did not find a satisfying job within one year. She could not find a job in the university because she did not have a Doctorate degree. On the other hand, if she worked in the middle school she would not be satisfied, because a Bachelor's degree

was enough to be a middle school teacher. However, jobs such as a tour guide like her boyfriend or working in a company were not stable for a girl. She thought she would marry her boyfriend after all. If he had no stable job, they would worry about income later. What she hoped was that her boyfriend could earn much money through his job, whether stable or not, and she should find a stable job even if the wage was not high. At last, FB and her boyfriend made a decision. He continued doing his job here and she studied for her Doctorate degree. After her graduation, they would marry and she would hopefully find a stable work place, such as in a university or in the government office. A few months later, FB passed the Doctorate entrance exam and went on to study history in a university in northern China.

As a matter of fact, they considered their future since they made their decision, FB told us. Most female graduates will have to face the problem of childbirth. After working for years, a relatively stable job could be a necessary element for them to handle the relationship between career and family; taking care of the family becomes the most significant duty in most of women’s lives after childbirth.

FB's Doctorate life was better than her university life. She did not have to worry about money because she could receive some from the university where she studied and her boyfriend always sent some to her. She only hoped that she could get her Doctorate degree as soon as possible, because she wanted to marry her boyfriend after finishing her Doctorate study.

In three years, FB got her Doctorate degree and she wanted to stay in Beijing instead of working in southern China where her boyfriend worked. However, her boyfriend did not want to move to Beijing because he was satisfied his job and wage in southern China. If he moved to Beijing, he would have to start everything over, including his work and his house. Since neither of them wanted to give up what they had, they separated.

FB found a job as a teaching assistant in the history department at the Normal University. She worked very hard, because she knew it was not easy to find a job in the university. It was especially hard for a woman in Beijing. Many people admired her, and her parents were happy for her as well. To work in the university was a stable

job, and to be a university teacher means having a high social status. The wage was also higher than that of a teacher in middle school. She told us she had some plans. First, her Hukou could be moved into Beijing and in one year, she would be a Beijinger. To do this, she had to hand in some forms. Second, she had only worked for two semesters until now, and she needed to study more and get more teaching experience from the others. Third, she wanted to publish more works in order to become a lecturer. Fourth, after mastering more academic knowledge and teaching experiences, she would find a part-time job. She wanted to earn enough money to buy a small apartment in Beijing and invite her parents to come so that they could live together. When asked about the marriage, she said she still did not think about it for the moment. However, she told us that if her boyfriend wanted to come to Beijing, she would marry him. It could be seen as a dilemma for her. She knew that her boyfriend had not planned to come to Beijing, and she considered that they both needed some time to think about the future.

FB's parents worried about her marriage, but they did not say anything because they knew it was not the right time for their daughter to talk about it. Even though her parents admiringly met their daughter's friends and old classmates with their husbands and children in their hometown, they did not want to give their daughter more pressure in her private life.

In a big city like Beijing or Shanghai, it was very popular for the girls not to marry before being 30 years old. However, in FB's hometown, a girl would marry when she was 23 or 24 years old and have a child one year later. Therefore, when the relatives and friends asked the parents if FB had married, the parents always said she already had a boyfriend and they were very busy working and had no time to think about marriage. FB did not go back to her hometown in order to avoid being asked boring questions; she always invited the parents to come to Beijing to visit her. That was one of her aims: to buy an apartment by herself so that she could invite her parents to come to live with her.

FB said that as a woman, she also wanted a man who cared her. She knew that it was impossible for her and her so-called boyfriend to marry, but neither of them wanted to

be the first to say goodbye. FB said that she has almost forgotten this so-called boyfriend, because she had no time to miss him. She had to work hard to make her dreams come true. When someone asked her if she had a boyfriend, her answer was always that she was single. In her department, there were always nice colleagues who introduced males to her. She has not refused these chances to meet other men besides her boyfriend. Maybe one of them would be her future husband. However, she was serious in that she did not want to make a wrong choice. She said that she did not worry about her marriage and now she was patiently waiting for her Prince Charming.

To talk about the teachers in the department, FB said at the moment, there were more female teachers than male teachers in her department. However, her older colleagues told her that before, the male teachers were always a majority. In fact, to study history was not a good choice for middle school students, because they were afraid that after graduation they could not find any job if they did not want to be history teachers in school. Some of the male teachers worked as researchers in institutes after publishing some papers because some of them liked researching, and others hoped to earn more money. The female teachers were conservative and went on to their jobs in the universities; there were few young female teachers who gave up the opportunity to be a university teacher.

FB said it was not easy for her to find this job as a university teacher. She had to work hard and she hoped to become the best teacher among her female colleagues in the department. However, FB said that to have the Doctorate degree did not mean she had a higher educational degree than others. Most of her colleagues hold this title and only a few teachers had only a Master's degree; there was no Bachelor in this department. She planned to research archaeology with the older teachers during the summer holiday because on one hand, her dissertation was about that; on the other hand, there were few female teachers who wanted to go due to the hard conditions in the field. If she could be a member of the research group, it would bring her more opportunities to be promoted quickly. FB told us that she did not want to be the leader; she only wanted to become a professor ten years later.

In FB's eyes, the male teachers have more advantages than female teachers in terms

of teaching or researching fields. She also noted that in general, male teachers have more seminars each week.

5.2.3. FC

FC is 53 years old and in 2 years, she will retire. She finished her Bachelor's degree in the 1980s and has been a lecturer in the education department until now. At that time, it was very difficult to go to the university to study. The national college entrance exam was very difficult and the entrance rate was 20:1. This meant that only one student could study higher education, and 19 others would fail. University or college graduation could change one's fate. If a countryside student graduated, he or she could find a job in the city and get the city Hukou and would be no longer have to be a farmer. If a student from a small town graduated, he or she could find a job in the big city, and could become a citizen there. Because FC's parents were farmers, their children were also farmers. Her parents had no jobs; they only worked in the field. Their living conditions were very bad. Since FC wanted to change her life and get the city Hukou, she had to depend on herself.

FC told us that in the past in China, people always said that there were two ways to escape from poverty: to study in the university or college, or to join the army. FC had the same opinion. She hoped to change her fate and escape from poverty by studying in the university. She thought that there were some problems in Chinese society. The obvious problem was the huge gap between the city and countryside, especially between the rich people in the city and the poor people in countryside. FC was from a countryside family, and she always heard from her parents that the city was modern and big, and that people could find jobs with much earning there. She had two brothers, and they both wanted to work in city. However, at that time the firms in city only needed workers with city Hukou. The countryside dweller had no chance to get such a job. One of her brothers married a girl who was from a city family, and since then he became a city dweller, he could work in a state-owned enterprise. Her other brother still learned in high school at that time, and he could not join the army because of his age. Therefore, he had to stay in his hometown with their parents as a

farmer until now. FC told us she and her one brother worked in urban areas and their wages were higher than her other brother in the countryside.

At that time, if a rural child had good scores on the national college entrance exam, he or she could study in the university and college, and after graduation urban firms could employ him or her. His or her rural Hukou could be changed to urban Hukou, and he or she would be a city dweller forever. FC was such a person. Of course, she said, to become a city dweller would bring her some advantages. For instance, the living standard would be better than in countryside: wages, housing, medical insurance.

She emphasized that now, since the Hukou is not as important as before, the gap between the cities and rural areas is not as big as before and the living conditions in the countryside in some provinces are no more different than in the cities. Even though the farmers had no urban Hukou, they were permitted to work in the cities now.[229]

FC said that after graduation from university, rural students like her hoped to first find a job in city– no matter good or bad. They just wanted to stay in the city and get a stable monthly wage and the urban Hukou instead of going back to do farm work. In contrast with them, the students from the city did not have to worry about their work seriously, for at that time there were only a few graduates. Therefore, almost every graduate could find a job, and those from city could be very easily employed. They only cared about good welfare and a high wage. There were different needs between the students from the city and the students from countryside in the job market. Most of the rural graduates wanted only urban Hukou. It was the basic requirement when they looked for a job, for they hoped to change their fates. In order to have an urban Hukou, they could do any job. In contrast with them, the city students only needed a place where they could work every day.

At that time, the teacher's wage was low for both schoolteachers and university

[229] "The Household Register New Deal' Reduces the Differences Between Town and Country" 12. 05.2007
http://www.zkcz.gov.cn/news/News_View.asp?NewsID=4211

teachers. Many people with a low educational level, or those who worked in the factories, had the same wage as a teacher. As a result, few people wanted to be teachers. However, it was the best chance for rural students like FC to change their fate and get city Hukou. Since there were few competitors in this area, it was easy for FC to become an urban dweller if she chose to be a teacher. In addition, FC was a very traditional Chinese woman. She chose to be a teacher because even though the wage was low, there were two long holidays in one year, and she thought that after marriage she could use the holidays to take care of her family and child. She was very satisfied that after graduation she got Beijing Hukou by herself and had quickly found stable work.

She married a Beijinger who was also a college graduate and worked as an engineer in a factory. When asked if she loved her husband, she said had no relatives or friends in Beijing and as a girl she was very alone in this big city. Her parents could not live with her because they had to work in their hometown, and she needed a family– not a big one, but warm; her husband could give her such a family. She also said that everyone was selfish, especially a girl like her who did not have any social connections in Beijing. Her husband was a relative of one of her female colleagues. She thought her colleague could help her with her career in the future if she married him. FC had a son quickly after marriage. She cared for her husband and their son and also her husband's parents, because they had to live with them.

FC told us that she did almost all of the housework at home. Her own mother told her that even if her husband's sister did not do anything, the parents of her husband would not say anything. However, if FC did not do anything, her parents-in-law would definitely say that she was lazy. It was proved that her mother was right, and FC did not want her mother-in-law to say anything. She realized that if she did nothing at home, her mother-in-law would tell her son that his wife was lazy, but if she did something, her mother-in-law would think it was her duty.

FC's day-to-day life was repetitive until the 1990s. At that time, some people gave up their stable work in factories, government, or schools and they went to work in a

foreign company or did some business themselves in order to earn much money. Before the 1990s, people emphasized that stable work was the most important thing in one's life, but people realized step by step that regardless of country or family, they were dependant on an economic base. This means that more and more people paid attention to the income that they earned, and FC's husband was one of them. He left his factory and worked in a foreign company. There, he not only earned more money than before for his family, but he also had better chances for his own development. In order to support her husband, FC stayed in the university.

FC said that she was conservative and that at the beginning, she did not agree with her husband giving up his stable job. Her husband expressed that he was over thirty years old and he had already wasted much time. He was not satisfied doing the factory job, and felt that if he did not break out on a new path now, he would not receive another chance to do so. At last, she agreed with her husband's decision because she did not want him to regret anything. If he failed, at least she had a job and wage to live. Although it was not high, it was enough to make a living for the whole family. She told us that she worried that her husband could be fired at any time if he did something wrong. Her mother-in-law was also angry with her. She blamed FC for letting her husband give up a stable job in the factory to work in a joint venture company. However, she changed her mind after FC's husband was promoted some months later.

In recent years, the social status of all teachers is higher than before. At the same time, their wages also slowly became higher than before. FC's son grew up slowly and he wanted private space, and his parents needed it as well. Hence, they decided to buy a bigger apartment. It was not difficult for them to buy an apartment because their wages were higher and their living conditions were better than before. At the end of the 1990s, they left her husband's parents' house and moved to their new apartment, which they bought by themselves. FC continued caring for the family and her son, because her husband was busier than before. When her son was enough old to care for himself, she had more spare time. However, she still had to do housework.

After working as a lecturer some years, FC began to care about her career

intensively. She said to us that the living condition now was better than earlier, it was time to do something about her career. Therefore, she decided to achieve a higher professional title. Not only could her wage be raised, but she could also be more respected. Since some of young teachers who had only worked for a few years were already lecturers, she was afraid that they might laugh at her. She was an older teacher and had already worked for over 20 years. She said that the leader talked about her professional title some years earlier, but she had no time to think about it then because she had to take care of her son and the family. She wanted to be promoted, but she was so tired that she could not go on reading and writing after housework, and she could not find extra time to write papers or publications. When she left the university and arrived at home, there was no end to the housework she had to do.

She told her leader her idea about getting a promotion, and the leader told her it was more difficult to be promoted than in the past years. There were some new conditions for promotion today, which every candidate must fulfill. Of course, the years of working and work experience were important as well. However, they were not as important as before. Now people put their focus more on the scientific researches. In short, she had to publish some research papers in professional magazines. Besides that, the relationship among colleagues and the vacancy of the position were also significant points. At that time, there was one free position for vice professor in the department that year, and FC was promoted quickly. She told us that she was very satisfied with her situation.

When she was 53 years old, she was ready for retirement within 2 years. There were some new conditions in her university for the promotion of a professor, including: the candidate must be over 50 years old; they must have over 30 years of work experience; they must have a professional title of vice professor; their educational degree must at least be a Bachelor's degree; they must pass the foreign language test; and they should have published more than 5 books in their own subject, and each year 5 papers must be published in professional magazines.

FC told us that she had not ever thought about being promoted as a professor because she did not want to work harder than ever in the last two years before her

retirement. Furthermore, the wages of both her and her husband were high enough; she had nothing to worry about. She hoped to spend her last 2 years in the university in peace. She had no energy to publish so many professional papers, which would take her very much time. She told us that her relationship with the staff was good and the leader persuaded her to apply for the title of vice professor when she was a lecturer. This time, the leader advised her again to achieve the title of professor, for if she would be a professor she would have more chances to be employed again by the same university or other universities after retirement. The leader hoped that she would at least try to grasp her last opportunity.

FC knew the leader was good to her, and her husband encouraged her to try it, no matter what the result. However, FC hesitated to make her decision. The first reason was that she forgot the foreign language that she had learned in her period as a student. She did not use it often after work, so she had already forgotten most of it, except for some simple words. When she was young it was not so important to raise the professional title with a second language, but now the foreign language exam was a very important point to in order to do so. FC worried that at her age she could not learn it well enough to pass the exam. Her second reason was that she had already published some works and books in the past, but to be a professor she had to publish 5 papers each year. She worried that she did not have enough time to finish them. Another reason was that she wanted to have more time with family. If she were a professor, she would have to spend much more time at work.

As a matter of fact, FC's husband hoped that his wife would have more achievements in her career and gave her some advice. For example, if FC had no time to do housework, they could employee a babysitter to do it since they did not have to worry about the money now. If English or other European languages were difficult for her, she could choose to learn Japanese instead. Since there are many similarities between Chinese and Japanese, maybe she could understand the meaning of the sentences even if she did not know how to pronounce everything. Regarding the papers she must publish, she could write down some working experiences for the magazines, or tell the story of how she overcame difficulties in terms of teaching.

Finally, FC made her decision to apply for the title of professor. She arranged and published her works before the deadline of the application. FC chose English as the foreign language to learn, and so she had to go back to social school to learn a new language. It was not so easy for her, being over 50 years old, to learn some new knowledge. However, she was very lucky and she passed the exam with only two points above the failing grade. One year later, she was promoted to professor.

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5.2.4. FD

FD, 36 years old, was born in Beijing and her parents and relatives were all in Beijing. Her life was similar to other children whose parents all worked in Beijing and were busy with their work. Her mother was a doctor and her father was an engineer. She was an only child. Her parents were very busy during her childhood, so she sometimes lived with the grandparents from her mother's side, and sometimes she lived with the grandparents from her father's side. Although she had no sisters and brothers in her own family, she had many cousins in Beijing. She and her cousins

were sent to the grandparents' home in the winter and summer holidays, so that these children would spend their holidays together. Their grandparents did not like the holidays very much because their grandchildren were very noisy, and they had to cook for the children each day. Some of the children were picked up and taken home by their parents after work, and the others, like FD, stayed with them for the whole holiday. Since she did not live with her parents during the holidays and only stayed with her parents at night while she was in school, she was very independent and had her own judgment.

FD did not study hard, but she was very intelligent and her note was always average in the class. Her school was a key school and was made of two parts: junior middle school and senior middle school. FD spent three years in middle school, but her graduation note was not enough good to go on learning in the senior middle school at the same school. Her parents hoped their only daughter could study in the university after graduating from the senior middle school, instead of the vocational high school and then work. As parents, they hoped that their child would be better than them, and to be a university student was the first step. Her mother thought there were more chances for her daughter to go to university if she learned in the key senior middle school than in the normal senior middle school, so she decided to visit her daughter's teachers. If they could help her daughter continue learning in the same school, they were willing to pay some money to the school. In China, if students wanted to learn in a key school but their scores on the entrance exam did not reach the minimum passing score of the school, they had to pay some money to the school so that they could learn there. However, her father did not want to do that. He thought that if his daughter studied hard in the normal high school, she could also go to the university. In the end, FD stayed in the same school to study. Since she won some prizes for the school in some singing and painting contests, the headmaster agreed to allow FD to learn in the senior middle school, and her parents did not have to pay anything.

While FD attended senior middle school, her mother thought her daughter’s notes had to be better than those of her classmates if she wanted to go to university.

Therefore, FD had to pay all of her attention to either homework or exercises after school. Her mother also sent her to tutoring schools on the weekends so that she could have more exercises or go over what she learned in the school, even though the costs of such schools were not cheap. In the last year in her senior middle school, FD decided to study humanities later on in university. She liked Chinese and English, and her notes in physics and mathematics were not good. Therefore, her teacher suggested to her and her parents to think about humanities. Her parents– especially her father– thought that a girl ought to have a stable job (such as a lawyer, an accountant or a teacher) and find a nice husband. Therefore, in their eyes, studying humanities was a good choice.

In her senior middle school, most of the boys stayed in the science class in the third year and most girls chose humanities. At that time, some disciplines such as law, accounting and foreign language were very popular. Many students chose these as their university's discipline in humanities classes; FD was one of them. FD told us that she did not want to be a teacher. She wanted to be a flight attendant or to work in an office. She thought that if she worked as a flight attendant, she could fly to anywhere in the world and she could also have a high wage and visit different cities often. If she worked in an office, she could wear beautiful clothes every day. To be a teacher was not her dream. In her mind, teachers always looked so serious and their clothes were not colorful but rather quite monochrome. If she became a teacher, she would have to stay in the school in her whole life with the children instead of seeing the world.

However, her parents told her that the department of Chinese in the Normal University was better than other universities and that she should choose a Normal University; FD agreed with her parents. Therefore, her first choice of universities on the form filled out before the NCEE by every student was a key Normal University. Her parents were afraid that FD would not be accepted to any university if her scores were low, and the passing scores were not very high in some Normal Universities. In addition, some of them were the key university as well. However, FD passed the NCEE with high scores– especially in Chinese and English– and she was accepted to the key Normal University, even though it was not her dream university. In China, the

Normal Universities had permission from the Ministry of Education to recruit the students earlier than other universities. Therefore, if a student's second choice on the application form were a Normal University– even if his scores were enough for his first choice– the Normal University would recruit him first. One reason for that is that the government has to guarantee that each Normal University can recruit enough students each year. Otherwise, the number of schoolteachers would be reduced step by step because few students at that time chose to study at Normal University due to the low wage for teachers.

FD said that if she had not written the Normal University on the form early, she would have gone to her dream university. However, she had no choice and had to go to the Normal University. Her father suggested that she give up this year and take the NCEE again next year because he hoped his daughter could go to her dream university. However, she did not want to have a hard life again. She said she had to face numbers of exercises or textbooks every day in the past year, and because of that she lived under great pressure. Hence, she decided to study in the Normal University.

FD lived in the student dormitory during her studies and went home every week. Her classmates admired her very much because her family was rich and she did not have to work after seminars. Her classmates always worked as private teachers after class or as salespeople on the weekend in order to earn some money for living costs. Meanwhile, FD was able to have a picnic or go to the cinema with her friends. In her college years, her note was average in the class.

There were always boys to introduce some part-time jobs to her, such as tour guide. A tour company needed good English-speaking students to lead the foreign visitors, because the students were open and young. Some college students with good English wanted to earn some money for living costs or to support their parents. Others, like FD, wanted to practice their English. FD's parents did not want her to do this part-time job. They thought they were not lacking money and they preferred that FD would study hard. However, when their daughter told them she could practice her English and it was good for her note, they agreed and gave her double her living costs

to buy some food and take a taxi in order to stay healthy. She told us this was funny. The other students worked in order to earn money, but she wanted to earn money so that her parents would not have to send her so much for her living costs.

She liked this part-time job as a tourist guide, not only because it was free to visit different tourist attractions, but also because she could get to know many new friends from around the world. FD said she could say "Hello" in 8 different languages. When the visitors played and did some shopping, and she could pause and talk with the other tourist guides, and some of them became her good friends. During a summer vacation, she met a boy who was a student in another university and was also a tour guide as a part-time job. This boy quickly became her boyfriend.

4 years later, her college life ended and the next step was to find a job. In her generation, the university would recommend their graduates to middle schools as teachers so that they did not need to waste their time finding jobs. FD and her classmates were assigned to the middle school to be teachers. Two excellent students from her class, who became members of the communist party in the third year and were also the leaders of the student's organization in the college, were permitted to stay in the university become university teachers. One of them came from another small city and wanted the Beijing Hukou; he was willing to stay in his alma mater to become a college teacher. The other student was from Beijing and did not want to become a teacher and quickly went to study abroad.

FD told her parents that she wanted to be a tour guide, not a teacher. Her parents thought that being a teacher was a stable job and there were also winter and summer holidays in the year. The wage was not very high, but they did not need money from her. However, FD did not want to be a teacher. The students from the other provinces became teachers because they wanted to live in Beijing and get Beijing Hukou, but she was from Beijing, and did not need to do this. In addition, as a tour guide she could earn more money than as a teacher. She was young and had Bachelor's degree, so she thought she could find the job easily– regardless if the job was stable or not.

In order to persuade her parents, she told her parents that two students could be permitted to stay in the university, and one of them from Beijing gave up. Actually,

she wanted to tell her parents that not only she, but also some other students, did not want to become a teacher. However, her mother thought this was a good opportunity for her daughter to become a college teacher. Hence, her mother met FD's teacher and expressed that her daughter hoped to be a university teacher. Because her mother was a doctor and also a leader in the hospital, she had good relationships with some powerful people who helped her recommend her daughter to work at the university. The university needed some fresh people, and therefore FD became a university teacher.

FD told us she did not know what her mother did for her at all. She knew her mother just wanted to find a better way for her. After thinking for some days, she realized that to be a tour guide was suitable for young people, but she had to find a stable job for when she got older. A stable job would be especially important if she had a child. She would have to spend more time to care for the child. If she were a tour guide, she would have to go to other cities sometimes, and if her child was sick or needed her, she would not be able to come back at once. Moreover, to be a college teacher was better than to be a middle school teacher because the social status of the university teacher was higher than other jobs and she had more spare time to do her own things. Besides, if she was a college teacher, she might find a husband who was better than her, because it was a tradition in China that the husband normally was better than the wife in a family.

Being a teacher was not as difficult as FD thought. Occasionally, a teacher in her department was sick that year, and FD was needed to replace her to teach some seminars. She told us that she was 22 years old when she worked and her students were only 18 years old. This meant that she was from the same generation as her students. Because FD was nice and young, she built very good relationships with her students. FD sometimes thought this job seemed like a continuation of her college years. However, she faced some difficulties. She had no prior teaching experience, and sometimes she had to work until midnight to prepare for her seminars. Some older teachers and her colleagues gave her useful advice in terms of teaching methods or preparing the seminars. This way, she was able to adapt to the job within one year.

After the teacher who was ill returned, it was arranged that FD would work as an assistant in the department, in charge of some daily office tasks.

In the fifth year that she worked, the university was divided into some small colleges. They were different department than before, and FD's department was no exception. FD said that while it was enough for her to be secretary, she also missed her time as teacher. She thought that if she continued working as an assistant, she would have something to do with her discipline and become an administrative staff in the future, but not a teacher. Her parents had the same opinion: they thought that as a teacher she could earn some practical skills, which would be helpful for her own development. After discussing this with the leaders of the department, FD was appointed as a teacher for the new students. In the third year, she was promoted to lecturer, but if she wanted to be promoted continuously, she needed a higher academic degree. In addition, some new teachers in her department held higher degrees than her. FD said it was the first time in her life that she lived under pressure, and so she decided to study for her Master's degree.

There were always chances for university teachers to study continuously. That year, the leader sent four teachers with wages to study; two of them went to America and the others went to China. Because FD's English was not bad, she had no child to care for, and her husband and parents also supported her, she was picked to achieve her Master's degree in America.

The two years abroad study passed very quickly. Since FD did not need to pay the tuition fee and the Chinese college gave her a wage every month, her life abroad was relatively comfortable. In her leisure time, she always visited different cities. Of course, she worked very hard for seminars and on her homework. She said that during her college period in China, she only wanted to hold a Bachelor's degree; now she knew it was important for a person to study– not only to hold a higher degree, but also to have a better future. She missed her family very much. Her husband visited her twice during the two years and they toured in America and Mexico. Before her graduation, her parents came to visit her and they attended her graduation ceremony and then they all flew back to China together.

After FD came back to China, she decided to apply for vice professor. She prepared her works and published two books one year later. The two years of studying in America allowed her to quickly pass her foreign language exam. One and half years later, she was promoted to vice professor.

FD's husband was the boy who she met her in a summer vacation. At that time, he was a student in another university and also worked as a tour guide as a part-time job. After his Bachelor's graduation, he worked in a foreign company and earned more than FD. She told us that she did not marry too late. When she was 27 years old they married, but they did not have a child until she was 34 years old.

FD said she was very free before the birth of her child. Since she and her husband were both only-children and their parents had good jobs in Beijing, they bought an apartment for the young couple together. The young pair did not cook at home. Sometimes they had supper with FD's family, sometimes at her husband's home.

She told us that she was the first teacher in her university to buy a private car, even before her headmaster. Since both her and her husband's parents had good jobs, they did not to give their parents money every month, and their parents always bought something for them. She and her husband did not save money. At that time, the private car was a symbol of wealth, not a means of transportation. She and her husband decided to buy a car and their parents also gave them some support. She told us that her colleagues, who came from the other provinces or from normal families in Beijing, admired her because she did not have any pressure. For instance, she did not have to worry about the apartment, because their parents already bought it for them. Their parents had jobs, so they did not need any help from FD, and the hourly worker would help her to clean the room.

However, FD wanted a child when she was 34 years old because her friends and colleagues around her had all children. She admired them and she also wanted to become a mother. Now her baby is 3 years old, and she told us she would save money now for her baby's education in the future. Both her and her husband's parents would care for her baby, and she had to reduce her time at work. She said her baby was still

young; when he was enough old she would let her parents take care of him.

FD told us that most of her colleagues are women, but the leader is male. She admires her leader not only because he holds a Doctorate degree, but also because he is excellent at teaching. The leader hopes that all teachers could pay much attention to get new knowledge after class. FD said some teachers of other departments thought the relationships in her department were very complicated. Because there are many female teachers, they thought that maybe they would struggle for wages or professional titles, but as of yet, she has not noticed such a problem. She thought her colleagues are all nice and they always helped each other. FD thought her leader plays a very important role at work, because he gave every teacher a fair chance at work. FD said that if she were a leader, she would not be as successful as him. As a woman, she preferred thinking about herself, but not about others.

She said that all of her colleagues had a Master's degree or a Doctorate degree. Everyone liked to learn from each other, and there were always opportunities for the teachers to get continuous education each year. Everyone wanted to make more progress in his or her own career, whether female or male. In FD's department, the female teachers are as successful as their male counterparts in their jobs.

5.2.5. FE

FE was born in Beijing and is 47 years old. Her parents were farmers. Her father had a driving license, so he found a job in Beijing driving a truck in a factory and her mother came with him to Beijing in the 1960s. FE told us that her father was very nice, and her mother did all housework in the family. They were nice people. However, both of them had low educational levels, and therefore FE had to take care of her homework by herself. Because she was very diligent, her note was always good in primary school and junior middle school.

In China, there are two choices for the students after the 9 years of compulsory school. The first way is to study in the vocational high school (such as a school to become a bank assistant, a car repairing school, salesman school, hotel service school...), and after 2 or 3 years, the students could work. The other way is to continue

studying in the senior middle school and then to attend university. Normally, the students with bad notes want to go to the vocational high school because they do not like studying and prefer to earn money as early as possible. At the vocational school, they learn only relative knowledge within two or three years at school and make one year of practice. After the practice year, the students will be recommended by the school to some factories, or they can find jobs themselves. It might be said that if the students study in the vocational high school, they will find work right away after graduation. The students with bad notes in the middle school would not be able to pass the entrance exam for the senior middle school because the entrance note in the senior middle school is higher than the vocational high school. In contrast with them, most students with good notes want to continue studying in the senior middle school and later attend university. Of course, there are also some students with good notes who would like to go to vocational high school because they want to work earlier due to their family status. Their parents think that if the children go to the vocational high school, they could find job after graduation. They are afraid that their children might not find a job at once after university graduation, because each year more and more university graduates appear.[230]

As a matter of fact, FE's mother hoped that her daughter would go to vocational high school and find a job quickly, because FE's little brother was born during her last year in middle school. Her mother thought that only one wage from her husband was not enough to support the family. She thought that, as a girl, FE did not need to have high education. It was more important for her to have a job and find a good husband like her father or a rich man. But FE's father thought that his daughter had good grades and it would be better for her to go to senior middle school and then study in university. He did not want his daughter to accept a low education like him.

FE followed her father's decision to go to senior middle school. She told us the living conditions in her family were very poor at that time, especially during the three years she was at her senior middle school. The family had no savings, and therefore

[230] Wang, Han, "Go to University or Vocational High School", Chinese Youth Newspaper, 14.08.2007

she studied very hard in order to study in the university later. Sometimes she had to do a part-time job to support the family. FE knew that if she could not pass the NCEE, she would not go to university. This would mean that she would have wasted these 3 years in senior middle school. If she only received her senior middle school degree, the jobs she would find would have wages much lower than those she could find with a university degree. She said it was more of a pain for her to face the pressures of studying than the pressures of poor living conditions.

FE told us that when the university informed her that she was allowed to study there, her father cried. Her father had never cried, even though the family was very poor and he always had to borrow money for his family from his work. But this time, he cried. She would study in the Normal University, because at that time the Normal University students did not need to pay a tuition fee. At the same time, they could get some money every month from the government. Therefore, FE decided to go to Normal University in order to save some money for her parents. The other reason to go to the Normal University was that after graduation, the students from the university would find a job as a teacher in middle schools easily and quickly. She did not want to waste much time finding a job because she wanted to help her family as soon as possible, and she knew that her family did not have any social connections to help her find a job.

FE was a shy girl, and she did not have many friends in her life. During her college period, she studied very hard every day and she went home to help her mother do housework every week. As a result, she had no time to get to know boys. Her father knew their home was too far away from his daughter's university, even though they all lived in Beijing. However, Beijing is very big and the transportation at that time was not very developed. He hoped that his daughter could stay in the dormitory to study over the weekend, or to have a rest or meet with her classmates instead of coming home every week. If she continued to come home every weekend, she might become very tired. However, FE knew that her mother had to take care of her little brother and cook for the family every day, and she wanted to help her mother so that she was not very tired. She told her mother not to wash the clothes because she would do it for her

on Sundays. She cared and played with her brother and let her mother have time to have a rest or visit the relatives. On Sunday nights, she had to go back to the university before the door of the dormitory was closed. Sometimes she took some food from home to the university in order to save some money. During her 4 years of college, her life was always the same.

FE always had good notes during her college period. She became the only one in her class to be a university teacher after graduation. Some of her classmates from other provinces worked as middle school teachers in order to get Beijing Hukou, although they did not like this job at all. The others from Beijing found different jobs. They chose not to find jobs working as teachers due to the low wages. However, because of the poor status in FE's family, she became a teacher in the university. She already had Beijing Hukou and she only needed a stable job to earn money for the family. She gave all of her wage to her parents and lived in the single dormitory in the university after graduation. She did this because her parents' home was too far from the university and it took too much time to go home every day. After she graduated and found a job, her mother thought her daughter was old enough to marry. If she were too old, she would not be able to find a man with a good situation. Her father, however, thought that since his daughter held a higher education and was now a teacher in the university, she should not settle for just any boy. Even though her wage was not much, she had a high degree and a good job. Therefore, her father hoped that his daughter would not find a normal boyfriend without a degree like himself, even though he worked as a driver and had a stable job. FE told us that she knew her father told his idea to his colleagues. He hoped that they could introduce some good boys to her. At the same time, her mother hoped her daughter could find a boyfriend among her classmates or colleagues. Her mother had a few friends and she knew that their farmer relatives could not help FE because her family was the better off than all of them.

There were always nice people in the unit. One of FE's colleagues introduced a boy to her, who became her first boyfriend and later, her husband. This boy came from the

countryside in southern China, and studied for his Master's degree in Philosophy in Beijing. He worked at an institute in Beijing. FE's mother thought that this boy was not handsome, and also that he was short and hairless. His degree was high, but his wage was low. There was only one point which satisfied her mother, and that was that his parents were not in Beijing and he had two brothers at home who worked as well. Therefore, the brothers could take care of the family, which enabled him to pay all of his attention to his own family in Beijing. FE's father thought this boy was a normal boy, but he had high degree that might lead to a better future. Furthermore, his job was stable and he had more chances. Even though the wage was temporarily not high, he was young and could develop well. However, he also worried that since this boy came from the countryside and his parents were farmers, their ideas of everything would be different from those from city, such as he and his wife. Although they were also from a rural area, they were still citizens of Beijing. He was afraid that her husband's family would exclude his daughter. Nevertheless, FE thought this boy was very honest and had a high educational level. He worked very hard and got Beijing Hukou by himself. If she married him, a room in the dormitory from the institute where he worked could be arranged for them. This way, they could live independently, especially since her parents had no more space at home.

Some months later, they married and moved to the 15-m² room with a public kitchen and toilet in her husband's unit. Neither of their families was rich. The parents of the boy only gave their daughter-in-law a silver ring, and the parents of FE bought some furniture for them. After marriage, FE gave her parents half of her monthly wage– not the entire wage like before– because her husband's family also needed such money. The young couple was frugal and saved some of their limited wage every month. They went to FE's family and visited her parents every week, and she helped her mother wash and clean like before. Her husband helped care for the little brother of his wife and do some heavy work for the father. Her father told his daughter not to come often because she had already married. He thought that she and her husband needed more spare time for themselves. He did not want to waste their time and he thought it was unfair for his son-in-law to do housework for him on the weekend. FE

told us she was satisfied with her husband because he always did something for her family on the weekends and never complained about it. Her husband told his father-in-law that since his parents were not in Beijing, he regarded them as his own parents. FE's parents were very happy that they did not make a wrong decision about their daughter's marriage. FE did not see her parents-in-law until her son was 5 years old because they wanted to save the money that they would have spent on the train tickets. She preferred to send them living costs every month.

FE's university was not near her home, so she had to spend 2 hours on the way by bike. After work, she liked do some shopping in the market. Her husband lived and worked in the yard of the institute, and he had no time to help his wife do some housework. He was very busy because he had to publish some papers every year. Every morning, FE got up earlier than her husband and prepared breakfast for him. Then she went to work by bike, no matter if it were good or bad weather. They had lunch in their own canteen, and after work FE would cook at home. Because her husband was very busy working, she had to do all of the housework for the family.

FE said she supported her husband in achieving his Doctorate degree and gave up the chance to achieve her own Master's degree. She had to spend more time to take care of the family and her son, as well as her parents. Her husband promised her that after his Doctorate graduation, he would do all of the housework and take care of the baby. He thought his wife was tired and he also hoped that she could become more successful in her own career. Unfortunately, he was not able to carry out his promise. After graduation, the institute wanted to send him abroad to study for his post-Doctorate. Of course, he would make the decision whether or not to do it by himself. In fact, he did not want to go abroad. He thought that after marriage he did not do anything for the family and if he could not stay at home, his wife would not only work but also care for their son every day by herself. At the same time, his mother-in-law was sick, and she could not help care for the baby like before. In fact, his wife had to often go back home to take care of her mother. Hence, he decided to pass on this good opportunity. Nevertheless, when he told his idea to his wife, she disagreed with him. FE said that she was a traditional Chinese woman. Her mentality was influenced by

her mother: the husband must be better than the wife, no matter in which field, and she would be proud of her husband's success. She told her husband he had to make some achievements while he was still young, otherwise he might regret making a wrong decision in his later years. FE also told her husband that there would be some advantages if he studied abroad. For instance, his wage could be doubled every month– one part from the institute and the other part from the project. After graduation, he could have more chances to be promoted. FE told her parents her opinions, and they agreed with their daughter. They also persuaded their son-in-law not to miss the opportunity. FE told us that her husband was moved and at last he agreed to go abroad to study and to come back to China as soon as possible.

FE no longer had any time to care for her parents after her husband went to study abroad. Instead, she just gave them more money than before. She hoped that she could compensate them with money. Time went by quickly. It seemed that she had no spare time, not even on the weekends. While her husband was abroad, she had to do everything herself. FE told us that this living situation was indeed over after 2 years. Her husband came back with his post-Doctorate degree. He told his wife he was used to saving money, and that he took almost all of his scholarship money back to China with him. It was the first deposit in the family. Before marriage, FE gave her whole wage to her family and after marriage she gave them half and used the rest as living costs. Her husband did the same as her because his parents needed the money more in the countryside.

FE told us that her husband published some works within one year and was also promoted. The institute quickly gave him an apartment to replace the 15-m² room. They used all of their savings to pay for the apartment and buy some furniture. She told us that their real life began then. She thought their life before could be seen as a fight, because both of them struggled with hard lives. Now their life was much better. Her brother graduated and found work as an office assistant in a company. Three years later, her brother wanted to go abroad to study. However, since he had only worked for two years, he did not have enough money to go and his parents could not help him anymore. FE decided to give her brother some of her savings to help him

make his dream come true, and her husband agreed, too. She said that she was poor again, but this time was not as bad as before. First of all, her brother was grown up and he could care for himself and make his living overseas while he studied there. Second of all, they still had some savings and their own house, and they did not need money urgently.

Now FE could have a rest and breathe freely again. When she looked back on her life, she said that the time went by quickly. She found that her son was already a middle school student, her husband finished the post-Doctorate degree and was promoted, they moved into a big apartment, her father retired, and her brother had already grown up and went abroad to study. When she found some grey hair in her husband's head, she realized that she was also middle-aged; her face was never young again. She had already worked for almost 20 years, but she was still a lecturer. The last opportunity that FE had to be promoted from teaching assistant to lecturer was over 10 years ago. There were many young teachers with Master's and Doctorate degrees in the department. She had already given up many chances for the family or her husband. If she would not catch up with the other teachers now, then she would never have the time, because she was already 40 years old. Hence, FE decided to study for her Master's degree and her husband supported her very much. He thought that as a college teacher, she should learn new things. Before, she had no time to learn because she had to take care the family and support him; now was time to do it.

She got a chance from the department to study for her Master's degree in the USA. She wanted to study for her Master's in Beijing so that she could go home every day, but the leader told her that the same degree achieved abroad was better than what she would receive in China. For the sake of her future, she should do it abroad. Moreover, she could speak English very well and it would be easy for her to adjust to the life there. At last, she decided to leave her son and husband to go to the USA.

She achieved her Master's degree in two years. She went back to China after graduation because she missed her family very much. Within the coming year, she published some papers and two books. In the second year after her Master's graduation, when she 45 years old, she was promoted to vice professor. During the

first 20 years in her work, she devoted more energy to the family and her son. In the recent years, she had to pick up the books again. She was tired and studying was already enough for her. She decided to relax, give herself a break, and enjoy her life.

FE told us that she often discussed new and hot themes in society with the young teachers after class. She knew that she must know what the students liked; otherwise, the students would not like the old examples and programs.

In FE's department, there were more male teachers than female teachers, and like most of the departments, all of the leaders were males. FE thought it had something to do with the educational degree. In general, the educational degrees of the male teachers were higher than the females' degrees. As a consequence, their professional titles were also higher than the females' titles.

In FE's opinion, most of the female teachers in her age group or older spend much time caring for their children and doing housework. The young female teachers between thirty and forty years old had fewer siblings than those in FE's age group. Therefore, the parents of the younger teachers could help them care for the children. At the same time, they were open minded and some of them liked to employee a babysitter or hourly worker instead of their parents. Normally, the female teachers under thirty years old did not marry and had no children, so their lives were easier than others. FE thought that in a few years, after the male leaders retire, these young female teachers might be the new leaders because of their high educational degrees and their work experience.

5.2.6. FF

FF is 32 years old and was born in a small town in the southeast of China. She spent her happy primary and middle school period in her hometown. Because of her excellent note, she was able to study in a key senior middle school outside of her hometown, which was the best key senior middle school in the province. Her parents considered their daughter's future and thought that it would bring her more chances to study in university when she was in key senior middle school than in the normal

senior middle school. However, it also meant that she must begin her independent life without the care of her parents. She would eat and live with her classmates in the senior middle school every day. Both of her parents were workers in the same factory and their wages were not so high. They spent all of their money on their daughter. FF knew the status of her family and understood her parents very well. Therefore, she saved her money that was to be spent on food and used it to buy some books. She said she had not bought new clothes during the period in her senior middle school.

FF told us her family was normal compared to her classmates, and she also said the students from families worse-off than hers studied very hard. Therefore, she also had to study hard, in order not to be left behind. She said she was not like the other girls who liked art subjects; FF liked science subjects. In the third year in the senior middle school, she became one of the few girls in the science class. When asked if there were boys who liked her, she said that the living conditions among her classmates were not good and they had no time to think about anything except studying. Almost everyone wanted to go to university and change his or her fate. She felt the same, and therefore she used all of her time to study like the others. She did not know the reason why her note was always better than others in her class– including the boys. Her teacher said that maybe she was talented in science. The teacher also said to FF's parents that they did not need to worry about the note of their daughter; FF would definitely go to university later. What the parents should do was to save money for the tuition of their daughter's university education. Her teacher was right; FF was accepted to a key university[231] after the NCEE.

FF spent her Bachelor study period at a university in southern China, which was far away from her hometown. She studied atmospheric physics. At the beginning of her study, she did not know what his subject was. She only knew that she liked physics and wanted to continue studying it in the university. At the university, there were so many different branches in the physics field. However, the courses were not as easy as she had imagined. Sometimes she could not understand what the teachers said, even if

[231] Another name for top university

she prepared carefully. She became shy in the university due to her poor family background, and so she kept silent instead of asking questions. FF said that she lost her interest in the second semester, but when her parents told her that they would support her until graduation in any case– they could even sell their house in their hometown or donate blood to the hospital in order to have enough money for her study– she knew that her parents just wanted to encourage her not to give up. She told us that she appreciated what her parents did for her in giving her their support. Because of them, she recovered her confidence and motivation to study.

Because of her 3 years of experience in the senior middle school, she was used to living independently without the care of her parents. In the four years at the university, she learned to make decisions by herself. Because her hometown was far away from the university and she wanted to reduce some economic pressure for her parents, she only went home once a year. In her senior middle school period, she liked to tell her mother everything, such as what happened in the school each month. But now in the university she could not write a letter or call her parents to tell them her miseries; she only told them she was happy and everything was good so that they would not worry about her.

FF said she admired the students who came from this city, because they were able to go home every week. She also told us that she was very alone on the weekends when the other roommates went home. In the dormitory, eight students shared one room and only three of them came from other cities, including her. One of the other two could go to the home of her boyfriend, who was born in this city, on the weekends. The other girl was in the higher class and she was familiar with this city and was busy working on the weekends. Only FF stayed in the room on the weekends; she was alone. She said that every weekend she would stay in the library until 22:00. She was jealous of those from other cities, especially when she saw them coming back with clean clothes and delicious food. It made her study hard to change her fate.

In her second year in the university, she decided to work. On one hand, she could get some practice; on the other hand, she wanted to send some money to her family so that her parents could have a better life. At the same time, she would not feel lonely

on the weekends. She worked as a family teacher after class and on the weekend. FF told us she could support herself from the second year, and did not use the money from her parents any more.

FF told us that before her graduation, she had no plans for her future, such as what kind of job she wanted. Her aim after her Bachelor study was to go on to achieve her Master's degree, and her good notes helped her to make it true.

Her roommates, she said, had different situations after graduation. One of them who came from this city found a job in a hotel through her parents and relatives. The other with the boyfriend in local city married right after graduation and worked in a school there. Another girl who was older than her went to another city to work. FF was the only one from the dormitory to go on studying. Since she was also the best student in the class, she was permitted to go on to her Master's study without taking an extra exam in the same university. She said that she was very lucky because the entrance exam was difficult, and there were many competitors for the place. Avoiding taking the exam allowed her to save more time to work as a family teacher instead of preparing for the exam, and she could also earn more money for her next study period.

She told us that her parents missed her and hoped that she could go home and visit them after her Bachelor's degree graduation and before the beginning of her Master's degree studies, but she said she desired to earn money to do something she always wanted. For example, she planned to take a tour in other cities with the money she earned. She said that there was no end for someone's desire. She missed her parents and wanted to go home, but she did not want to lose the opportunity to earn money. At last, she decided to go home but she reduced the time at home; she stayed at home for only one month instead of the three months that her mother had hoped. She told us that maybe she was too poor in her childhood and she could not ever forget the can of fish which she ate the whole week in her senior middle school, and so she told herself she could not live like before.

She said that to study for her Master's in the same city and at the same university was easy for her. Otherwise, she would have needed time to adapt herself to a new

atmosphere. She said she had no special feeling during this period and her life was a repetition of her Bachelor period: study and work. Maybe the only different point was that as a Master's student, she could get some money from the government each month. Although it was not much, it was better than nothing. She had more savings during this period.

After 3 years, FF successfully achieved her Master's degree. She said that her supervisor had 10 students: 7 males and 3 females. They had a meeting once a week to talk about their papers or discuss their topics. FF thought that both the girls and boys in the group would like to do something together.

FF mentioned that because she left her parents very early and made decisions for herself at a very early age, her parents would normally honor her wishes. It happened again when she told her parents that she would go on to study for her Doctorate degree. They believed that their daughter could make the right decisions, and they knew the note of their daughter was always excellent and they did not need to worry about her study. Therefore, they agreed with her decision.

FF acknowledged that she liked studying her subject intensively after her Master's study, and therefore she began her Doctorate study in Beijing. Here, she married her boyfriend from the university. Her husband was not her classmate, but he worked in the same university as technical supporter of computers with a Bachelor's degree. She told us that she had already left her parents 12 years ago; she lived independently since she was 16. Nevertheless, she also needed someone who cared for her, and her husband was the one she waited for. It did not matter that his educational degree was lower than hers and that he was 5 years younger than her. In the beginning, her parents did not agree to the marriage because they did not even meet their daughter's husband before. She did not care about the views from other people and– the opposite of her parents– she thought her happiness should be taken into her own hands. Nobody could change her mind no matter what happened in the future, such as a quarrel or even a divorce. She did not mind that her husband's degree was lower than hers, or that he was younger than her. They were somehow against Chinese traditions. FF said she was happy now with him and that she needed him. She told us she knew

her parents were very conservative, which she told them after the ceremony. In the beginning, they were angry due to her husband's low academic degree and the age difference, but finally they thought that happiness was important for their daughter, as long as FF's husband loved her and treated her well.

Normally in China, the husband always has a higher educational degree and is older and higher than the wife; at the very least, they should have the same background. FF and her husband were an exception. They were a little special in the university, but she did not care what others said. She only knew that she loved him and needed him.

As a Doctorate student, FF had a wage but it was not very high. Her husband worked for few years, but they could only afford a small apartment near the university. She was very busy doing her experiments in the laboratory every day, and so she quit her job as private teacher.

Her husband believed in her very much, even though there were many men on her team. He understood his wife, and he knew that she worked very hard because she wanted to do something by herself. Thus, he did all of the housework. She told us that she went to her lab at nine o'clock in the morning, and her husband was ready with breakfast on the table for her. He left at eight at night and they would have lunch at his workplace. When she arrived at home after work, her husband had already put supper on the table. She said to us that she felt as if the house was only like a hotel for her to sleep in, and her husband was like her babysitter to care for her. She felt very happy and thanked her husband very much; she thought it proved that her marriage was right.

FF had no interest in cooking. First of all, she was too busy and had no time to cook. Secondly, she was not interested in cooking and she preferred to eat in the cafeteria or restaurant. FF said she did not like to do some things that most women do. For instance, most of her female classmates liked literature, but she liked science; most women liked cooking and caring the family, but she preferred researching.

FF also admired the female Doctorate students who studied art in the university because they had time to put on make up and always dressed beautifully and had much spare time. When they walked away before her, she would have rather watched

them than go to laboratory. She said she did not have much free time every day; she was always busy with her experiments. She told us that sometimes she forgot to comb her hair in the morning, and this was the reason why she always had short hair as a student. She told us about a time when her parents visited her after her marriage. Her mother cried and told FF that she looked like a woman over 35 years old, even though she was just 28 at that time. Her mother did not understand why her daughter always had short hair and did not comb it. Her mother did not understand why FF's husband loved FF either, because she could neither cook nor do the housework. Her mother was very sad for FF's husband, but not for her daughter.

FF said that she actually liked putting on make up and wearing skirts in summer, but it was not convenient in the lab. FF joked that if she could chose again, she would study art and dress beautifully in order to find a boyfriend during her Bachelor studies. She did not like the busy life in her Doctorate studies period; there was only the lab and her academic thesis in her boring life. If her husband had not been beside her, she did not know how she could have finished her study.

After achieving her Doctorate degree with a good note, she quickly found work in the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, because it is an authorized institute in China in the researching fields. However, after 2 years she found there was nothing new to do there. Every day was the same to her; she just researched the weather and wrote reports. She said that it was not her dream, and she actually hoped she could do some new projects in the lab.

She did not want to do the same thing like a robot for the next 30 years. Therefore, she decided to change and get a new job. To be a university teacher was attractive to her, because she thought she could always learn new branches in physics and new knowledge. At the same time, there were more chances to study than in the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences because there were more exchanges among different universities, different cities and different countries. She said the leader in the department hoped that the teachers could always study new knowledge in their work. Hence, she was sent to London University to achieve a post-Doctorate degree in 2007.

She came back this year and now she will apply for vice professor. She said that some of the other female teachers did not want to study in the other cities or abroad because they needed to take care of their family and children. She thought that she has already studied so long in China and she needed a chance to have some new experiences in other countries. At the same time, she wanted to develop herself while she was still young so that she would not regret giving up such chance when she was older.

Her work was always busy like before. She still had no time to care for her family and have a child, even though she liked children very much. She told us that she was like a machine with a full battery and could not stop, because there was always something for her to do. His husband understood her and cared for her like before. He knew she had no time now and agreed to wait a few years to have a baby, because they still have time.

When asked if FF had pressure about the difference of educational degrees between her and her husband, she told us that her husband was satisfied with his job and there was no need for him to go on studying for a Master's degree. His job needed only skills but not a degree, and so her husband told her that he had no pressure. However, FF said that she would prefer if she had Bachelor's degree and her husband a Doctorate. If she could go back in time, she would prefer to work after receiving her Bachelor's degree and have a child right away. She said to us that life was like a wall: people always thought the other side was better than their own side. Her classmates and friends in her hometown admired her very much for her Doctorate degree and good job in Beijing; she admired them for being able to have children already and a stable family– even though they had no high educational degree and made a lower wage and lived in a small town.

She told us that most of her colleagues were males and their wives cared for the family and children. Most of her colleagues hold Doctorate degrees, and the leader is a man with Doctorate degree. There are a few females in the department. Some of them are the secretaries as the staffs in the department and some female teachers hold only Master's and Bachelor's degrees. In fact, she could feel the differences between male and female teachers at work. All male teachers put all of their attention to work;

on the contrary, most female teachers took time for family. She thought that could be the reason why more male teachers than female teachers could be promoted quickly. However, she would rather do research than housework.

5.3. Interviews with the female teachers – results

5.3.1. Family background

In the past, few people wanted to become teachers due to the low wage and poor conditions, and university teachers were no exception. In addition, there were not as many universities as today; thus there were limited university graduates. Some of them became university teachers after graduation because universities needed teachers and because working as a university teacher was a stable job. With the development of Chinese higher education from 1980s on, more and more universities and colleges were founded. The welfare of teachers was better than before, and becoming a university teacher was attractive for the young people— especially for those from countryside or poor families. As university students, they could get some financial support from the government every month; as university teachers, they could become urban residents, which is the biggest hope for them and their families.

The interviews demonstrate that half of the female interviewees, such as FB and FF, came from small cites, or like FC and FE, from rural areas. They had some similar opinions on why they wanted to go to university, including escaping from poverty and becoming a citizen of a big city. In other words, they wanted to pursue a better life, and for them, the university was a tool that could help them make the dream come true. During the period of studying in university, they always spent lots of time on seminars. After seminars, another location to find them in was in the library. They were very diligent. As a result, their notes in all subjects in their class were good. They did not have much spare time, and some of them had to do part-time jobs after seminar in order to support themselves or their family. Those from rural areas or small cities were independent; they had to do everything by themselves. At the same time, they had more stress than those from big cites. They hoped to work in big cites after graduation, and to become a university teacher was an easy way to realize their hopes.

However, only a few of them receive the opportunity. Therefore, they had to study hard in order to be the best among many competitors.

In contrast with them, FA and FD were from Beijing; they did not need to worry about their lives as carefully as those from rural areas or small cities. Compared with the others, FA and FD had more advantages. For example, they could go home every day if they wanted to; they did not have to do part-time jobs after seminars in order to earn their living costs. Their stress of finding a job after graduation was not as great as their rural classmates. For example, FD's mother helped her very much in terms of working in the university, although she did not want to work there at the beginning.

According to the interviews, almost all of female teachers agreed that their children should go to university. They knew that education would change their children's life. Some years ago, it would have been unimaginable that the parents from rural areas, such as FC's and FE's parents, could have had such an opinion. It reflects that with the development of society, the ideas of the people are influenced step-by-step. People become much more open and they want to try something new. The traditional idea that females should not be educated is abandoned little by little. People understand the importance of knowledge, especially in rural or less-developed areas.

5.3.2. Motivation of working in university

For the women from rural areas or small cities, becoming an urban citizen is one of the aims to work in the big city. Some of the female interviewees are no exception. Others, such as FA or FD, had the idea that working as a university teacher was a stable occupation: the wage would be raised step by step following the social development as well as the change of the people's ideas about education. The government would pay more and more attention to education.

According to the interviews, all female teachers are fond of this occupation, because they think the social status of university teachers is higher than ever. At the same time, there are some welfare regulations at work. For instance, they have the opportunity to be arranged one apartment from university; for those who come from other regions,

this is one motivation to work there.

University teachers have more spare time than schoolteachers; they do not need to stay at the university the whole day. If they have no seminars, they could go. In other words, their time is much more flexible. They can make use of spare time to take care of children or do some part-time jobs in order to get more income. Certainly some of their spare time is for research or publications.

5.3.3. The significance of family and marriage

The interviews reflect that most of the female interviewees like FA, FC, and FE were traditional Chinese women: they treated family as the most important thing in life after marriage instead of developing their own career. They support their husbands and care for the family without any complaints. Most of them, except FF, did all of the housework and cared for the children or parents.

Most of the female interviewees hold Master's or Doctorate degrees. However, some of them achieved their degree after working for some years, unlike male teachers who achieved their Bachelor's degree through Doctorate degree without any interruption. One reason is that female teachers prefer to support their husbands' careers first, and they were willing to do it; FA, FC and FE are examples. After their children had grown up or after their husbands had some achievements in their professions, they began to pay attention to their own careers. As previously stated, they are traditional Chinese women. Their thinking was influenced by the Chinese ideas about women, which indicate that a woman's duties in a family include taking care of her husband and children, doing housework, obeying what the husband says, and so on. Although in today's Chinese society, women are much more independent than ever, they are still affected by such traditional ideas unconsciously.

In fact, the husbands in today's China hope that their wives could have their own careers; they thank their wives for supporting them. At the same time, they also encourage them to achieve higher academic degrees, such as FA's and FE's husband.

In today's China, most of the young female teachers choose their careers at first

and then the family, such as FB, FD, and FF in our interviews. They thought the career was more important than the family. Moreover, women and men were equal; they should help and support each other. The young female teachers do not want to give up their own career but they also want to support their husbands. They hope both of them can be done together, although it is not possible sometimes. In any case, they are willing to try. For them, family is not only individual sentiment and satisfaction; moreover, it also plays an important role for their work. It means if they can handle the relationship between the two elements well, their careers would develop quickly; otherwise, family would become an obstacle for the career.[232]

Following the changes in people's opinions about individuality, the value system of females changes as well. They pay more attention to themselves. The young female teachers marry and have children later than their older colleagues and they have less pressure in terms of the family and children. The interviewee FB is even single. Therefore, they have more time to pay attention to work. At the same time, they are more independent; they want to develop their own careers, and they hope their husbands could support them. They are not like the older female teachers who regard their family as the most important element in their lives. The young female teachers are more willing to concern themselves with their own careers. To them, family is one of the many parts of the life.

Some years ago, most schoolteachers or university teachers could work until retirement because it was a stable job. But today, they have to work hard everyday— especially the young teachers— for if there is no achievement in their careers after working for some years, they could be fired by the university. In addition, the competition among universities is crucial; each university hopes to improve qualities in teaching or researching fields and the quality of teachers is the foundation. It forces the young teachers to develop themselves in terms of academic degree, teaching or researching abilities, as well as the number of publications, so that they can stay in the university. It also forces them to think about the family or the children later on.

[232] Wang, Gongming, "University young teacher's career development plan inquisition", 03.18.2009 http://www.dhyedu.com/sz/show.htm?id=11298

5.3.4. Educational degree among female teachers

Table 5.1 shows that FC is the only female interviewee who only has a Bachelor's degree, and she will retire in two years. Therefore, she thought that there is no need for her to achieve a higher educational degree because she already possesses the professor title; at the same time, she is a supervisor for Doctoral students. She has a high income and a big apartment; for her, the educational degree was not as important as it is for young teachers.

In today's society and higher education institutes, people pay more attention to the educational degree. The higher the educational degree, the more chances for people to find better jobs, such as being a university teacher. In other words, a high educational degree is a key to work in the university. Therefore, most students prepare for the entrance test of the Master's study at the last year of their Bachelor's study. Besides these internal conditions, China is open to the whole world; people with high quality are on the rise day by day. As a consequence, the teachers' qualities should also be improved, whether in schools or in higher education institutes. The government did some important changes. In 1999, the Ministry of Education established some regulations of improving the quality of university teachers; one example was that, until 2005, the rate of teachers with Doctorate degrees should reach 30 percent.[233]

The Ministry of Education and every university provided many chances for the older teachers with only a Bachelor's degree to study continuously so that they could have more achievements for universities, because they were the backbone of the teachers' teams in every institute. These chances included that some institutes for further education were founded, and some of the older teachers who studied foreign languages were sent to foreign countries to achieve a Master's degree. FA is an example.

In order to improve the quality among all teachers, every high education institute also tried to recruit new teachers with higher academic degrees. Under such

[233] Yuan, Xinwen, "To achieve doctor degree", 17.12.2006 http://www.kaobo.cn/html/74/n-174.html

circumstances, if young people wanted to be university teachers, a Bachelor's degree was not enough at all, except if he or she had excellent achievements. In today's Chinese higher educational institutes, a teacher with a Bachelor's degree has fewer chances for his own development. As a consequence, some students who hope to work in higher education institutes after graduation try to achieve a Master's or even a Doctorate degree, such as FB and FF; others achieve them during work, such as FA, FD and FE.

Another reason for recruiting young teachers with high academic degree is that nowadays, the competition between universities might be more regarded as the competition between elites. Every institute hopes to own high quality teachers so that the teaching or researching level can be improved. Of course, a highly qualified university may attract more students to study there, which bring the university economic interests as well.

According to Table 5.1, young female teachers have higher educational degrees than the older female teachers. However, the older teachers have more teaching experience than the young teachers. Therefore, the young teachers should involve themselves into learning from their older colleagues. The high educational degree means that the person is well educated; however, it does not mean that the person has the ability to teach.[234]

The older female teachers have higher professional titles than the young female teachers. According to Table 5.1, FC holds the title of professor, FE holds the title of vice Professor, and they are both older teachers; among young teachers, FA and FD hold the same title, the other two have lower professional titles. One reason could be that the older teachers have longer work years than their young colleagues, and therefore they own richer teaching experiences. These two points were two of the preconditions of promotion in early time. However, at present, the personal ability is the important element for promotion, including publications, second foreign language skills, and so on. As a result, the preconditions of promotion for young teachers are

[234] Tang, Jingli, "Young university teachers ", 20.07.2007 http://www.edu.cn/fa_zhan_364/20070820/t20070820_249625.shtml

more difficult than ever.

5.3.5. Life of female teachers

Some years ago in big cities, if a woman had no boyfriend before she was 25 years old, or if she did not marry before she was 29 years old, her parents would worry about her, and her colleagues and relatives would laugh at her. If the female had no child after being married one or two years, her colleagues and friends would gossip about her. Hence, the females would live under pressure from the family and society at that time. As a result, females married and had children earlier than today's females.

Among our female interviewees, FB is 28 years old, and is still single; she does not worry about her marriage. FF is 32 years old, and although she married, she has no baby yet. Their situations reflect that the traditional opinions have somehow changed in recent years.

Normally in China, most females prefer to support their husbands to develop their careers, while they pay more attention to the family. The older interviewees, namely FC and FE, have done so. They have the same opinion that there must be one person who does the housework and care for the child in a family, and they are willing to be such persons. They would rather give up their own careers and support their husbands. After their children have grown up, they will have time for their work. However, following the development of society, young teachers can afford to employ a babysitter to do housework so that they have time to achieve a higher educational degree and develop their careers. FA and FD are examples.

5.3.6. Disciplines that they study

Based on Table 5.1, only one of the 6 female interviewees (namely, FF) study a science discipline. According to Wen[235], female students in Chinese universities prefer studying humanities. Their proportions among humanities, such as languages and

[235] Wen Dongmao, "A Comparative Study on the Gender Differences of Higher Education Opportunity"
http://www.tc.columbia.edu/centers/coce/pdf_files/c10.pdf

literature, law, or economics, are higher than among sciences, such as engineering courses or agriculture. Among female teachers, FA studied English and FD studied Chinese. It is the same as Wen's result. In Chapter 2, 4 reasons that influence students' choice of discipline are listed: interest, which discipline she or he is good at, parents' opinions, and job perspective. FA and FD said in the interviews that they were good at English and Chinese, respectively. FF mentioned that she always had an interest in physics; therefore, she chose to study it in university.

5.3.7. Proportion of male and female teachers in department

According to what the female teachers said in the interviews, in FA's, FB's and FD's departments, namely English, History and Chinese departments, there are more female teachers than their male colleagues. In FF's and FE's departments, namely Physics and Management departments, male teachers play a major role. FC did not mention the proportion between female and male teachers in her department. In terms of academic degree, all female interviewees agreed that the male teachers generally hold a higher educational level, and this is the reason why most leaders in the department are males. At the same time, FE pointed out that after marriage, female teachers always think that having a good family is more important than having a good career. A good family is for them one of the symbols of a successful life. Hence, they spend much time taking care of the household, children, and husband instead of paying more attention to their careers. This might be another reason why the academic degrees of some female teachers in universities are lower than those of their male counterparts. A higher academic degree is one of the preconditions of being promoted to be leader; hence, there are more male leaders in departments.

Nevertheless, although most leaders in departments are males, the female teachers do not think that discrimination exists at work.

5.4. Interviews with the male teachers – biographical summaries

Table 5.2 The situation of the six male teachers in the capital normal university.

Gender /Male	Arts/Science	Discipline	Age	Professional title	Education	Family	Children	Study abroad
MG	Arts	English	49	Prof.	Dr.	Married	Yes	Yes
MH	Science	Design	33	Lecturer	M.A.	Married	No	Yes
MI	Science	Physic	32	Lecturer	Dr.	Married	No	Yes
MJ	Science	Sport	59	Vice Prof.	B.A.	Married	Yes	No
MK	Science	Computer	42	Vice Prof.	M.A.	Married	Yes	No
ML	Science	Economy	35	Lecturer	Dr.	Single	No	Yes

(In this dissertation, teachers over 45 years old are called older teachers; those between 30 to 45 years old are called young teachers.)

5.4.1. MG

MG is a 49-year-old professor and one of the leaders in an institute attached to the university. When he was in middle school, he was interested in foreign languages– especially English. His mother might have influenced him, because she taught in the middle school as an English teacher. However, he never thought that being a university teacher would later become his career. His expectation about his future job was to be a solider or an athlete because he had already won some prizes in sports competitions in his school. He was born in northern China and was always taller than the others of the same age. The sports teacher always liked to train the taller students and let them take part in the sports competitions to win prizes for the school. He told us he was always trained after class in the school because he could escape from his class for a while. He liked being trained very much because he could play with other students on the sports team after class and his mother would not criticize him. It was more important for him to play than to learn at that time. He told us his mother also hoped that MG would be trained in the school. She as a teacher and her husband as an officer were very busy at work, and they hoped that somebody could look after their son so that he would not play outside with strangers and learn bad habits. If their son was trained in school, the sports teacher could help them take care of MG. His mother thought that exercising would keep him healthy. Another benefit was that if MG won

some prizes for the school, he could be evaluated as school student with sport talent. Then he could have added points to his score in all kinds of graduation exams, like the graduation exam of primary school, junior school, high school or the NCEE.

He told us that in his class in middle school, the girls generally always had better grades than the boys– whether in Chinese, history, mathematics, physics, or chemistry. He said he was not good at any subjects; however, his English grade was the best in his class. His classmates always said that his mother taught him at home. However, he said that his mother did not in fact help him often at home in terms of English because she was busy doing housework and taking care of his little brother, little sister and grandparents. He was afraid of that his mother might criticize him if he had bad score in English; therefore he had to study English very hard.

MG said he was not a student with good notes, and his parents always hoped that he could be educated until university because they had many expectations of him. Hence, he did not think about going to work after junior middle school like most of his classmates. In fact, he wanted to continue his high school learning in the same school, but his scores on the entrance exam to the high school were not good enough. However, since he won some sports prizes for his middle school, he was admitted to learn there as a student with talent. He said that there was a political movement during this period, and many schools were closed. It was not important to go to school at that time, and he did not want to talk about that period any more. He said to us that his mother had to teach him English at home and she asked her other colleagues to teach MG other subjects. As a result, MG's English was always good and he never wasted time in that special period, but always learned in his spare time. He told us that he thanked his mother very much. If she did not insist that he continued learning, he would have wasted all of his spare time playing like his other classmates in school. MG said it was his mother’s wish that he should never give up learning, so that he could have a better life.

MG took part in the National College Entrance Exam in 1979– the third year after its restoration in 1977– and there were a total of more than 4,68 million students

participating in the exam at that time. He thought that he was very lucky to be permitted to go to the university because the entry rate that year was only 6.1%. When he accepted the acceptance letter of the university, he cried. His mother did not cry; she only said to him that he must persist in studying even after graduation and try to be a person with a high educational level. He made up his mind to become successful in the future and thanked his mother. MG studied very hard in university and was chosen as the top graduate in his class. He chose English as his profession because on the one hand, he liked it; on the other hand, he anticipated that he could find a good job with his language skills in the future. After the Cultural Revolution, China began to communicate with the world, and foreign languages would be useful tools.

He told us that during his college period, there were no part-time jobs for the university students. They were not the same as the students now, who have beautiful clothes, spare time, or various part-times job such as private teacher, tour guide or salesman. The life of the students in MG's time was not very colorful. They did not think about clothes or making friends, and there was not so much entertainment for the young people like the cinema, disco, or Internet. At that time, nobody knew what a part-time job was; they only knew that after graduation they would work until retirement like their parents. MG thought the students at that time were a little bit foolish and conservative. They did not talk about money or which job was comfortable, but rather they talked about how they can make a contribution to the country. Some young people voluntarily chose to work in the small cities or poor areas in China so that they could realize their value and make some good changes for the poor and undeveloped areas. On the contrary, the young students now like to live in big cities and expect to have relaxed work with a high wage. They are selfish and they think only about themselves, and they see fortune as the most important thing in their lives. MG said the young people in the past were very stable; they could endure hardships and were able to do hard work. On the contrary, the young people now could not overcome any troubles whatsoever in their lives or at work.

He told us that he and the people around him all cherished the opportunity to study in the university very much. They knew it was not so easy for them to receive the

chance at that time. They had already wasted lots of time during the Cultural Revolution, and they had to pick up the knowledge that they had lost. They wanted to help and change the country through their knowledge and by their hands.

In the 1980s, people did not have to pay a tuition fee for the university. MG worked in his spare time to help the professor translate some materials so that he could learn more knowledge and also afford some parts of his living expenses; his family afforded other parts. He told us that it was not very easy to get the chance to work with a professor. Since his grades were good and he was a leader in the class, he got the chance to help the professor. During his time in university, some of the courses he liked included oral English and listening comprehension. He liked to communicate with people and he could practice his English in the oral course. He liked the listening comprehension course because he could watch some original English movies. Not every university had as many original movies as his university at that time. Black and white television was even a luxury for some families, and radio was more popular.

At the beginning of his life in university, he anticipated that he could find a good job with his language skills in the future. After the Cultural Revolution, China began to communicate with the world, and foreign languages would be valuable. Some years later, it was proved that he was right. After his Bachelor's degree graduation, he was sent to England by the government to continue his Master's study. After graduation, he went directly back to China to his alma mater to become a young university lecturer. Since there were few teachers who achieved their Master's degree abroad at that time, MG was quickly promoted to vice professor. During his period of studying in England, the government paid all of his living costs, for he was chosen by the university and did not need to pay anything. Despite having all of his expenses paid for, he still worked in his free time. Until some years ago, he had not planned to achieve a Doctorate degree because he always devoted himself to his work and to his students.

However, he told us that nowadays more and more young teachers with Master's and Doctorate degrees became university teachers. It seemed like a pressure on him, and

he thought that as a leader of the department, he must be the best in both his work and his educational degree. As a result, he decided to go to America to achieve his Doctorate degree.

MG told us that at this time, the number of female students in universities– whether Chinese or foreign– was always higher than the number of males. The female students abroad liked to discuss things with their classmates or professors. Chinese female students then were much shyer; they preferred to study by themselves. He said that at first, he was also a little bit shy because he could not wholly understand what his professor or classmates said. After a few weeks, he joined his classmates to discuss the topics in order to finish his homework, because sometimes he had to do group work with his classmates. He liked this way of studying. He said he was not as young as the other students in the university, and he felt much more pressure. He wanted to finish his study quickly, even though he had scholarship.

In fact, MG's expectation about his future occupation after university was to become a translator. However, he said his job now as a university teacher somehow fulfilled this dream because he translated some English books into Chinese.

He told us that he was already a vice professor before he went to America to achieve his Doctorate degree. When he achieved his doctor degree 5 years later, he published many books and papers, and he became a professor and the supervisor of the Master's students. Because of his good relationships and excellent academic skill, he was also promoted as the vice leader in the department.

MG said that he missed his wife and daughter when he studied in America. He flew to China to visit them when he handed in his Doctorate paper. He married very late– when he was about 35 years old– because he was busy with his career and his studies. His daughter was born when he was around 40 years old. He told us that he lived in the university before marriage. When he was over 30 years old, his mother worried about him. His little brother and little sister had already married and already had children, so his mother persuaded him to find a girlfriend. He had never worried about himself, because he knew he would find a very good wife if he was successful. He

told us that it was very beneficial for him to work hard in his life, because he met his wife at work. His wife was an editor of a journal in which he always published some papers. He said he and his wife were both people who care about their careers more than family. Therefore, they did not want to have a baby immediately after marriage. They lived in a small apartment in the university after marriage. He wondered if he was strange for preferring a small room. Everyone wanted to live in a big room, but he liked his small room because it was easy to clean. Most people like to put more furniture and things in their home so that it looks warm and comfortable. In his room, on the contrary, he had only a bed, tables and a closet because he had no time to go out and buy more things. He said his wife was very nice and understanding; otherwise, she would be angry about the living situation. When his daughter was born, he changed his mind. He said he must do something for his daughter, such as move to a big apartment and decorate his home so that it looks more warm and comfortable. Since he already made for himself a nice foundation while he was young, he had some savings. Therefore, he was capable of doing such things for his daughter. However, he had little time to take care of her because of his work. His wife was also busy with her work, so they had to hire a babysitter for their daughter.

MG said he did not trust a stranger to care for his daughter. As a result, he found a relative from his hometown to come to Beijing and help his wife care for the family and his daughter. This relative lived with them, and every month they would pay her and every year they would buy her a ticket for her to go home. Sometimes they would even buy some new clothes for her. He said it was in fact cheaper to employ a babysitter than his relative. He had to buy her tickets, gifts, and clothes; but she was their relative after all, and it was much safer than hiring a stranger as a babysitter.

MG mentioned that his overseas experience was helpful in his work. His British teachers, in terms of teaching technique and style, influenced him. For example, in schools or universities in China, there was a lack of communication between teachers and students. This might be because of the traditional Chinese concept of education: what the teacher says is right, students should obey them absolutely, and students are used to doing it. However, it may restrict the students' thinking– especially in

universities– since they cannot have creative ideas. Hence, he always listed some topics at the end of the seminar, encouraging his students to find materials by themselves instead of just listening and writing in the seminar. In other words, he tried to change his students' old behaviors. As a result, the students in his class have better abilities in terms of reading and understanding. Besides this technique, he encourages his students to do presentations in class so that they can practice their English and have much more self-confidence.

MG loves his job as a university teacher and professor. He said he was willing to be together with students forever because they were active and creative, and with them he would be forever young. At the same time, he realized that the world developed very quickly. He always had to learn something new, such as computer or Internet knowledge, so that he could know what his students like to do. This may be helpful for him to make new topics for his seminar. He also liked to listen to European and American music and to watch the original films, because they gave him some new topics for his students. At first, he did this all for his students; later, they became his hobbies. His wife said to him that he was old but his heart was young. There is a Chinese saying: "the face reflected the heart". In fact, he looked younger than he really was. He suggests becoming a teacher in order to keep the heart young forever like him.

When asked if he was satisfied with his professional title now, he said that there were different kinds of people in work: those who think that their career is the most important thing, those who think that the professional title is more important than the work, and those who are always satisfied with their lives. The first kind of people wants to develop their career and be the best that they can be in their work. They are not concerned with becoming a leader or having a high status. The second kind of people pays more attention to achieving their professional titles and to being promoted. The third kind of people has no big ambitions. They care more for their family than for their work. To them, finding a stable job and having a peaceful family are important. These people are willing to have a simple life until their retirement, and are not interested in being promoted or continuing their studies. MG said he belonged

to the first type of people. He did not care about which professional title he had, and he liked to study in order to be the best of his department. He of course loved his wife and daughter, but he could not give up his work to care for the family. He did not expect to be a perfect leader, and he wanted to use more time to read and learn new knowledge.

MG emphasized that in order to be promoted as professor, some prerequisites have to be fulfilled: an academic degree, publications, how many years you have worked, relationships with your leaders and colleagues, etc. One of the most difficult conditions for him was the second foreign language. This was a very important element for promotion in a foreign language institute. He chose to learn Japanese, because he thought there were many Chinese characters in it, and he might know the meaning without understanding the words. Nevertheless, it was not as he expected. In the end, he had to take part in a Japanese course during his spare time in order to pass the exam.

He told us that female teachers are the majority in his institute. According to him, more female students than males choose foreign language as their discipline when they study at university. Among the 5 leaders, there are 3 men and 2 women. Perhaps because there were so many female teachers, the male teachers might have some advantages. The male teachers were seen as “the rarer, the precious”, and were always thought highly of by the leaders. For instance, MG said he did not care to be promoted. He paid more attention to his study, and his leader often mentioned that he should do something for his professional title or to receive a promotion. He said some years ago he thought that work, relationships with colleagues, and promotion had nothing to do with each other; now, as a leader, he thought he had to handle them well. Otherwise, he would be in trouble.

MG said that whether a lecturer, a professor or a leader– studying and researching were the foundations in work. He thought that people should not be evaluated by their professional title or high social status. He said that although he was a professor and a leader of the department, he was still a teacher and he had to teach the students at least two courses every semester so that he could always refresh his knowledge. He said to

us that there was no end to learn new knowledge.

When asked about discrimination against women, he thought his female colleagues had the same chances to be promoted and sometimes worked under the same pressure as male teachers. Furthermore, their incomes are the same as their male colleagues. Hence, he did not think they were discriminated against. He said that he supported the female teachers to study in China or to be sent abroad for advanced study. It was good not only for themselves, but also for their students: his mother is a good example. As a schoolteacher, his mother was sent to study in New Zealand as a visiting teacher for half a year. She brought back to her school some new methods and experiences in terms of teaching school students. He hoped that all of his female colleagues were not only the best mothers and wives in the family, but also the best teachers.

MG tried to spend more time with his family. He did not have a part-time job like the other teachers in the department. He thought that career and family should not be mixed, and there was no end to earning money. He always needed to have a high quality of teaching, as well as a high quality of life. He enjoyed the life at work with the students and colleagues, and also life in the family with his wife and daughter. He was a good teacher at the university and a responsible husband and father at home. He could handle the relationships very well. He loved his work and his life. He also missed his childhood and, if he had a second life, he would want to be a good teacher like his mother.

5.4.2. MH

MH is 33 years old, married, and comes from a small city in northern China. He is a communicative man. He has worked in the university for 2 years after achieving his Master's degree in Germany. He told us that he has studied product design in Bremen, Germany since 2000 because he thought this discipline will soon be developed in China due to globalization. He, as an overseas student, might bring many western ideas to Chinese students.

MH was actually interested in drawing when he was a boy. He said his painting teacher in school somehow influenced him because he drew very well– both in pencil

sketch and watercolor. At that time, his painting teacher wore very popular clothes such as jeans and colorful T-shirts, and he had long hair. MH admired him very much and wanted to be such a man later. MH's parents found his talent and tried to cultivate him consciously. They sent him to some painting classes and bought him some painting books. They brought him to galleries when they had time, even though the tickets were not cheap, and their salaries were not high. Therefore, MH said, he still appreciated what his parents had done for him; otherwise, he could not be as successful as he is today. His father was an engineer and his mother was a worker. The living conditions in this one-child family were better than those of the other neighbors with many children. At the same time, he participated in many painting competitions and received some prizes when he was in primary school. He told us that it encouraged him to be an artist in his lifetime.

However, MH said, his expectation in middle school regarding his future career was to become a scientist, not a painter. He thought a scientist creates something new every day; the painter, however, sometimes draws something that already exists. This idea influenced his discipline in university later. He told us he liked to break all of his toys or electronics– such as small model planes, cars, or clocks– and then try to put them back together again.

One time, he wanted to break the most expensive TV in the family and his father was very angry and hit him. At that time, like many families, his family was not rich. His parents saved for 2 or 3 years in order to buy the TV; it was a luxury object in his family. His father thought that his son had inherited his hobby since he was an engineer. Therefore, he hoped his son could also be an engineer. After the TV incident, he taught MH how to repair a bike. MH had an interest in it at first. He told us that he repaired all of the bikes for his neighbors during one semester holiday. He quickly became bored of repairing things and found his new hobby: painting.

There was not anybody who worked as artist in MH's family, including his parents, relatives and friends. In his childhood, his father thought painting was only MH's hobby. MH always had no patience to continue doing something; maybe he would give up painting soon and find a new hobby. As parents, they also did not expect that

their son would study art in the university. They did not know what could he do after graduation. In their opinion, if a student studied medicine, he would be a doctor. If he studied law, he would be a lawyer. If their son studied art, maybe the best option was to become a schoolteacher, but being a schoolteacher means low wages and low social status. MH said his parents were conservative.

MH still continued his hobby and wanted to study in the university. When he told his parents he wanted to apply for the art department in his form, which would be filled before the NCEE in the last year in the high school, his parents disagreed. MH's teacher explained his thinking to MH's parents, firstly, about MH's future career. If their son studied art in the university, he could be a designer in a building company or an art teacher in middle school. Secondly, the teacher explained, MH's notes in Math, Chinese and English were not good. If MH would apply for other subjects, maybe he would not be able to pass the high education entrance exam and could not study in the university. If he applied for art, his special skill would help him to pass the exam because the level of painting would be the more significant point than the scores. Finally, MH's parents agreed to let their son apply for the art department in order to study in the university. The precondition, however, was to apply to the Normal University. They thought that being a teacher was better than working for a company because in their opinion, being a teacher was a more stable job than being an employee in a company. MH agreed with the suggestion of his parents in order to study painting in the university.

MH spent his university time in a Normal University in his hometown in northern China. Because it is a Normal University, there were more girls than boys, and most of the students in his class would become schoolteachers in the future. They also thought drawing was not their hobby, but rather their future career. MH had his own ideas. He always thought drawing and art were not only his hobbies but also dreams; he wanted to create some new objects for the people and become an artist. He did not understand why his classmates had no great ideal or goal; the only thing they wanted was to become a painting teacher in school.

MH said that although he had different ideas about the future than his classmates,

he did not do any special things like design something or draw something special during his studies. MH said he liked to talk with his classmates. Since most of them took part in painting classes when they were young, they could find some interesting topics to discuss together. At the same time, he could gain some inspiration from them. After class, he often talked about his ideas with his teachers, one of whom was his favorite teacher in the university. MH admired him very much due to his abilities and his style. MH thought this teacher was the person who affected his decision to study product design at the university, because this teacher opened his eyes and developed his thinking. His teacher thought MH made the right choice to study art because his ideas were always different than the others, which is important for a designer since they have to create something new. At the same time, he encouraged MH to study abroad in order to accept western concepts; it would make MH have more inspiration for his works.

In the year when MH graduated, the government did not assign jobs to graduates like before. This meant that the graduates had to find jobs by themselves, and for excellent graduates, the university would recommend them to some schools. However, there were only a few of such work places, and MH was not an excellent graduate. Since his university is a Normal University, most students were distributed to middle schools after graduation. MH should have found a job by himself, but one student who could have been assigned a job by the university gave up his opportunity. Therefore, MH got the chance to become a drawing teacher in a middle school.

However, being a middle school teacher was not his hope and his dream. He told his parents that he did not want to work and he was not ready to work. He was willing to continue studying in western countries like his teacher suggested. Since design was created in America and developed more quickly in the western countries, MH said he wanted to study and find different kinds of art abroad. MH told us that his father was surprised when he discussed this with him because he thought painting was simply his hobby in his childhood. He did not think MH had the idea to study it or that he looked at it as his future career. His father thought it was good that his son went on studying in order to make his dream come true. He only had one child, and he expected that his

child could have a better future. Although the wages of MH's parents were not high, they gave their son all of their savings to support him in studying abroad. Considering the economic status of his family and himself, MH chose a German university because students did not need to pay tuition in Germany.

MH said he could not speak German when he arrived in Germany and his English was also not good. Hence, the beginning of his life in Germany was very hard and he had to do everything by himself. The living costs in Germany were more expensive than those in China. Therefore, he was very frugal and he had to learn to cook while he was in Germany, even though he could not cook at home. MH told us that foreign students who were not enrolled in the university were not permitted to work. Therefore, he had to use his family's money. MH said that because he was an adult, he did not feel good when he used his parents' money. Furthermore, his family was not rich; his parents also needed the money. While he learned German in the language school, one important aim for him was to be accepted to a university as soon as possible in order to reduce the burden on his parents. In addition, he would be able to work.

One year later, he passed the entrance exam for German universities and was recruited by a university to study architecture in southern Germany. He was very satisfied and he thought he could make his dream quickly come true. However, after studying there for one year, MH decided to leave because the university was small and the materials there were not modern enough for his discipline. He thought he was supposed to study in a large university and change his discipline to something other than architecture. He said it was not easy to do that, even though he had a Bachelor's degree in China and a recommendation letter from a professor of his university in Germany. After waiting for about 5 months, he was accepted to Bremen University in Germany to study design. During the 5 months, he worked in some factories to earn some money for his future studies.

He thought that since he had already wasted one year learning the language and another year in the first university, he had to spend all of his time studying. He liked

his new discipline in Bremen because it was more interesting to him than architecture. He decided not to move again and to study hard to finish his Master's study. He told us that in that year, only three Chinese students passed the entrance exam of the famous German university; he was one of them, and he is still proud of his accomplishment today.

MH said that even though he did not pay tuition for the study, he had to spend extra money for his discipline. For instance, he had to buy some special papers and pens for some seminars. Sometimes the students had to go to other cities to collect inspiration, and they had to afford the costs by themselves. He also needed a good camera to take photos. Even though his family could afford parts of his living costs, he had to work during the holidays in order to pay all of them and to make a living. If he could not earn enough money, he would have to find a part-time job besides his study.

MH said he liked travelling very much because he liked communicating with people from different regions and he could find out some different features in terms of architecture or culture. MH said that there were only three parts to his life in Germany: studying, working and travelling.

Working with Germans also helped him practice his language. He said that if he could not speak German well, he would not wholly understand what his teachers or classmates were saying in the seminars. In his class, there were only 10 students: 5 boys and 5 girls. He mentioned that they were all active in and after class. They communicated with each other often so that they could learn something new from each other. Almost all professors in his department were nice. However, some of them were busy with their own projects, and he could not find them sometimes– even during their office hours– which made him angry. He acknowledged that the German teachers were independent and strong-willed.

MH found a job as a university teacher in China after achieving his Master's degree in Germany, and hoped to later run his own studio. MH told us that being a university teacher is not his ideal occupation, but that to be a designer was always his goal. However, there were too many competitors for one position in the job market– both in China and in other countries. At the same time, he wanted to find a job as soon as

possible because he actually took about half a year to look for a job in Germany after graduation. He was not allowed to work due to his lack of experience. He did not want to waste his time anymore. Occasionally, this university needed some young teachers who have studied abroad, and so he made his decision to work in China. After working in China for some months, he thought that being a university teacher is not a bad job for him.

When asked about the difference between teachers who have overseas experiences and those who do not, MH mentioned that in Chinese universities, under the same circumstances, sometimes a teacher who has studied abroad has more advantages than those who graduated from Chinese universities. For example, when competing for a position, those who have studied abroad will be easily accepted. In his department, most of the teachers have studied abroad. Some were in the USA, some in England, and others in Germany. They are divided into three groups, and people in the same group often gather to go to a bar or have a picnic. People from other groups are not permitted to take part in their activities. MH found this atmosphere interesting.

MH works in the art department in the Capital Normal University. He thinks that a foreign language is important for international communication. For example, a German delegation once visited his department, and he was the only one who could speak German. It was easier for him to understand what they were talking about than for his colleagues, who could only speak English.

MH's family supports his career, especially his wife. She always helps him find modern designs from materials or from the Internet, which are helpful for his seminars. At the same time, his career influences his family as well. For example, his parents never noticed the design of products before, but now after finding something new they will tell him and give him some advice on how to use them in his seminars. MH can learn something not only from his family, but also from his students because they are young, active, and they always have new ideas. MH said that he would be forever young if he stayed with his students.

MH said he met his wife while he did an internship in a middle school after graduating from university. Both of them worked as painting teachers in the same

office. MH thought he was very lucky that he won the heart of the beauty, because there were many competitors for the girl. He told us that he planned to run a studio later, and his wife would be his secretary. Until now, his wife has not finished her Master's study abroad, so he must wait for her and then run his studio. MH has visited his wife each year.

In his spare time, MH works in a company as an interior designer because he thinks he would touch the trends of fashion from the society, and these trends are what a designer such as himself should know. At the same time, he could tell his students about these trends in his seminar so that they can develop their ideas.

MH is a lecturer now, and he hopes he can be promoted to be vice professor in the next two or three years. However, he has to fulfill some prerequisites, such as how long he has worked and how many publications he has. He also has to fulfill some private conditions, such as the relationship between he and his colleagues, and his educational level. But first of all, he mentioned, he had to be sure that his seminars are attractive for students. Otherwise, if there was nobody in his class, he could not stay in the university, and he would lose the job.

In regards to sexual discrimination at work, he said that he has not seen it in his department. He mentioned that he had some difficulties while he looked for internships, because the most of firms hoped to find female students.

In MH's department, there are a total of 5 leaders: 4 of them are men (80%), and only one is a woman (20%). In addition to his leaders, he has 11 male colleagues and 2 female colleagues; the rate between male and female teachers is 6:1.

Among his colleagues, 50% hold Bachelor's degrees, 45% hold Master's degrees, and 5% are Doctors. One point he emphasized was that almost all of the male teachers achieved a Master's or Doctorate degree except for one. Nevertheless, most of female teachers only have a Bachelor's degree. In other words, the female teachers in his department normally have a lower educational level than their male colleagues. He thought that one reason might be that fewer female students in this profession were recruited each year. After graduation from university, they chose to stay in China to

find a job instead of continuing studying abroad because China needs such people today. Another reason for this is that although there is no longer discrimination against women in Chinese society, many Chinese women still choose to take care of their family rather than progress in their career. Therefore, they lose the chance to achieve a higher degree.

When talking about the family and career, MH considered both of them important. He would not say that there are any differences between them. However, when he was asked who would give up the opportunity to be promoted in order to take care of the family if both he and his wife were offered it at the same time, he smiled and said that his wife would support his career. He said this because he knew that his wife was a traditional Chinese woman who thought the husband in a family should be more important than the wife. For example, his wife spent 6 months to help him find a job while she achieved her Master's degree. They planned to have a child in 2010, for they thought it would be better to wait until they both had some stability and money.

5.4.3. MI

MI is 32 years old, married, and works in the department of physics in the university. He was interested in physics and chemistry since his junior middle school. In the classes, the teachers showed them some experiments, which he thought were fantastic– especially chemical reactions. From then on, he began to read books from famous physicists and chemists and did some easy experiments himself using the limited materials in his home. Hence, he had the best results on the exams in physics and chemistry among his classmates. At the same time, he was permitted to go to the Olympic school[236] of physics and chemistry without attending the entrance exams. This was a very rare opportunity. After junior middle school, he was sent to a key senior middle school due to his excellent results in the competitions.

[236] It is a kind of school to which only the best school students can be recruited so that they can take part in the competition among school students around the world. The students learn in their spare time, not in the classes.

MI stated that in the middle school, he never thought about what his future job would be; all he wanted was to have good scores. His only goal was to go to a university in Beijing. He thought that the lower the educational degree, the easier it is to be eliminated by the society. He took the situation of peasants as an example. He said that until this day, some of them have no chance to go to school. They can only do farm work, they have no welfare, no insurance, they are poor, and at the same time they have to pay taxes to the government for the fields. Therefore, many of them go to cities to find work in order to escape from poverty. But what if they could be educated? They might bring new technologies to the farm work, they might get much more income from their fields, they might become rich, and would be willing to stay in the countryside. MI emphasized that this was why almost all parents in the countryside tried their best to send their children to study in university– or at least to go to schools in cities– because they realized that education could change the fortune of people.

MI then talked about workers in the state-owned factories. He mentioned that their living conditions were better than those of the peasants because they at least received the 9 years of compulsory education. They lived in cities, had stable wages, and could get an apartment from the factories after working for some years. However, some of them became unemployed since the middle of the 1990s because of the political reform, and they could not find a new job quickly due to their low educational level. Nevertheless, from the 1990s on, his parents' wages rose each year because they were university teachers. On the one hand, the value system of the people had changed: they realized that "science and technology are the primary productive forces", and teachers were much more respected. On the other hand, the government took education more seriously than ever. As a result of the open-door policy and the introduction of new machines and technologies, some of the state-owned factories were shut down or did not need as many workers as before. Those who stayed could not get the same wages as before; hence, their living quality kept falling.

MI passed the NCEE with an excellent score. Therefore, he went to a key university and studied chemistry there in a big city in southern China. First of all,

chemistry was the discipline he liked. Secondly, he thought that studying science might help him easily find a job after graduation.

He spent almost all his free time doing an internship. On the one hand, he could practice what he studied in seminar; on the other hand, he could afford his living costs. At that time, he thought he should learn to be independent. He received almost no money from his family during his 4 years in university.

MI said that in his class in university, the male students played a dominant role, since few female students studied science. The male students had better results on exams than their female counterparts, even though sometimes the female students spent much more time studying. He thought that this might indicate that men have better logical thinking abilities than women.

MI told us that people always had ambitions. He was satisfied with the fact that he could study in university; it could be seen as the first step to his successful life. The second step was to find a job and to earn money after graduation. His parents said they could help him find a job in the city where they lived if he wanted to work there after achieving his Bachelor's degree. It is a big city in southern China, and his parents had many social connections there. Some of his classmates admired him for having such a good opportunity to work there. In the end, he decided to continue studying for his Master's degree. His hope was to work and live in a city like Beijing or Shanghai, even though he had to do everything by himself. He always thought it was important to have a Bachelor's degree from a key university, to choose a good discipline during the period of achieving a Master's degree, and to find a good supervisor when studying for a Doctorate degree; these are all useful things for a successful future. He also mentioned that each person meets many options in his or her life, but only the right ones should be chosen. For MI, the right choice was to continue studying. Although he could find a good job in his hometown through his parents, he was not satisfied with that option and wanted to do something independently.

He chose the same discipline for his Master's study and stayed in the same university. Every month he received an allowance from his university, which was

enough for his living costs. He actually did not have much free time to work outside of the campus. Almost every day he had to do some experiments with the people in his group, and they then had to discuss and finish the paper together. Sometimes they needed to have some seminars for the undergraduate students if their supervisors were busy. He was very nervous at the beginning because he had never stood in front of a big classroom with more than fifty people.

Although he was tired at that time, MI was happy with his fulfilling life. In other words, he enjoyed that period of his life.

In his group, there were a total of 10 people: 8 men and 2 women. He told us that he, as a man, was tired every day; for the two women, it was even worse. They were often sick during that period; however, they insisted on coming every day. He thought they were very active. In the end, these two women were recommended to work in the same institute of chemistry. He said that he had to work hard and finish the part of the project for which he was responsible on time; otherwise, the others in the group would complain about the person who slowed down their plan, and the professor would not give the group a new part of the project. That meant that their graduation date would be put off. Nobody wanted to delay his or her date of graduation, because it meant that the time to find a job and earn money would also be put off. The whole group wanted to graduate as soon as possible. Therefore, he said, everyone in the group worked very diligently.

MI saw himself as a perfectionist, for he tried his best to do everything. Therefore, after finishing his Master's degree with an excellent score, his supervisor advised him to achieve his Doctorate degree in Beijing. As a matter of fact, MI had the same idea. Since some people in his group became his competitors for one work place, he thought that as a Doctor he might have fewer competitors. MI changed his discipline from chemistry to a branch of physics that was related to chemistry when he studied for his Doctorate degree. He considered that this branch developed quickly and would bring him more economic benefits in the future, and he also expected a better life. Another reason was that he could get more economic support from the institute where he studied if he chose this branch. He even could save some of the money. He was

very busy while studying for his Doctorate degree. He had to spend the whole day in the laboratory– sometimes until midnight– and there were no days off. He admired those who studied humanities very much, because they could study at home and had leisure time.

One time, an experiment was not finished and it had to be observed incessantly for 72 hours. MI and his colleagues decided that each one of them would observe it for 8 hours. It was a very cold in winter in Beijing and nobody wanted to work at night, but they had to do it for the experiment. He said that it was very hard for him as a man to get out of the warm bed to go to the laboratory— especially since it was snowing at that time. He had to go there by bicycle at 1 o'clock in the morning because there was no bus that went directly to the laboratory. At that time, there was not anyone on the streets and it was dark. He said that his female colleagues told him they were afraid of the darkness, but they had to do that just like their male colleagues. MI thought it might be one of the reasons why there were so few women who studied this discipline; it was really hard work.

During his Doctorate period, he published some papers in some professional magazines, and he built a very good relationship with his supervisor so that he might be recommended to work in some famous institutes. He emphasized that these relationships were very important in China. Without social connections, people could not do anything. In today's society especially, with too many competitors in the labor market, these connections become a vital element. He said to us that the relationship was more important than skills sometimes. However, this does not mean that skills are not significant. It is only that when two capable people compete for one job, the one who has better relationships with leaders or colleagues would be the one who gets the job.

MI worked as a post-Doctorate in Italy after achieving his Doctorate degree. His supervisor in China was a friend of a professor who worked in an Italian university, who was famous in this branch of physics. If MI could work for him, he would get valuable experience. Hence, MI agreed with his supervisor and worked in Italy.

MI worked as project leader in Italy due to his excellent abilities in terms of

researching and organizing. It was an important event for him, because it indicated that the Chinese could also be leaders. He decided to come back to China after finishing the project because he thought that in China he would have broader spaces for further development in the field he researched. Still, some of his colleagues chose to stay in Italy to work. To this, he stated that different people have different opinions. Of course, it depends on some potential elements as well, such as family background, financial status, and so on.

When MI was asked if a Doctor with a diploma from a foreign university is better off than those with a diploma from Chinese universities, he stated that it must be expressed separately. At work, the one with the foreign diploma has better skills than the one with a Chinese diploma, because one can learn more in foreign universities than in Chinese universities. Someone who studied in a foreign university has a more serious attitude towards the knowledge that he or she learned. However, if the one with a foreign diploma could not find a job, his or her advantages then could not be found out. They would not be able to compete with someone who graduated from a Chinese university and has work experience. In his opinion, academic knowledge and work experience are both important.

MI was fond of his vocation as a university teacher in Beijing. In his opinion, to be a university teacher was better than to be a researcher in a research institute. As a teacher, he could have a stable wage every month. In a research institute, however, one has to find or apply for projects on their own; otherwise, they could not make a living. Furthermore, once there is a project, there is no time to do anything but the project. It is possible that he or she will have to stay in the institute until midnight if needed.

MI had his own plan about his future. Being a university teacher was not the only career for him. He said that he had to work hard when he was young, and therefore made more relationships with companies and other universities. After getting some experience in his area he would run his own company, and then he could get more projects and earn more money. For him, now is the time to get experiences, and the university is the right place to gain such experiences. He said he was only a lecturer

now, but he wanted to be promoted as a vice professor. He already applied for it and now he paid his attention to fulfill the prerequisites. Maybe he will be promoted next year.

MI told us that his wife is younger than him. They studied in the same university; when he studied for his Master's degree, she just began her Bachelor study. Of course, MI had some difficulties in his life. At the beginning of his career, he and his wife lived separately. Nobody cared for him because she worked in another city. Every two months they met each other. After three years, she found a job in Beijing and they were finally able to live together. However, MI came from southern China and his wife's home was in northern China. The weather was different in the two regions, and they had different eating habits. Therefore, his wife was often ill when she came to Beijing, and MI had to go to the hospital to take care of her every day after work. He laughed and said to us that he could not sleep at times due to the exhaustion and pressure, but he kept doing it because he loved his family and he would do anything for them. His wife actually supported his career. She did all of the housework so that MI could have more time to take care of his students.

MI said that the male must be better than the female, whether in career, wage, or academic degree. However, his wife as the female tried her best to reduce this gap. For example, if he was a post-Doctor, his wife should at least have a Bachelor's degree. He said he could accept that his wife earned less than him, but she must have her own career. He would not do any housework because he had no time. If his wife did not like to do it, he would employee a babysitter to do it instead. He thought it was enough for his wife to hold a Master's degree. She also had a job in Beijing now. She only needed to care for the family and for him; his duty was to earn money. He knew he was selfish not only to his wife but also to his colleagues. He told us that he did not like kids, but he had to have one in order to become a father. He knew it sounded a little extreme, but those were his real opinions.

Speaking frankly, MI thought there were some difficulties for female teachers; however, he did not think there were discriminations against them. For instance, sometimes teachers of the physics department had to do some experiments in the

laboratory. Some rays or gases might be harmful for women– especially the pregnant women– and because of that, females were forbidden to do some experiments.

In his department, there were more male leaders than female leaders: the rate was about 3:1. The male leaders' academic degrees were generally higher than the female leaders' degrees. All of the male leaders have a Doctorate degree, and all of the female leaders have a Master's degree. Among the teachers and staff, however, 16 of them were female and 9 of them were male. Therefore, females played a dominant role in the department.

MI came from a traditional Chinese family and his father influenced his opinion of family. His father thought the role of the husband in a family must be more important than the role of the wife. This means that he must have a higher wage than his wife. He should take care of his career more than his family; otherwise, his friends, neighbors, and even his wife would look down upon him. MI had the same idea: he stated that the wife should pay more attention to the family. This includes doing the housework and taking care of the children, because this is the tradition in China. MI planned to have a child after working for at least 3 or 4 years. He said that a man should have his career first, and then the family. If a man had a baby first, he might not be as active as he would have been because his thinking and values might be changed.

When was asked if he would still study abroad if he were given a chance again, MI answered that he would. He explained that to be a human being, man has to learn from the outside world so that he can develop himself. He wanted to be the best in his area.

5.4.4. MJ

MJ is the oldest teacher in my interviews. He is 59 years old and next year he will retire.

MJ was born in a small city in northeastern China. He was the oldest son in the family. His parents did not care for his study like the other parents at that time, because they were very busy in a factory. However, MJ was diligent and his grades

were not bad. MJ wanted to join the army and broaden his horizons after graduation from high school at 20 years old. If he would become a solider, he would be sent anywhere in China by the army. However, his mother did not agree with her son leaving the family. She hoped that she and her husband could live with him after they retired, even though they also have other children in the family. It is the tradition in China that the oldest son will support the parents when they are getting old. The family is arguably the most important social institution in China, and blood ties have traditionally been the cornerstones of society. In accordance with Confucian customs, many families keep careful genealogical records on bloodlines, achievements, and even graveyards. Traditionally, sons and their wives live with the son's parents until the parents die, at which time the sons divide the household and property. MJ obeyed the decision of his parents and stayed in the family because in his hometown, parents traditionally have absolute authority over the family.

In the year that he graduated from the senior middle school, his school needed a young sports teacher to replace the old teacher who was sick. Although he liked sports very much, he did not want it to be his career for his whole life. At that time, there were normally three ways for students like him. The first way was to be a solider, to which his parents disagreed. The second way was to go to college, and he knew he could not pass the high education entrance exam with his notes. The third way was to become a worker. He had to choose to become a worker like some of his classmates. At that time, to be a worker was a good job because the wage of the worker was higher than other careers. His father helped MJ find a job in a steel factory near the family, but his work situation was the heaviest in the factory. The parents of MJ cared his health; therefore they looked for other jobs for their son. After working in the factory for 3 months, his father knew that the school still needed a sports teacher, and he told his son to ask the headmaster. MJ did not like the job in the factory, and so he went to the school, even though he also did not want to become a teacher.

A few months later, he took off the uniform of the factory and put on sports clothes to be teacher in the school. He told us that his wage as a teacher was lower than as a worker, but it was enough for him because he lived with his parents. His classmates

and friends married one after another in these years, but he was still alone. His parents worried about him and asked the relatives and friends to find a daughter-in-law for them. The teachers in MJ's school introduced some new female colleagues to MJ. His parents, however, thought their son's wage was already not high. If his future wife were also a teacher, their life together would be hard– especially after childbirth. Even though as teachers, they would both have winter and summer holidays (and therefore time to care for the family and the children), they would have to worry about money often. Hence, MJ's parents quickly chose a wife for their son through one of their relatives. The girl was a worker in a state-owned factory. One year later, they married and lived with his parents. His wife was very diligent and she cared for her husband and his parents. She was very honest. As previously stated, the wage of workers at that time was higher than teachers, but MJ's wife did not complain about her husband's low wage, and their life was peaceful.

MJ said they had their first daughter soon after the marriage. MJ's mother was very happy, but since her son was the oldest child in the family, she hoped that he could have a son. Actually, their wage could support one child; if they had two children their living conditions would be worse than now. In fact, he had no assurance that the second child would be a son. However, his wife liked children and she wanted a second child– whether girl or boy. One year later, they had a son.

In the beginning of the 1980s, MJ's school was promoted to the academic college by the local government. After senior middle school, the students could study 3 years continuously in this academic college and then they would get the short circle study degree. The college hoped that all teachers could achieve at least the short circle degrees as well and continue studying new knowledge. As a result, all teachers without any degree had to study in colleges to achieve one; otherwise, they could not be teachers anymore. MJ was one of them. He worked as a sports teacher after graduating from senior middle school, and now he had to continue studying in order to continue working there. The college sent these teachers to different colleges and universities to study with a wage, and MJ was sent to the University in Beijing to

continue studying.

MJ said he actually did not want to leave his hometown because he needed to care for his children and parents. However, it was the decision of his college, and he had to do it. His wife understood and supported him. She told MJ that she would care for the two children and his parents herself. She had no ambition and she did not want to become a leader or to continue studying.

MJ arrived in Beijing and lived in the dormitory in the university. He finished his short circle study in two and half years, and during the other half year, he did an internship in Beijing. He said he was lucky and after graduation, a Normal University hoped that he could stay to work because they needed a sports teacher with experience. The university said they would help him and his wife and children to come to Beijing. He went to his hometown and told his parents and wife this information, and both his parents and wife thought this was a good opportunity for the family. Lots of people wanted to live in the capital, and now MJ had the chance. In addition, the whole family could also live there. MJ told us that his parents also knew it was good for MJ's development if he could stay in Beijing. Not everyone in his school had such a good opportunity. They encouraged him to go there, even though they did not want him to leave them. However, as the parents, they always hoped that their children could be happier and have a better life than they did.

MJ stated that after working in Beijing for half a year, his wife and children came to live with him and brought all of their valuables– many books included. Their home was an apartment with only one room; they could not buy much furniture because of the limited space. They had to share the kitchen and bathroom with neighbors. MJ found a school for the children at once. Since his wife was a worker before, it was difficult for her to find a job in Beijing. At first, she had to stay at home. After waiting for half a year, she found a job in a factory with the help of MJ's friends. MJ said that at that time, his wage was low, even though he was a university teacher. He spent his whole wage to support the family and he had no more money to send to his parents in his hometown. MJ had a very good relationship with his colleagues. His wife cared for the family and the children the whole time, and she made good use of every cent

they earned.

Some years later, the children were grown up and MJ thought that one room was not enough for the whole family anymore. They needed a bigger apartment. However, even though he had worked for some years in the university, he did not fulfill all of the prerequisites to get a house from the university. One of them was to have a professional title, and his professional title depended on his degree. If he had a Bachelor's degree, he had the chance to get an apartment. Therefore, he decided to study in the night college in order to achieve his Bachelor's degree quickly since his short cycle study was not enough to apply for a house. His wife knew he was very busy, so she went home right after work and did the shopping, cooking, caring for the children and making sure they finished their homework. After dinner, her husband went to the night college by bicycle, even in the rain or the snow. MJ said he was thankful for his wife; without her support he would not have been able to concentrate on his study. Around 2 years later, MJ got the Bachelor's degree. With the degree and his work experience, he was quickly promoted to lecturer. The next year, he got a bigger apartment from the university, and the whole family was very satisfied with it. They had their own apartment, after all. In their hometown, they had to live with his parents, and in Beijing the four of them lived in one small room.

MJ's wife still worked in the factory and cared for the family and the children. She had no chance of promotion due to her low educational level, and she retired when she was 50 years old. She did not involve herself into her career; she worked 8 hours every day and after work she spent all of her time for the family.

MJ was a sports teacher, and although his discipline was not considered to be as important as others like foreign language or economy, he had 4 seminars every day. Many students chose it as an elective course, and there were not many teachers in the department. MJ was in charge of all of the students in the first and second year in the university. In a Chinese university, there were normally 4 seminars in the morning (from 8 o'clock to 12 o'clock, each lasting 45 minutes) and 4 classes in the afternoon (from 14 o'clock to 18 o'clock). The sports seminar took place in the afternoon.

MJ normally went home very late and had no time to go shopping or cook for the children. In the mornings, there were always meetings in his department to make plans and arrangements, and he would also prepare the classes for the afternoon. He told us that the sports class was not as easy as he thought. The students could not always run or do exercises, because they found them to be boring. They liked new and interesting sports like swimming, skating, playing the balls or Konfu, and of course also some theories. If the students played basketball, football or volleyball, MJ could not just sit on the chair and watch them. He had to teach them by showing them or acting as a referee. He also told us that he stayed beside the swimming pool under the sun the whole afternoon and made no pause, because he had two seminars for different students. As a result, after class he was always tired and did not want to do anything. His wife understood him and did all of the housework.

From the beginning of the 1990s, some state-owned factories were closed in China, and many workers became unemployed. MJ's wife was very lucky. Although her factory was closed in 1999, she was the last group of workers who were over 50 years old and could have pension and medical insurance after retirement. Some of her other colleagues were young and could not get any help from the factory. His wife was very satisfied with everything. Although her pension was a little bit low, it was better than nothing. She wanted to find another job because she was only 50 years old, but her husband thought she was too tired in these years and she needed to have a long rest and use the time to do something she liked. MJ told us his wage was higher than earlier and it was enough for the family. He thought his wife would stay at home after retirement, and he thought she needed a comfortable place to have a rest. At the same time, their two children should have some private space. Therefore, he decided to buy a bigger apartment.

MJ said that after retirement, his wife still went to the cheap market by bicycle to buy the food every morning as she did before. She also became the leader of the neighborhood committee [237]. After dinner, MJ and his wife would discuss the

[237] http://www.hudong.com/wiki/%E5%B1%85%E5%A7%94%E4%BC%9A
As self-governing organizations established by the people, these committees deal with matters

information of houses: whether or not there were some new buildings, which one was cheap, and which location was good. If they liked the house, they would go to visit it by bicycle over the weekend. One year later, they sold their old welfare apartment and bought a new bigger apartment with credit.

MJ also told us that both his daughter and son found jobs after graduating from college. His daughter hoped to study abroad, and his son would marry next year. Since the children were independent, his wife had more time to do her things. She went shopping in the morning, because the vegetables were fresh then. She went to the so-called "old people's college" to learn drawing because she did not want to stay at home the whole afternoon. There was no more housework to do now, and she had more spare time than ever. MJ said he would retire next year, and after that he would travel with his wife. Since his wife did many things for him and for the family, he wanted her to be happy for the rest of her days.

In 2005, MJ was promoted to vice professor. He was the last group of teachers who were promoted with the old rules in the university, which focus mainly on the working years and working experience. However, the new rules of promotions included: the male teacher had to be over 50 years old; had to have worked over 30 years; had the professional title of lecturer; had at least a Bachelor's degree; had published more than 3 books; and had passed the foreign language exam. MJ said he was very lucky because he did not expect that he could be a vice professor before retirement. The authority of the university considered that some of the teachers over 50 years old had worked many years and most of them only held Bachelor's degrees. They had rich teaching experience, but relatively less publications. Hence, the prerequisites for them were not supposed to be too strict. MJ said that if he had stayed in his hometown, he might have been a professor some years ago, and he also could get a big apartment there. It was difficult in Beijing; there were so many talented

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concerning public welfare and residents' well being while assisting local governments in mediating family and neighborhood disputes, conducting ideological education and maintaining public order.

people there. However, he did not regret coming to Beijing.

In MJ's department, most of the teachers were male. Some of them were over 40 years old with Bachelor's degrees, a few with Master's degrees, and only one male teacher with a Doctorate degree. Therefore, the rate of Bachelor's, Master's and Doctorate degrees was 8:4:1. He said that the educational degree associated itself with professional title, wage, and welfare. Therefore, it encouraged the teachers in the department to study for a Master's or Doctorate degree. He thought that a few years later when the older teachers retired, there would no longer be teachers with only Bachelor's degrees; all of teachers would hold at least a Master's degree. He said that if he were 50 years old, he would study for a Master's degree in order to have the chance to compete with the others. Now he was a vice professor, but without a Master's degree because he was lucky. If he were 10 years younger, he would only be a lecturer, no matter how many years he had already worked. The conditions of the promotion were more difficult than earlier: now the educational degree and publications were the significant points. He thought that being a university teacher was no longer an easy job. In the past, the teacher only needed to work hard. Now the teacher needs to improve his abilities, such as educational degree, otherwise the young teachers and the society would surpass him. As a consequence, the university teachers had more pressures than before.

There were a total of 4 female teachers in the department. One of them retired some years ago because of illness, another was middle-aged, and the other two graduated from this university two years ago. MJ said that in the past, there was only one female teacher in the department. The leader thought that more females should be recruited in the department in order to avoid the imbalance between the two sexes. Hence, they chose some graduates who had good notes and were healthy. After passing some tests, they became teachers in the university. One of them even had the opportunity to be sent to study for a Master's degree.

5.4.5. MK

MK is 42 years old and was born in Beijing. His parents were workers in a state-

owned factory. In his childhood, he was always the leader among his friends. He invented some new games and was the best player.

MK did everything by himself when he was still a boy, including cooking and going to school. He did this because both of his parents were busy in the factory. It was especially so after his father became an accountant; MK only saw him 2 or 3 times a week. MK said that this kind of experience cultivated his spirit of independence.

He told us that his teachers in primary school thought he had the potential to be a leader later on in life. In his class, he belonged to the good students. His scores in exams were good— particularly in Chinese— despite the fact that he spent much time playing with his friends after class. He said he always studied for the exam 3 days before, and he could remember all of the texts in a short time. He said he might have inherited this from his mother, because she had a good memory.

After entering the junior middle school, he started to have interest in all literature, and he began to write a diary. His parents noticed his interest and hired a college student who studied Chinese to teach him in his spare time, hoping that MK might be an author later on. Within the 3 years in junior middle school, he wrote some texts and sent them to magazines and newspapers; some of them were published. MK said that he was very happy when he saw his texts in newspapers, and his parents were proud of him. As a result, his grades in Chinese and English were better than his other subjects, such as mathematics, physics or chemistry. Hence, his hope for the future was to become a novelist. In the third year of the junior middle school, he became the captain of the football team in his school. MK smiled and said that it might testify to what his teacher in primary school predicted: that he would be a leader.

After 9 years of compulsory education, students could choose to continue to senior middle school or to receive other kinds of education, such as at vocational schools or technical schools. After discussing with his parents, MK made his decision to continue his senior middle school education in the same school. He did this despite

the fact that his mother tried to persuade him to go to a vocational school so that he could give the family some financial support.

Normally in the second year of senior middle school in China, students will be divided into 2 kinds of classes to determine what they will study in the university: humanities or science. MK entered the humanities class because of his excellent grades in Chinese and English. He said at that time, he planned to study literature in a key university in Beijing. However, his score on the NCEE was not good enough, and he was admitted by another university to study English in Beijing.

Besides literature and Chinese, MK liked English as well. He thought that it is the world language, and if he could master it, he might become a translator later. In the interview, he told us that his favorite courses included oral, listening comprehension, translation, as well as extensive reading. He said that the lecturers of oral and listening comprehension were Americans who were not able to speak Chinese. Therefore, the students were forbidden to speak Chinese with them, and it was a very effective way to practice the foreign language. The students also had the chance to watch some original English-language movies in the courses, such as *Gone with the Wind, My Fair Lady*, and so on. His parents afforded most of his living costs during his time at the university, and he occasionally did some part time jobs, such as a server in a restaurant, or a tutor for middle school students. He told us that at that time, the entrance rate of higher education was not as high as today. Therefore, many parents needed college students to help their children consolidate what they learned in schools. On the one hand, college students have already learned such knowledge; on the other hand, to hire a college student was not as expensive as hiring a schoolteacher, and the parents had to think about their financial situation. He taught a total of 5 middle school students, and all of them were accepted to universities. He was very proud of them. MK also worked as a translator for a newspaper. He liked this job, not only because he could be paid more, but also because he could practice his language skills.

In the university where MK studied, female students were the majority. In accordance with the traditional ideas, girls seemed to have a better ability than male

students to study language because they were patient, gentle and quiet. According to MK, this might not be absolutely true. Although the female students always had higher scores on exams than the male students in his class, their oral English was not as good as their written English. They liked to study by themselves instead of discussing with teachers or classmates because they were shyer than the male students. MK said that his teacher often repeated that one important method to practice oral English was to talk with people, and he agreed with his teacher very much. He liked talking with people, whether teachers or classmates, so that he would be able to speak freely if he met a native speaker.

The countryside students would rather spend most of their free time in the library than communicate with other students or teachers. In MK's opinion, they hoped to stay in Beijing after graduation. Beijing was big and modern, and being a dweller in Beijing meant more advantages, such as a good education and a better living standard. One way to stay in Beijing was to become an English teacher in a middle school. However, not all of them had the chance to do so, for they were competitors against each other. Therefore, each of them tried his or her best to study hard, so that he or she had more opportunities than the others to stay in Beijing.

MK said that in his third year of university, he saw a computer for the first time and was already interested in it, for there was a computer course in university. At the beginning, he had no idea what the computer was, and he was curious of how to use it and what one could do with it. After class, he began to read some books about it and got some basic knowledge from his teacher, who was one of his neighbors.

MK graduated with good grades and his teachers recommended him to some middle schools to teach English, but he refused. He had his own opinion, and he wanted to achieve another academic degree for the discipline of computers. On the one hand, the teacher told him that the computer was a new technology and that it would be very helpful for the human being. At the same time, it would bring a revolution to the way that people communicate. On the other hand, most of his classmates from the university worked as teachers in middle schools or workers in a

library, and he was not interested in such jobs. He hoped to find something new. However, it was not easy to persuade his parents to support him. They thought that having a Bachelor's degree was enough for their son, because at that time the entrance rate to the university was low. Only a few middle school students could be permitted, and their son was permitted and became a graduate, so it was not necessary to achieve another degree. Furthermore, his parents thought that the job as a teacher in the middle school was stable, and he could stay in the school until he retired. MK told us that at first, he tried to talk with his parents peacefully, but they did not agree and insisted on telling him to give up his idea. Then, he quarreled with them and went out to live with his friends for a couple days. His parents finally compromised and agreed to let him do it. He told us that he was very sorry about the quarrel with his parents; he should have found a better way instead of doing that, because it might have hurt them.

He went to an evening university to study computers so that he would not have to take part in the NCEE again. Another reason he chose the evening university was that the time to go to the university was flexible; he did not have to go there every day. Of course, it was hard for him to study a new discipline, especially a discipline of sciences. He had to study it from the very beginning. However, he was very diligent. He said that sometimes he recorded what the teacher said in class with a small recorder so that he could hear it after class. He spent almost all of his spare time reading and doing homework. He said that, to be honest, there was a period when he planned to give up since it was very boring and difficult at times. After class, if he had questions, nobody could help him. MK said that he thanked his parents and his girlfriend (who later became his wife) very much, because they encouraged him often to overcome the difficulties. His girlfriend gave him some advice to help him relax as well.

The situation in the evening university was not good. There were only 4 computers in the university, and this meant that 4 or 5 students shared one computer in the class. Sometimes MK had no chance to practice. After class, there were only two hours for students to do exercises, and he often had to wait for an hour to use the computer. He

told us that one of his dreams at that time was to have a computer at home. However, at the end of the 1980s, buying a computer was a luxury, and his family could not afford it. He was lucky that he had a good relationship with his teacher. He was his teacher's favorite student, and he could use the computer in the office to practice what he learned in class.

After 3 years, he finished all of the courses, which would normally take 4 years. He can still remember how surprised he was when he held the diploma. Due to his good results, his teacher advised him to stay in the university to work with him. However, MK had no interest in becoming a teacher, and therefore he resisted the offer. After a few days, he was recruited to work in a small computer company as a programmer. He was satisfied with this job because he could do something he wanted. At the same time, his wage was higher than others around him, including his neighbors and his friends. His parents were glad as well, for their son made the correct decision. His classmates from the university also quickly found work, for very few people studied computers at that time, and they were needed in many fields. It was not easy to be a programmer, especially at that time because there was a lack of helpful books in China. In MK's words, the IT field was the hardest work. Sometimes he had to spend a whole day figuring out a problem or repairing one small error in the system.

At the very beginning, there were a total of 4 people in the company. Both MK and his boss graduated from university and worked as programmers. The other two worked as salesmen, and they were only beginners in this field with limited knowledge. Hence, MK and his boss had to help them if they had problems with the system or hardware, or if they were not able to explain something clearly to the customers. MK acknowledged that he was always tired after work. He said that at times, he slept in the bus on the way back home, and sometimes he passed his station. However, under such circumstances, he got enriching and helpful experiences. Two years later, with the popularization of the computer, the company grew and he was promoted to be the vice manager in charge of technical support. In 6 months, MK's boss planned to promote him to be the manager of a subsidiary company in another city to help train the staff there. However, after discussing this option with his wife,

MK decided to stay in Beijing because his family and parents needed him. If he worked at the subsidiary company, he could only come back on holidays. MK said that he would rather be together with his family than become a manager.

After working for 5 years in the IT field, MK realized that he needed a change. The computer was a new technology and it would develop quickly. More and more universities offered the discipline of computer, and more and more students chose this discipline to study. MK said that the government also encouraged people to learn some computer knowledge. As a result, the knowledge would be updated very fast, and the workers who worked in the field for some years would have to meet new knowledge every day; otherwise, they would be surpassed by the young competitors. This would cause them much pressure. MK also considered that he was always busy within the 5 years he worked in IT. He had no time for his family, and his wife had to do everything and she never complained. He wanted to share some of the work with her so that she could have more leisure time. Another reason he decided to change was that he and his wife liked children, and they hoped to have a baby as soon as possible.

MK thought that working as a university teacher was a suitable job for him. He had some advantages. Since many universities offered the discipline of computer, the number of students who studied this discipline rose each year. In order to face the large number of students, each university definitely needed such people with working experiences like him to support the teams. He also thought he knew how to teach a beginner, for he had taught the two salesmen in the company. At the same time, if he worked in the university, he might have more time to study this discipline intensively, so that he was able to get in touch with the newest information. However, there were also some disadvantages as a university teacher. One of them was that he would have less income than before. However, he considered the fact that the government attached such an importance to education. They invested much into it and the situation of teachers would quickly be much better. Therefore, he thought that he did not need to worry about it.

MK sent his resume to three universities to ask if they needed computer teachers.

After a week, two of them responded and offered him the opportunity to be interviewed. MK said that both interviews were successful. Both universities were satisfied with him— especially with his work experience— because at that time not so many people had as much experience as MK. Both universities thought he was able to help them build the new department of computers. In China, before being employed in a university, the candidate generally has to have a seminar for all teachers and professors in the department in order to show them that he or she is capable for the position. This includes demonstrating his or her professional knowledge, teaching skills, and so on. MK was no exception; he prepared his seminar carefully and passed the test.

At last, MK chose the university that could offer him the position as a lecturer and promised him that he could teach the seminars in the English department as well if he wanted, since he also had the Bachelor's degree in English. MK told us that he never gave up practicing his English after graduation. He insisted on listening to English radio every day and translated some short stories for a newspaper while he was working in the computer company. During the interview at the university, some of the teachers from the university spoke with him in English and found that his English level was good enough to teach a translation course to new students.

As a matter of fact, during the first two years in the university, MK was very busy since there were only 5 teachers in the department and they had to teach more than 100 students. At the same time, they often had to communicate with colleagues from other universities in order to gain more experience in terms of building the department. MK said that besides the work in the department of computers, he had one seminar in the department of English as well. However, he liked this kind of busy life. It brought him a different feeling in contrast with his old work in the company. His colleagues were nice and he had good relationships with them; after class, they often went to have a picnic together.

MK's first baby was born during his second year of working at the university. His family was very happy about the new baby.

After working at the university for about 3 years, MK's department recruited 3 new

teachers. Therefore, MK had more spare time to do something for his family, such as taking care of his son and helping with the housework. Nevertheless, he had new pressure at work. All three of the new teachers were younger than him, and they all had Master's degrees. He graduated from an evening university, and although he possessed more experience, he thought he should enhance his academic knowledge. As a result, he applied to the university to achieve his Master's degree. At first, the university did not accept his application, because he was one of their important teachers in the department of computers and he had many seminars. The new teachers lacked experience, and they studied different branches. Hence, there was nobody who could teach some of his seminars. Nevertheless, MK insisted on studying for his Master's degree. The university finally agreed with him, but the precondition was that he must come to university two days a week to teach his seminars. MK said that he agreed without hesitation.

He studied for his Master's degree in another university in Beijing after passing the entrance exam. He paid all of the costs himself during this period. He could not only get money from the government every month, but he also had his wage from his job at the university. Most of his classmates were males. He thought it might because few girls have interest in doing such a "boring" job. He also thought that girls do not like to face many symbols or numbers every day.

He achieved his Master's degree two years later and involved himself into his career again. In addition, he had his second child, his daughter, that year. MK said that both he and his wife were only children in their families. Therefore, they had the right to have two children, and he was happy to have one son and one daughter.

MK told us that he was promoted to vice professor just one month before the interview. He fulfilled the all of the prerequisites, such as work years and publications, and he was satisfied with his life now.

MK said that if his wife had the chance to be promoted, he would support her because she paid very much for the family and his career.

In MK's department, most of teachers were males. Of course, the leader was also

male. There were only three young females in department. It might be because very few female students studied computers some years ago. The situation changed, and step-by-step, more and more female students studied this discipline and some female teachers started to appear in the department. He said the academic degree was very important for the university teachers. In his department, there were only two older teachers with only a Bachelor's degree. Other teachers held Master's degrees, and some teachers— especially young teachers— had a Doctorate degree. MK planned to study for his Doctorate next year in order to be promoted to professor while he was still young. MK also told us that in fact, many teachers had projects for some companies to earn extra money after class. He had no projects yet, because he still studied in these years and he would go on studying for his Doctorate degree next year. Therefore, he had no time to earn extra money. He said he did not care about the money; otherwise he would not have become a teacher.

MK thought that everyone had different options in his or her life. Some people aimed to earn more money, regardless of how tired they may be. MK, on the other hand, preferred to improve himself in terms of knowledge and professional title. He would pay more attention to stable work as well as a position in the department. When he had these things, it was easier to earn money.

5.4.6. ML

ML is 35 years old and was born in a family with a good educational background in eastern China. His father worked in a private company as department manager after graduating from university. His mother was also a graduate from a university and taught history in a key middle school. Therefore, ML's grades were always the best in his class in primary school. In the interview, ML said he was the only child in the family. He was spoiled not only by his parents, but also by his grandparents. He spent most of his time with them at home.

In ML's childhood, he admired his father very much. In his eyes, his father was a man who knew everything, and he hoped he could be a man like his father after growing up. His father studied economy in the university, and because of it, ML

wanted to become an economist in the future. ML said that it might be the first thing that influenced him to chose economy as his discipline in university, even though at that time he did not know what the economy really was; his father only told him that economy included mathematics and politics.

Nevertheless, after entering the middle school, ML found that he had no interest in politics or mathematics. Although his grade in mathematics was not bad, he could not understand the relationship between mathematics, politics and economy. In contrast, his grades in English and Chinese were good. As a result, in middle school he decided his ideal career in the future was to be either a diplomat or an actor instead of being an economist.

ML said that in his class, the female students had better grades than the male students in English, Chinese and politics. In contrast, the male students were in the dominant position in physics and chemistry.

In the second year in senior middle school, students would be divided into two groups based on the different disciplines in university. The decision is important because it will somehow influence one's career and quite possibly even one's life. Therefore, some parents forced their children to study the disciplines that they thought would be good for their children, and neglected their own interests. ML told us that his parents did not do that. In fact, they discussed the options with him. ML wanted to study humanities in university, because his grades in mathematics and physics were not as good as his grades in English or Chinese. His parents, however, hoped he would choose sciences, such as business, economy or trade. ML said that at that time, those disciplines were seen as so called "hot disciplines". With the economic development and the opening policy, China would have more chances to communicate with the whole world. Therefore, a student who studied those disciplines would not have to worry about getting a job after graduation, because there would be many job opportunities in the job market. Hence, numbers of parents encouraged their children to study such disciplines. ML told his parents his ideas about his future careers, but his parents did not agree with him. Finally, they spoke with ML's teacher. The teacher thought that with ML's grades in his class, it would be

easier to be permitted to go to the university if he chose business or economy, since the entrance rate for “humanities students” was higher than that of “sciences students”. ML acknowledged that his parents did not force him to do anything; they merely gave him some advice to help him make the right decision. After thinking it over carefully, ML decided to study sciences in university.

While studying in the university in his hometown, ML thought that his decision was right. There were some courses he liked, such as marketing, administration and personnel. ML said that these courses were more “humanities” than “sciences”, because they still focused much on theories. On the contrary, other courses such as accounting or statistics he found to be boring, for he had to deal with lots of numbers and formulas.

According to ML, male students were the minority in his class: only one-third were males, even though it was a sciences discipline. In addition, the favorite courses between males and females were different: males liked economic theory and practical courses while the females were fond of accounting or English. ML said that the males enjoyed discussing things together both in and out of class. In contrast, the girls generally preferred to study alone. Even when they occasionally joined the discussions, most of them just sat there and listened to what the others said.

ML’s parents paid for his living costs during the four years in the university. They were able to afford it and they did not want their child to worry about it. They preferred that he could concentrate on his studies. However, ML and two of his friends worked as assistants in a research company in their spare time in order to accumulate experiences and earn pocket money. He said that their jobs were to make interviews with their questionnaires in some families that were randomly chosen by a computer. It was not as easy as it sounded, for some people did not want to be disturbed by strangers, even though they showed them their I.D. cards or explained what kind of work they did. ML said that he and his friends saw different kinds of people during the period working as interviewers. Some were nice, some were angry, others treated them as thieves, and sometimes he and his friend were even scolded. ML thought that this job really made him grow up. However, he said, they also

learned something from the job. At the very least, they learned some methods of how to communicate with strangers and how to make strangers trust them, and such methods would be helpful in their lives. ML told us that when he discussed his job with his parents, they were not at all supportive of him doing such a job. On one hand, they did not think it was a suitable job for him, because ML was not as open as other teenagers. He was a little shy. On the other hand, they thought that it would take him much time to do, and that as a result he would have no time to do his homework. Nevertheless, ML wanted to gain some experience through the job and to overcome his shyness. In his words, he needed a challenge to see whether or not he could change this weakness.

ML told us that his ideas about his future career had changed in university. As he previously stated, in middle school he wanted to be a diplomat or an actor. Nevertheless, after studying economy in university, ML found it was not as boring as he thought it would be before. He had more interest in it than ever, and many people who studied economy would be needed in society. After graduation, ML hoped he could work in a joint venture company due to the new management approaches. In his opinion, employees in such a company could develop their abilities and their modes of thinking through working. At the same time, the high wage was another attractive point for him. Working in a joint venture company meant earning a high salary at that time, and having a high salary represents one's value in some ways. Of course, if he wanted to change his job later on, the work experience in such a company was an important advantage. The relationship between employees was not as significant as it is in state-owned factories. In a joint venture company, employees were much more independent.

After graduation, ML found a job in a joint venture company as an accountant, as he had expected. In his work, he not only practiced what he learned from the university, but he had intensive knowledge about accounting. He found accounting had many branches, and each one had its own theories. ML stated that one of the important events during that period was that he had many tests to pass. At first, he had

to pass the professional examination, including preliminary and senior tests. Then there was the most difficult test: the CPA[238] examination. He said that for most people, it would take them at least 2 or 3 years to pass all tests, and he was no exception. However, with the development of economy, new theories and methods would be acquired. As a result, textbooks would also be updated constantly, and all accountants had to pass the new test. Therefore, in ML's words, those tests exhausted him. He spent almost all of his spare time preparing for them.

After working for 4 years in the company, ML thought he should find a new goal in his life. After graduation, his goal was to find a good job, and he had realized it. After 4 years, he became aware that he did not have the energy to do this work anymore. He needed some changes. Therefore, he considered that it would be a nice change for him if he went to a foreign country to study for a Master's degree. ML told us that at that time, to study abroad became easier than before. People were richer than ever, and more and more normal families could afford to do it. As a result, they sent their children to foreign countries such as the U.S.A. or England. ML chose to study in Germany. Like many students who went to Germany to study, he chose this country because there were no tuition fees for higher education. This way, he was able to save some living costs for his stay in Germany. His parents hoped that he could study continuously in a foreign country so that he would be able to have a better life. Hence, they supported him. He spent one year in a school to learn German, and then he went to Germany.

To study and live in a foreign country was not as easy as ML had imagined. At first, he found the German that he learned in China was not enough at all. He could not understand what people said, even if he wanted to pay for what he bought in the supermarket. He was very sad because he never expected that this would happen. However, his parents called him often and supported him. ML himself also wanted to pass the language exam as soon as possible, so he quickly found a language school to

[238] Certified Public Accountant

learn German. In the school, he met some friends who helped him very much. One year later, he passed the exam and went to a university to study.

When asked about the living costs while he studied in Germany, ML said he saved some money while he worked in the company in China. In addition, his parents sent him some money regularly, and his friends from the language school recommended some jobs to him as an assistant. His income was enough to make a living.

ML said that it was difficult to give an accurate ratio between male and female students in his class in university, because there were different people in each seminar. He guessed that the ratio was about 50:50. He considered that both males and females were active in studying. Through presentations and discussions, he found that females were better capable of oral expression than the males in the seminars– at least in the seminars that he attended. ML noticed that there was a big difference between Chinese and German female students: the German girls were more open.

To speak frankly, ML thought the courses in his Master's study were much more interesting than those in his Bachelor's study because they were more practical. In contrast, the courses before were more theoretical.

After 3 years of studying, ML achieved his Master's degree and he planned to find a job in Germany. However, competition exists everywhere, and Germany is no exception. Although some companies interviewed him, he got no contract. In the end, ML just found a company where he could be an internship student. At the beginning, the boss told him it was impossible for him to work there after the internship because it would be more expensive to hire a worker than an internship student. ML thought that the other companies might also have the same idea.

ML acknowledged that his idea about his future career changed again after achieving his Master's degree. He would have liked to do something in the research or teaching fields instead of working as an accountant. He found that what he learned during his Master's study was much more systematic and practical. For instance, in some seminars in the university, he and his classmates had to read many correlative documents and make some modes by themselves in order to accomplish some research projects. He found this to be very interesting. For his thesis, he had to do the

same things by himself, and he could not forget how he happy was when he finished it. He said he felt very successful at that time.

ML returned to China after the internship, for he found a position in a university to achieve his Doctorate degree. He told us that his notes in the German university were good and his professors wrote him some recommendations. Hence, it was relatively easy for him to find a position, and he did not have to take part in the entrance exam.

His emphasizes in his Doctorate degree included marketing, labor market, and economic growth– all of which were main topics in China. ML chose such topics to study because he thought they might help him find a job easily after graduation. He said that he was also a common person, and he had to think about his life. Among all of the students of his supervisor, there was not one female. The students did not meet often, for they all had different projects. ML said that once a month they met to talk to each other about their works. During his Doctorate study, ML paid all of his living costs by himself. He got a wage from his supervisor and government, and he lived with his parents. This way, he said, he could even save some money in the bank.

ML told us he that found his job in a career fair. In a few days, the companies or units would invite some of the people who handed over their resumes for an interview, and at last, some of them would be hired. ML said he was invited for an interview just two days after the career fair. His interview was successful.

ML liked his job as lecturer in the university. He thought that what he learned could be used in his teaching, and he was satisfied with it. Besides the job in the university, he could do some research in his spare time. At the same time, he could get more income from his research. Sometimes he worked with famous professors, and he could learn a lot from them. He had good relationships with his students. He said it might be because he was not as old as the other teachers in the department, and therefore he and the students had common interests.

ML did not think about being promoted to vice professor. He knew it was not easy to do. He was new in the university and had a lack of experience. He had to fulfill many

conditions for that, such as publications, working years, quality of his seminars, and his research achievements. He said that maybe in four years he would consider applying for the promotion.

In ML's department, male teachers were in a dominant position with both department leaders and normal teachers. When asked about the differences between males and females in the work, ML said that the males generally had better abilities than females– in academic abilities, teaching abilities, educational degree and professional title. He thought his married female colleagues spent more time with their families, or– in other words– they accepted their social roles as mothers and wives. They saw their family as the most important element in their lives. He mentioned that for some of them, the job was only a way to get more income for their families. They spent a lot of time with their family and as a result, they paid less attention to the seminars that they taught. They did not have enough time to think about other methods, which could make the seminars more attractive; therefore, some of their seminars were boring to the students. After marriage, most of the female teachers chose to take care of their families instead of achieving higher degrees. That was why their academic degrees were lower than their male counterparts.

ML thought his Doctorate degree did not bring him any advantages because many of the teachers hold Master's or Doctorate degrees.

ML is single now, but he said he would marry in a short time. He had never planned to have a baby. He wanted to have an "economic base" first, so that his baby had a happy and rich life.

At the end of the interview, ML said that the experience of studying abroad was an important event in his life, and he never regretted doing that.

5.5. Interviews with the male teachers – results

5.5.1. Family background

Male interviewees have different family backgrounds as well. Among them, MG, MJ and ML are from small cities, while the other three come from big cities. The

parents of some male teachers are also university graduates, such as ML's or MI's parents.

Regardless of what kind of family they come from, the male teachers' parents supported their children to study in the university. It could be seen as an influence of the Chinese traditional ideas about males, which indicate that males are supposed to be stronger than females— physically or mentally— and to be educated is one way to be intellectual.

Because some of the male teachers' parents are university graduates, they somehow affect their choice to study. For example, ML chose to study economy because his father had studied it in the university.

5.5.2. Motivation of working in university

Some of our male interviewees, MK and ML, for example, wanted to work in the university because they wanted something new in their lives. They both worked for some years before being recruited to university. In contrast, MJ's situation is different. The senior middle school where he worked was combined with a university and then became a college of the university; after that, he became a university teacher.

Of course, the vocation as a university teacher is regarded as first step of their career by some of the male interviewees, such as MH and MI. Maybe it has something to do with their disciplines. MH studied design, and MI's discipline is one branch of physics. Both of them want to leave university some years later to develop their own career. For example, MH hopes to run his own studio, while MI's expectation is to have his own company. For them, university is only a location where they can accumulate work experience and some new information of their disciplines.

Among the six male teachers, MG is the only one who likes his occupation as a teacher. It might be because his mother is a teacher as well.

5.5.3. The significance of family and marriage

Five of the male interviewees are married; ML is single. According to the

interviews, all married male university teachers acknowledged that their wives supported their careers. In the family, their wives cared for children and did the housework. When asked about the relationship between career and family, MG and MH thought both were important. MH and MI thought that in a family, the husband must be better than the wife in terms of educational level and job.

5.5.4. Educational degree among male teachers

Most of our interviewees became university teachers after graduation, such as MG, MH, MI and MJ. Others decided to work in a higher educational institute after working some years in other fields.

The table shows us that with the exception of one teacher, all hold a Master's or Doctorate degrees; the rate is very high. Among them, 4 have studied abroad and achieved a degree there. Among the three young teachers under 40 years old, two achieved Doctorate degrees. In contrast, among those three who were over 40 years old, only one has a Doctorate degree, while one even holds only a Bachelor's degree. This represents that to become a university teacher is more difficult than before; higher academic degrees are required.

5.5.5. Life of male teachers

The married male university teachers are the main earners in families. Some of them regarded work as more important than family; MI is one example. Most of them had higher wages than their wives, and their wives cared for the family. They were diligent and worked hard— not only for themselves, but also for their families. They thought one of their responsibilities was to take care of family financially.

5.5.6. Disciplines that they study

According to the table, all teachers except MG study sciences. This is a traditional form for Chinese males. That is to say that most male students in China will choose to study sciences in university. Some of them chose this discipline because of interest, such as MG and MH. At the same time, MI chose his discipline because he thought it

would allow him to be successful.

5.5.7. Proportion of male and female teachers in department

The proportion of male and female teachers is different among departments. In MH's, MJ's, MK's and ML's department, there are more male teachers than female teachers. In contrast, in MG's and MI's department, female teachers are a majority. Generally, male teachers' academic degrees are higher than females'. As a result, most of the leaders in the department are males.

5.6. Similarities among male and female teachers

5.6.1. Family background

Some of the teachers in our interviews are from rural areas or small cities; their families are relatively poor. They themselves wanted to change their destinies. At the same time, their families also hoped that their children would have a better future, and going to university is one of the ways to achieve this. The parents of such families tried their best to support their children, even though they did not have much money. For example, MH's parents spent much of their salaries to pay for painting courses for him.

During the university period, the teachers from rural areas had to work in order to earn their living costs. Some of them had to send part of their earning to their families. They had to face pressures from family and life.

Being an urban citizen may lead to a better living standard. Therefore, these so-called "poor children" must study hard in order to study in the university or college after high school. After graduation, they could have more chances to find a job with their degree in a big city. Among many jobs, being a teacher is a better choice for them. Since few students who come from cities want to do this job after graduation, there are few competitors. At the same time, they can change their Hukou through this job. If so, their dream to become an urban citizen could be realized. In addition, working as a teacher is a relatively stable job; they can use the two holidays to get more income. In contrast with them, those who are from cities do not have to worry about Hukou, and for them, being a teacher means having a low wage and bad

opportunity to develop. Hence, they preferred to choose other jobs.

Among our interviewees, FB, FC, FF, MG, MJ, and ML were born in a small town or in the countryside. Their families could not help them anymore. They had to change their fates by themselves. According to the interviews, all of them studied hard in their school age. After graduating from university, some of them chose to achieve a higher academic qualification, while others worked as a teacher directly after graduation. Of course, some people work as teachers because they like this job, but others chose to become a teacher because it can help them make their dreams come true, such as living in a big city or escaping from poverty. Being a teacher might be seen as a springboard to them.

5.6.2. Academic degree for the recruitment

Young teachers, whether male or female, have higher educational degrees than older teachers in university.

As previously stated, some years ago, a university teacher's social status and wage were not as high as today. As a result, only a few people wanted to become teachers at that time. That meant that fewer competitors fought for the same job; becoming a university teacher was not as difficult as it is today. Some of our interviewees, namely FA, FC, FE and MG, worked as teachers directly after graduation. However, in today's university, with the quick development of economy and education, as well as globalization, Chinese higher education has to communicate with the world more closely than ever. Therefore, the quality of the teachers at higher educational institutes should be improved. As a consequence, the academic degree for new teachers will also be higher than ever; this kind of trend can be found from the interviews. In the past, holding a Bachelor's degree meant being capable to work as a university teacher, such as some older interviewees, namely FC and MJ. However, today the candidates are supposed to hold at least a Master's degree; the young teachers of the interviews are examples. In order to have more opportunities to be recruited, the candidates try their best to achieve a higher education degree.

Education will play a more and more predominant role in social and economic

development. The government will pay more attention to improve all teachers' statuses, socially and economically, including schoolteachers and university teachers. It encourages more and more young people to become teachers in today's China. However, more competition appears at work among teachers— especially among young teachers. Therefore, young teachers need to work hard to "protect" their work places. A high educational degree is one of the important conditions for working in the university. That is why almost all young people who want to become university teachers try their best to achieve higher academic degrees.

According to the tables and interviews, a trend should be noticed: young teachers hold at least a Master's degree when the university recruits them. In contrast, most of the older teachers achieve their Master's or Doctorate degree after working for some years. Some of them, especially some female teachers such as FA and FE, were forced to study continuously in order to be promoted.

5.6.3. The same option to be a teacher

Due to the lower social situation and wage, few people—whether male or female—wanted to become a teacher as a career some years ago. However, following the national development and high social situation and good wages, being a teacher is a relatively stable and good job in today's China. More and more people—whether male or female— want to become teachers.

5.6.4. The same conditions of promotion

There are no different conditions for males or females to be promoted. In China, some preconditions must be fulfilled if teachers want to be promoted, including academic level, teaching skill, working years, publications, and so on. In addition, every discipline has its own specialties. For example, teachers who work in the foreign language department must pass the exam of another language; for those who teach computers, they should achieve some certificates.

Besides such prerequisites, the relationship with colleagues and leaders is also an important prerequisite. For example, in the interview, FF told us that everyone in her

department has to have an open presentation before being promoted, and then all of the colleagues and leaders of the department will evaluate him or her. If more than 50 percent of all participants agree that his or her abilities are up to scratch, he or she could be promoted; otherwise, they would fail. This form might be seen as a “personal standard”, which means that if he or she had good relationships with most of the staff in the department, he or she would get more help. However, it does not mean that a low-quality teacher would be promoted even if he or she were on good terms with colleagues. Indeed, his or her abilities are the most important qualities.

Since 1994, all schoolteachers in China were not as stable as before. The schools would evaluate them every year, and those who were not up to the standard would not get a contract from schools; they would be fired. This reform made the schoolteachers become competitors against each other, forcing some low-quality schoolteachers to try their best to enhance their abilities so as not to be eliminated. It was helpful to improve their teaching level. This kind of reform was spread among higher education institutes around the year 2000. It brought pressure to university teachers, and forced them to improve the quality of their seminars. Teachers of higher education had to find new ways to attract more students to their seminars; otherwise, they would be fired or be arranged to do office work. As MH said in the interview, if no student or only a few students went to his seminar in one semester, this seminar would be abolished. If more than two of his seminars were abolished, he would no longer be employed by the university. Hence, the number of students who go to a seminar might also be regarded as a condition for promotion, as it somehow reflects the teaching skills and quality of a teacher.

5.6.5. For young teachers, career is the most important element

At present, young teachers marry and bear children later than the older teachers because there is more competition for them in today's China. They must worry about the relationship between wage and professional title, the relationship between educational degree and professional title, the relationship between professional title

and welfare in the university, and so on. Therefore, young people want to first develop their careers and then families, because they are aware that a successful career is the base of a good future. All of these reasons force the young people to think over the fundamentality of the career, and they have to agree that it is more important for them to develop the career than running the family.

In the schools, some interviewees, whether male or female, mentioned that girls had better grades than boys, and only a few hoped to become teachers.

The interviews show that during the study period, most of the interviewees depended on their families. This means that their parents paid their living costs or tuitions. In other words, their families were the main sources of their income. Although some of them had part-time jobs at that time, the main purpose of their work was to practice what they learned in seminars, not to support their families.

5.6.6. The same troubles

The young female and male teachers have to face the same problems in at work in the universities and colleges and in life, such as awarding professional and technical titles, position assessment, declaring the research funding, publishing the academic research, life pressure and so on.[239] For them, working as lecturers or teaching assistants for their whole lives is not their dream. They also want to be promoted as vice professors or professors. As a result, they have to achieve a higher educational degree in their spare time. That is why they are always busy studying and working.

At the same time, working as a teacher is not as stable as before. Teachers' work has to be evaluated by colleagues or students each year. If the evaluating notes do not reach the average, the university would fire him or her. Hence, as young teachers, they must always further develop their work. This means that they are forced to learn something new or to conduct some research. However, the problem is that no

[239] "Pay More Attention on the Young Teachers in the University : They Need More Care and Understanding in Growing up" The Chinese education newspaper---Zhang Chen, Cheng Mo, 08,21,2007 http://www.jyb.cn/xwzx/gdjy/szjs/t20070821_106671.htm

university can support all of them. They have to compete with each other for limited resources or funding. Besides the above problem, as young people, they have to think about marriage, childbirth, etc. as well.

5.6.7. The older teachers have lower pressure than the young teachers

The older teachers have worked many years, so they already have some position and relevant professional titles at work. Therefore, they need not go on developing their educational degree in their spare time. They also do not need to give more energy into teaching. Since they are already skilled in their teaching, they have more spare time to teach outside the university as a part-time teacher. At the same time, because of their professional titles and work years, their salaries are also higher than those of the young teachers. In addition, most of them also have welfare-oriented public housing from the university, so they have no pressure to buy an apartment. After the age of 40 years old, almost all teachers have their own apartment and their children are also grown up. Therefore, they have low pressure compared to young teachers.

5.6.8. Study abroad

Some of the interviewees— 4 females and 4 males— studied abroad. All of them have positive ideas about it, which means that they all think it is necessary to have such experiences. If it is possible, then it is worth studying abroad. First of all, they mention that those who achieve Master's or Doctorate degrees in foreign countries are more capable, especially in terms of academic ability. In China, they said some supervisors lack responsibility for their students; what they do is arrange some projects for students, and make them do everything by themselves. Sometimes students cannot find their supervisors when they have questions. One important target for those supervisors is to earn money from the projects, not the students. However, most supervisors in foreign countries help the students prepare their paper and always try to arrange time to meet their students so that they can know how far they are and what kind of guidance they need.

5.7. Differences among male and female teachers

5.7.1. Male and female teachers study different disciplines in the university period

Based on the table, among 6 female teachers, 5 of them study humanities in university. When asked about this choice, some of them realize that they thought it was easier to study humanities than to study sciences, and they were interested in humanities. For example, FA said that she liked reading English poems in middle school. FD told us that she read some classic Chinese literature and she was good at writing at that time. On the contrary, their grades in physics or mathematics were not good. No matter how hard they studied, these subjects were too difficult for them. They said it could be seen as a way to escape from those sciences disciplines. The traditional opinion, as well as their parents, unconsciously affected their choices.

FF is the only one who studies sciences among the 6 female teachers, and she had always been interested in it since she was in school. To her, this interest influences her choice.

Male teachers choose sciences as their disciplines. From the table, we can see that there is only one male teacher, MG, who studies humanities. He studied humanities in the university and after graduation went on teaching humanities. He told us that he liked English because of his mother. His mother was an English teacher in the middle school, so he chose English as his subject in the university. Because his mother affected his choice, maybe he would have studied math in the university if his mother had been a math teacher and not an English teacher.

In this table, MH is among those who studied design in the university. He told us that design belongs to the arts, but it has a deep relationship with science; he had to study solid geometry in the university in order to draw pictures.

The other male teachers, such as MI, studied science because they liked it when they were young. MI was always good at science in his childhood, so he continued his science study in the university. There was a slang term some years ago in China:

“study well in math, physics and chemistry, and you would be never afraid wherever you are”. So many people believe this sentence and like to study science.

5.7.2. The educational degree

According to the interviews, when asked about the educational degrees among colleagues, almost all teachers said that the females’ educational degrees are lower than the males’. For instance, MH said that in his department, all male teachers hold a Master’s or Doctorate degree; the only one who holds just a Bachelor’s degree will be sent to achieve a Master’s degree by the university soon. In contrast, among female teachers in his department, the percentage of those who hold a Master’s or Doctorate degree is about a mere 40 percent. It is affected by the traditional idea that males ought to be better than females in position, wage and educational degree.

The second reason is that females have to care for the family and children after marriage. As a result, they have no time to study and develop their career at work. In China, most males are busy working, studying and developing their careers, and they would not pay attention to the family.

5.7.3. Different concerns of lives between male und female teachers

The female teachers have no time or energy to develop their careers because they have to care for the family, husband and children. In Chinese tradition, it is popular for the female to care for the family and do housework. At the same time, it is also popular for the male to develop the career and further the educational degree. If the male is interested in housework but ignore their career, their wives would be disappointed in their husbands.

5.7.4. More male leaders in university

(1) The females’ academic degrees are lower than the males’

The leaders in the university tend to promote people with higher educational degrees, because the high academic degree and work years could bring the new leaders more advantages that can help them manage staff well. Normally, the male

teachers have more time to develop their career because they do not have to spend much time on doing housework or caring for children. For them, career is a little bit more important than family, although they refuse to admit it. In contrast with them, the female teachers would like to invest more time in their family. As a consequence, they do not have enough time to develop their career and study. Therefore, the male's educational degree is higher than the female's, and as a result, there are more male leaders than female leaders.

(2) The center of life for the male is the career, but for the female it is family

In fact, the females do not like to be the leader in the unit. They like to spend more time with their children and in the family, or enjoy spare time at home rather than always working in the unit or having a meeting. On the contrary, the males think they are not performing as real males if they do not have a good career. They think it is better for them to make good relationships with the other colleagues and leaders or to study more new knowledge than help run their family and children, as the males who think the career is based on a good family atmosphere. Therefore, most males have ambition to become a leader; of course there is relationship between the salary and the work situation.

As the leader, they must not only work hard but they must also involve themselves in other staff besides seminars. Outside of classes, the females prefer to care for the family. The male's interests are wider outside of class, because they know their wives would care for the family and children.

There is equality between female and male teachers in today's Chinese universities, such as the same salaries, same job opportunities, and the same prerequisites for promotion. However, the influence of traditional ideas to Chinese females and males determine inequality of women and discriminate against them. Females at university acknowledge the difference; they know that their roles as wives and mothers at home are different from their roles as teachers or leaders at university. Traditionally, they should spend much time with their family. Nevertheless, some of them— especially those who are leaders— cannot do that; childbirth would bring the breakdown of their

careers or studies. In recent years, some young female university teachers concentrate themselves on their career more than on their families. This might show that they have more self-confidence than their older or middle-aged colleagues.

Chapter 6 Summary and conclusions

Through the results of the study, similarities and differences between Chinese male and female university teachers could be found out. The similarities include: male or female teachers who come from rural areas study hard in their university periods; young male and female teachers hold higher academic degrees than older teachers; all of them like their job as a university teacher; they have to fulfill the same prerequisites for promotion; young teachers regard career as the more important element of their lives than family; young teachers must face some pressures at work and in their lives; older teachers have less pressures than young teachers; and male and female teachers who studied abroad think the experiences in other countries can help them develop their career. The differences among male and female teachers are: male and female teachers study different disciplines at the university; male teachers have higher educational degrees; male and female teachers have different ideas of living; more males than females are in high positions.

In the last years, the percentage of female teachers in Chinese universities has risen. According to some statistical data, such a tendency can be shown. In 2004, the percentage of female teachers in institutions of higher learning was about 42.5 percent[240]; in 2006, about 42.8 percent of university teachers were female[241] and in 2007, it increased to about 43.4 percent[242]. But there remains a difference: the percentage of female teachers is still lower than male teachers. In addition, more male than female teachers are in higher positions in university. The reasons for this phenomenon should not be ignored, and include: 1) Historical/Traditional influence; 2)

[240] "Women and Education" http://www.china.org.cn/e-white/20050824/5.htm,

[241] Aggregate data on academic qualifications of full-time and part-time teachers in HEIs http://www.moe.edu.cn/edoas/website18/39/info33639.htm

[242] Aggregate data on academic qualifications of full-time and part-time teachers in HEIs http://www.moe.edu.cn/edoas/website18/level3.jsp?tablename=1249610459599815&infoid=1249440769647326&title=%D7%A8%C8%CE%BD%CC%CA%A6%A1%A2%C6%B8%C7%EB%D0%A3%CD%E2%BD%CC%CA%A6%D1%A7%C0%FA%C7%E9%BF%F6%A3%A8%D7%DC%BC%C6%A3%A9,

The relationship between family and career; and 3) Differences in academic degrees. Such points can also be found in our interviews.

In Chinese history, women's status was very low; education for them was a luxury. Most of our female interviewees, especially married female interviewees, are still traditional Chinese women; their idea about the role of women is still influenced by the Chinese tradition.

In Chinese history, especially in feudal society, women were regarded as subservient; they did not have any power. Their duties included childbirth, doing all of the housework, and caring for the family. In terms of political perspective, the reason for that is that in a feudal society, all members of ruling class were men; they controlled the society and the family. In order to limit women's rights and power, some hard laws or regulations were enacted against women. In terms of cultural perspective, the Confucian ideology of women influenced the distribution of such thinking. He emphasized that men's position was higher than that of women from birth.[243]

Although the female interviewees are modern women in China, they are somehow influenced by such ideology. Therefore, they normally marry and have children early; at the same time, they have the idea that career is less important than family. Their opinions cannot be changed as quickly as society, although they hold high educational degrees and professional titles. From our point of view, that might be because from their childhood on, they were educated with the focus that women's responsibilities in a family are to take care of family members, to support the husband, and they learned such duties from their mothers and even their grandmothers. For those female teachers, after their marriages, they imitate their mothers or grandmothers to play the same role of women, and they take such a role for granted in their minds. Only one of the female interviewees, namely, FF, has a higher academic level than her husband. She thinks that women and men are equal; she belongs to type A in the list, which is demonstrated in Chapter 4 (page 9 to 10), a "non-traditional female".

[243] "Why women are undervalued in Chinese history" http://zhidao.baidu.com/question/74020814

How to deal with the relationship between career and family is also a factor that influences the percentage of female teachers in Chinese universities. From what the female interviewees said, it is easy to find out that they think their duties include taking care of the family and supporting their husbands. In order to do such duties, they have to give up something that might be helpful for their own development, such as to achieve higher academic degree or to fulfill the prerequisites for promotion. Nevertheless, the young female teachers, such as FB and FF, have different ideas in contrast with their older colleagues. They postpone the age of marriage and childbirth because they hope to break the traditional role of women.

In our study, 3 female interviewees are vice professors. Their academic levels are not low; nevertheless, only one of them is the leader of a department. From the interviews, we can see that even if in some departments the female teachers are a majority, such as in FA's, FB's or FD's departments, their percentages in leadership are still low.

Another reason that influences the percentage of female teachers in Chinese universities is the lower academic degrees of women. Among 6 male interviewees, one holds only a Bachelor's degree, two have Master's degrees, and the other three are Doctors. In contrast, such numbers among female teachers are one, three and two, respectively. According to what female teachers said in the interviews, they all admitted that in general, the male teachers in their department hold higher academic degrees than the female teachers, and male teachers have higher positions in the department. Based on the statistical data from the Ministry of Education, we also can make the same conclusion: in 2006, in Chinese higher educational institutes, 44.9 percent of all teachers who hold a Bachelor's degree were women; 44.5 percent of all teachers who hold a Master's degree were women; among teachers who hold a Doctorate degree, only 25.3 percent were females[244]. Such statistical data reflect that the number of female doctors is still fewer than that of male doctors; however, to hold a Doctorate degree is one of the prerequisites for being promoted as professor or

[244] Aggregate data on academic qualifications of full-time and part-time teachers in HEIs http://www.moe.edu.cn/edoas/website18/39/info33639.htm

supervisor. This may explain why there are fewer female than male professors in China. A tendency is that the higher the academic degree, the lower the percentage of female teachers.

In order to compare the female teachers' situations between Germany and China, we should pay attention to some characteristics of female teachers in German university[245]:

1. In Germany, the number of female professors and leaders in university as well as in research institutes is less than the number of their male counterparts, although the percentage of females in such areas is higher than before. In 2004, among all students who were permitted to achieve a Doctorate degree, 39 percent were females [246]; 16.2 percent of professors among all German universities were females[247].
2. In 2004, about 50 percent of university students and graduates in Germany were females. In 2007, the number of female graduates reached 89,364, 56.5 percent among all graduates.[248] However, the opportunity of being a professor for a male graduate is 5 times higher than it is for a female graduate. Some reasons: female graduates have fewer opportunities than male graduates to get jobs in the university; more often, they get scholarships. In those cases, they are mostly not integrated in an institute at the university, and they do their dissertations very much on their own. For most of them, there is a problem in handling the relationship between family and career.[249]
3. In general, although more and more female students study at university, their proportions in disciplines such as engineering courses or natural sciences are still low. For example, in 2007, the percentages of female students in these two

[245] Hochschulrektorenkonferenz, 209. Sitzung des Plenums am 14.11.2006
[246] www.cews.org/statistik
[247] "Chancengleichheit in Wissenschaft und Forschung", page 7 http://www.gwk-bonn.de/fileadmin/Papers/GWK-Heft-07-Chancengleichheit.pdf
[248] "Chancengleichheit in Wissenschaft und Forschung", page 7 http://www.gwk-bonn.de/fileadmin/Papers/GWK-Heft-07-Chancengleichheit.pdf,
[249] "Chancengleichheit in Wissenschaft und Forschung" page 7 http://www.gwk-bonn.de/fileadmin/Papers/GWK-Heft-07-Chancengleichheit.pdf,

disciplines are 21.8 and 40.8, respectively.[250]

4. In some disciplines, such as language and cultural science, the number of female students is far beyond that of male students; however, the female professors are fewer than male professors. In other disciplines, such as law, economy or mathematics, male students are the majority. Nevertheless, no matter in which discipline, the male professors are in the dominant position[251].
5. According to Hochschulrektorenkonferenz, in 2004, the proportion of females in some "girl's disciplines" such as language or cultural sciences is higher than that of males, whereas the number of female students who aim at a PhD is lower than that of their male counterparts. One of the important reasons is that during the period of achieving their Doctorate degree, females get less support than males, and there are no successful female models in some disciplines. The researching organizations have to notice the Gender Bias when they assign the opportunity to candidates. This can be seen as a discrimination against women. Three years later, in 2007, the percentage of females who achieve Doctorate degrees in the same disciplines reached 53 percent [252], perhaps because females could get support from researching organizations easier than before.
6. The research area is a difficult area for some females who want to have children. Those who have children said that they sometimes have to face the compatibility between career and the role as mother or wife. On the one hand, in order to have a stable work place, they have to improve their abilities. This includes achieving higher academic degrees or learning new knowledge, and such achievements take them time— maybe some years. Some of them do not have a clear perspective on their work. In other words, they are not sure about their future life, and such insecurity leads to the idea not to have children; on the other hand, if they have children, they cannot concentrate on their career.[253]

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[250] "Chancengleichheit in Wissenschaft und Forschung" page 6 http://www.gwk-bonn.de/fileadmin/Papers/GWK-Heft-07-Chancengleichheit.pdf
[251] Hochschulrektorenkonferenz, 209. Sitzung des Plenums am 14.11.2006
[252] "Chancengleichheit in Wissenschaft and Forschung", page 7 http://www.gwk-bonn.de/fileadmin/Papers/GWK-Heft-07-Chancengleichheit.pdf,
[253] Hochschulrektorenkonferenz, 209. Sitzung des Plenums am 14.11.2006

The situation in Germany for females in higher educational institutes is not very different from the situation in China. For example, in 2004, among all Doctorate students in China and Germany, the percentages of females were 31.4 percent and 39 percent, respectively. Although the proportion in Germany is 8 percent higher than in China, they are still fewer than men.

According to statistical data, in 2006, about 49 percent of university students in China were females[254]; the percentage is almost the same as in Germany in the same year[255].

In Chinese universities, the number of female students who study natural science and engineering is lower than that of females who study the traditional "girl's disciplines" such as literature or languages. According to Wen[256], in 2003, only 21.3 percent of students among all students who study engineering were females, in contrast with 64.4 percent who study literature. The same tendency can be found in Germany: in the winter semester of 2004/2005, the percentage of females in the engineering courses was 21 percent; however, their percentage in language- and cultural science was much higher, namely 70 percent.[257] Among the supervisors of postgraduate programs in regular higher educational institutes in China, in 2006, the percentage of females was 23.9[258], and in 2007, it became 24.6[259]. This means that the number of female professors is still fewer than that of male professors.

From what the Chinese female teachers said in the interviews, we can find that

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[254] "The relationship between open policy and the percentage of female college students" http://www.hnshx.com/Article_Show.asp?ArticleID=3936&ArticlePage=2

[255] Hochschulrektorenkonferenz, 209. Sitzung des Plenums am 14.11.2006

[256] Wen, Dongmao, "A Comparative Study on the Gender Differences of Higher Education Opportunity" http://www.tc.columbia.edu/centers/coce/pdf_files/c10.pdf

[257] " Nach wie vor studieren wenige Frauen Natur- und Ingenieurwissenschaften" http://www.destatis.de/jetspeed/portal/cms/Sites/destatis/Internet/DE/Presse/pm/zdw/2005/PD05__017__p002.psml

[258] Data on supervisors of postgraduate programs (regular HEIs) http://www.moe.edu.cn/edoas/website18/34/info33634.htm,

[259] Data of supervisors of postgraduate programs (regular HEIs) http://www.moe.edu.cn/edoas/website18/level3.jsp?tablename=1249610459599815&infoid=1249439779696311&title=%D1%D0%BE%BF%C9%FA%D6%B8%B5%BC%BD%CC%CA%A6%C7%E9%BF%F6%A3%A8%C6%D5%CD%A8%B8%DF%D0%A3%A3%A9v

between career and family, most of them pay more attention to family, to their children and husbands, and they prefer to give up their own development in order to support their husbands' careers. They told us in the interviews that they are satisfied with their status quo.

According to the results of the study, some tendencies in the future in Chinese universities can be shown: firstly, the number of female students and teachers will keep raising continuously; secondly, the meaning of marriage and family for young female teachers is not as strongly traditional as among their old colleagues. Two kinds of atmospheres might appear among them, namely, some of them hope to marry and have a child after graduation from university in order to develop without any interruption. Others will marry at around 40 years old and childbirth will be postponed as well for they are willing to have a successful career. Thirdly, male teachers are going to have more pressure than before because their female colleagues are as qualified as them. Based on the traditional idea, which is that males should be better than females, this might reinforce male teachers to work harder than before in order to keep following the idea.

From our point of view, the changes in female teachers' ideas about career and family might be affected by the social changes and by international influences, such as the spread of the Internet. Chinese females' ideas of independence, individuality, and value system develop very quickly. They are aware that females and males are equal, females have the same rights as males, and they cannot be undervalued anymore. One leading idea for the near future might be that, not only wives but also husbands play an important role in marriage and family, and that husbands should share responsibility with wives.

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Supplement

I. Questionnaire
II. Interview transcript

I. Questionnaire

We are going to interview some teachers in the university. The questionnaire below is used to collect data on teachers' study, life and work.

We are glad that you can accept our interview. Our interview is anonymous. Your answers will be kept confidential, and will only be accessible by the researcher.

Your major:
1. Can you explain how you developed your interest in your major?

2. Is there anybody in your family who studies or has studied the same major?
Yes ( ) No ( )
If Yes, does/did he/she influence your choice?

1. Were you interested in your major when you were in middle school?
Yes( ) No ( )
If Yes, --- was it personal interest?
or --- were you influenced by your schoolteachers?

2. How were your grades in school?

3. Did the girls have better grades than the boys?

4. Did you attend any contests of the major you chose in middle school?
Yes ( ) No ( )

5. What was your expectation about your future when you were in middle school?

1. Why did you want to choose this major in university?
--- Did anybody influence your choice? Was anybody against your choice?
--- What was your expectation about this major?

2. In the university, was there anybody who thought that you are or are not suitable for the subject you chose?
Yes ( ), Why?
No ( ), Why?

3. Which courses did you think were the most interesting course, and the most uninteresting course?

4. What is your thesis about? Does it have something to do with your career?

5. Who paid the tuition fees?
Myself ( ) Parents ( ) Brothers or sisters ( ) Relatives ( )
Loan from Bank ( ) Others ( )

6. Did you receive any financial help in university for your studies?
Yes ( ): Parents ( ) Brothers or sisters ( ) Relatives ( ) Others ( ).
No ( )

7. Were there any competitors in your study?
Yes ( ) No ( )

8. What was the proportion of male students to female students?
More males ( ) More females ( ) The same ( ) No males ( ) No females ( )

9. Were there differences between male and female students?
Grades:
The courses they liked:
Their attitudes towards studying (positive or negative):
Their behaviours in terms of studying (e.g. girls like study alone and boys discuss with others):

10. Did you have any different ideas about your major in university compared to what you thought when you were in middle school?
No ( ) Yes ( ), why?

11. Did you change your expectations about your career during the period in university?

No ( ) Yes ( ), why?

12. In which field did you take more time: studying, working, practising…?

13. Did you choose to work or to achieve a Master's degree after graduation? Why?

14. Did you study in China or abroad?
China ( ) Abroad ( ) If abroad, where?
Who paid the fees? Why did you want to study abroad?

1. Did you continue studying the same major for your Master's study?
Yes ( )
No ( ) --- what was your major? Why?

2. What was your motive to achieve a Master's degree?

3. What is your Master's thesis about? Does it have something to do with your career?

4. Who paid the tuition fees for your Master's study?
Myself ( ) Parents ( ) Brothers or sisters ( ) Relatives ( )
Loan from Bank ( ) Others ( )

5. Did you receive any financial help for your Master's study?
Yes ( ): Parents ( ) Brothers or sisters ( ) Relatives ( ) Others ( )
No ( )

6. What was the proportion of male students to female students?
More males ( ) More females ( ) The same ( ) No males ( ) No females ( )

7. Were there differences between male and female students?
Grades:
The courses they like:
Their attitudes towards studying (positive or negative):
Their behaviours in terms of studying:

8. Did you have any different ideas about your major in this period compared to what you thought in university?
No ( ) Yes ( ), why?

9. Did you change your expectations about your career while achieving the Master's degree?
No ( ) Yes ( ), why?

10. In which field did you take more time: studying, working, practising…?

11. Did you choose to work or to achieve a Doctorate degree after graduation? Why?

12. Did you achieve your Master's degree in China or abroad?
China ( ) Abroad ( ) If abroad, where?

Who paid the fees? Why did you want to study abroad?

1. Was your major the same as it was in your Master's study?
Yes ( ) No ( ) --- what was your major? Why?

2. What was your motive to achieve a Doctorate degree?

3. What is your dissertation about? Does it have something to do with your career?

4. Who paid the tuition fees for your Doctorate study?
Myself ( ) Parents ( ) Brothers or sisters ( ) Relatives ( )
Loan from Bank ( ) Others ( )

5. Did you receive any financial help for your Doctorate study?
Yes ( ): Parents ( ) Brothers or sisters ( ) Relatives ( ) Others( )
No ( )

6. What was the proportion of male students to female students?
More males ( ) More females ( ) The same ( ) No males ( ) No females ( )

7. Were there differences between male and female students?
Grades:
The courses they like:
Their attitudes towards studying (positive or negative):
Their behaviours in terms of studying (e.g. they like study alone or discuss with others):

8. Did you have any different ideas about your major in this period?
No ( ) Yes ( ), why?

9. Did you change your expectations about your career while achieving the Doctorate degree?
No ( ) Yes ( ), why?

10. In which field did you take more time: studying, working, practising…?

11. Did you choose to work or to achieve a higher degree after graduation? Why?

12. Did you achieve your Doctorate degree in China or abroad?
China ( ) Abroad ( ) If abroad, where?
Who paid the fees? Why did you want to study abroad?

1. When did you begin to work?
After university ( ) After achieving a Master's degree ( )
After achieving a Doctorate degree ( )

2. Is what you teach the same as what you studied?
Yes ( ) No ( )

3. Do you like your current job?
Yes ( ), why? (such as salary, benefits)
No ( ), why? (such as conflict with colleagues)

4. Have you continued to study while working?
Yes ( ) No ( )

5. Do you want to learn other subjects (such as foreign languages, computer, psychology) or to achieve a higher degree now?
Yes ( ), what is your motive?
No ( )

6. Have you changed your job?
Yes ( ), why? No ( )

7. Have you experienced something important at work?

8. Sometimes you have to face some problems, whether at work or in your life. How can you solve them? Is there anybody who can help you?

9. Does your family support your career? Does your career influence their work, or vice versa?

10. Do you have part-time jobs besides your career?
Yes ( ): What do you do? What is your motive?
No ( )

11. What do you think are the important conditions for a promotion?
Academic degree( ); Relationship with colleagues( );
How many years you have worked( );
The number of your publications( ); Other( )

12. Teachers in university are free if they have no seminars. How can you develop the relationship with your leaders and colleagues?

13. What do you do in your leisure time (summer and winter holidays)?

--- study ( ) --- do part-time jobs ( ) --- work in own company ( )

--- take care of family ( ) --- have a break ( )

How can you evaluate your work at the University?

Do you think you have any shortcomings?

If you were given an opportunity to choose again, would you still choose to be a professor?

14. Can you feel the differences at work between men and women?

Yes ( ) No ( )

In which field? Promotion, work distribution, benefits…?

15. What is the proportion of male to female leaders in your university?

More males ( ) More females ( ) The same ( ) No male ( ) No female ( )

16. What is the proportion of male and female teachers?

More males ( ) More females ( ) The same ( ) No male ( ) No female ( )

17. What is the academic degree among male teachers and female teachers? (*Please give a percentage, e.g. how many male/female teachers have Bachelor's, Master's or Doctorate degrees)*

OR if not clear:

Male teachers have higher academic degrees ( )

Female teachers have higher academic degrees ( )

They have the same academic degrees ( )

18. How can you handle the relationship between family and career?

--- Husband takes care of family more than wife ( )

--- Wife takes care of family more than husband ( )

--- We take care of the household together ( )

1. **If you and your husband/wife had a chance to be promoted at the same time, who would take care of family?**

2. **As a man/woman, what do you think are some advantages and disadvantages when you study, look for a job and when you are at work?**

Your university:

1. Sex: M ( ) F ( )

2. Age: 25-30 ( ) 31-35 ( ) 36-40 ( ) 41-45 ( ) 46-50 ( ) over 50 ( )

3. Are you married? Yes ( ) No ( ) Divorced ( )

4. How old were you when you got married?

5. Do you have children?
Yes( ), how many? How old were you when you became a mother/father?
No ( ) --- Do you want to have children? Why?

6. Was there or will there be a special period in your life, in which you had to/have to make a choice between having children and having a career?

7. Do children have an effect on your career?

8. Would you get rid of your career because of a child?

9. How can you deal with the relationship between having a career and having a child? If you had to resign in order to look after your child, would you do that?

10. Your highest degree is:

11. Does your husband/wife hold any degree?

12. Which foreign languages can you speak?
English( ) Japanese( ) German( ) French( ) Spanish( ) Korean( ) Russian( ) Others( )

13. Your present position/title:

14. Are you satisfied with your current situation?
Very satisfied ( ) satisfied ( ) normal ( ) not satisfied ( ) I don't know ( )
Why?

1. Would you choose to achieve a Master's or Doctorate degree if you were given the chance to choose again? Why? (for those who have university degree)

2. Would you still choose to study this major if you were given the chance to choose again? Why?

3. Would you still choose to be teacher at university if you were given the chance to choose again? Why?

4. If you were given the chance to choose again, would you choose to have a normal job and have a child after graduation, or would you choose to achieve a higher degree in order to find a better job?

5. If you were given the chance to choose again, would you go abroad to study? (for those who studied in China)
--- Yes ( ), why? --- No ( ), why?

Do you want to add something?
Do you have any questions?

Thank you for your time and cooperation!

II. Interview transcript

Part 1 Introduction

Part 2 Interview Transcripts

Female interviewees (by Hua Jiang)

1. FA
2. FB
3. FC
4. FD
5. FE
6. FF

Male interviewees (by Jinsong Gu))

7. MG
8. MH
9. MI
10. MJ
11. MK
12. ML

Part 1 Introduction

In the period from October 2008 to November 2008, we interviewed 12 teachers including 6 females and 6 males who were all employed by the Capital Normal University in Beijing, China from different department. The interviews took place in restaurants, cafés, libraries, and in some of the participants' offices.

We asked for permission to record the interviews, but they did not like the idea of it because they were reluctant to share personal information such as family background, annual salary and other private matters. Therefore, we took a more informal approach

to the interview by writing down our conversations.

In order to keep the interviews informal and friendly, we allowed the teachers to remain open and speak freely. Therefore, the questionnaire does not follow the same pattern.

We did not know all of our interviewees personally; however, all of them supported us by being active during the interview. They were interested in our research and eager to help.

We interviewed all of the teachers in Chinese, therefore our questionnaire and notes were also in Chinese. We have translated them into English and they can be found below.

In the following text Q = question, A = answer.

Table 1: The situations of the six female teachers in the Capital Normal University

Gender/ Female	Art/ Science	Discipline	Age	Professional title	Education	Family	Children	Study abroad
FA	Art	English	45	Vice Prof.	M.A.	Married	Yes	Yes
FB	Art	History	28	Teaching Assistant	Dr.	Single	No	No
FC	Art	Education	53	Prof.	B.A.	Married	Yes	No
FD	Art	Chinese	36	Vice Prof.	M.A.	Married	Yes	Yes
FE	Art	Management	47	Vice Prof.	M.A.	Married	Yes	Yes
FF	Science	Physics	32	Lecturer	Dr.	Married	No	No

Table 2: The situations of the six male teachers in the Capital Normal University.

Gender /Male	Art/ Science	Discipline	Age	Professional title	Education	Family	Children	Study abroad
MG	Art	English	49	Prof.	Dr.	Married	Yes	Yes
MH	Science	Design	33	Lecturer	M.A.	Married	No	Yes
MI	Science	Physics	32	Lecturer	Dr.	Married	No	Yes
MJ	Science	Sport	59	Vice Prof.	B.A.	Married	Yes	No
MK	Science	Computer	42	Vice Prof.	M.A.	Married	Yes	No
ML	Science	Economy	35	Lecturer	Dr.	Single	No	Yes

Part 2 Interview Transcripts

Female interviewees

1. FA

Q: Long time no see, FA. How are you? Glad to see you again. We missed you very much.

A: Fine, thanks. Yes, we have not seen you in about 9 years. I am old. Look at the wrinkles on my face. How about you?

Q: Fine, thank you. Well, you are not old and you look thinner than before.

A: I was still in the hospital a few months ago because of the job (laugh). Now I am the head of the department and there are lots of things to handle, including arranging teacher seminars, writing reports for the University, student affairs and so on. I was very tired and I had to stay in the hospital for a while. But I wanted to go back to work as soon as possible, because I missed my students and I have a very good relationship with them. Remember: health is the most important thing for everyone.

Q: But do you have any assistants?

A: Only one. Therefore, I often have to do much work myself. Actually, my husband suggested to me that I do not run the department anymore, but maybe later, not now.

Q: OK. Last time we called you and told you about our questionnaire and dissertation.

A: Yes. I support you both and saw your questionnaire on my computer. You can ask me anything you want. I can also introduce you to some other teachers in our University, but I cannot guarantee that all of them will take part in your interview. I hope you can send your questionnaire to them first and then let them decide if they would like to talk with you.

Q: Ok, we will send them an Email this evening. Thank you very much for your time.

A: It's ok. You are my former students. And now you are my students studying for a Doctorate degree, and also in Germany. I am very happy to help you and also proud of you (laughing).

Q: (smiling) Thanks again. Do you have to teach class this afternoon?

A: No, but I must go back home before 5 o'clock to cook for my daughter. And then I must go to the supermarket to do some shopping.

Q: Now lots of people hire hourly worker to help them clean the rooms or do some cooking. Maybe you could also hire someone.

A: Oh, yes. I have someone, but she only helps us clean the room once every weekend and does not do any cooking. I like to cook by myself, and my husband and my daughter like what I cook for them.

Q: Really? But you could not cook before.

A: Yes, you are right. But after I moved out of the house of my husband's parents, I learned how to cook and I am very interested in it. Maybe I can cook for you someday. (laughing)

Q: Oh, thank you. We would love to try your cooking. (laughing)

A: Maybe next time when you come back, because my daughter will go to University next year and after that I will have much more time.

Q: So your daughter is going to take part in the NCEE[260] next year?

A: (smiling) Yes, I bored my daughter with the matter very early and now she is 17 years old.

Q: And which university will your daughter go to? In China or abroad? Which discipline does she like?

A: She would like to study law at Beijing University or Hong Kong University. Her grades in her class are good enough to go to the best University in China, so I am not too worried about that. I am very proud of my daughter.

Q: What did you do for your daughter? In other words, did you teach your daughter at home?

A: Well, I did not employ any private teachers for my daughter outside of her classes because I believe that my daughter will go to University directly, even without taking part in the NCEE, due to her excellent grades.[261] My daughter's grades have always been very good, maybe because she also lived with her grandparents in her childhood. She learned to be independent rather early. You know, I married early and we had a baby one year later and I had no experience in caring for a

[260] National College Entrance Exam

[261] In China, some middle school students with perfect grades can be sent to universities directly instead of passing the NCEE.

child before. We were very fortunate that we had much help from our parents at that time. After marriage, we had to live with the parents of my husband because we could not afford an apartment independently. They could help me take care of my daughter; it gave me more time to pay attention to my career. My husband and I bought an apartment some years ago, but my daughter still stayed with her grandparents because her school was near her grandparents' home and she also could have lunch there. Normally we would pick our daughter up to come home on the weekends.

Q: But how could your daughter be so independent when she was a child?

A: She was taught by her grandparents. At that time I had classes from morning until afternoon. If my daughter lived with her grandparents she could sleep one hour more in the morning. If she lived with us, she had to spend over two hours on the way to school because the new apartment was far away from her school. At the same time, she could have lunch at her grandmother's home and sometimes take a nap in the afternoon.

Q: Your mother-in-law is so nice. Does she like to help you care for your daughter?

A: Yes, she is very kind. I thank her very much for that. You know, my mother-in-law is also a college teacher and she is very nice and always active in her life. She thinks that besides family, the young people ought to pay more attention to developing their careers. Therefore, she willingly took care of her granddaughter. She would bring my daughter to and from the kindergarten every day and would prepare dinner for the whole family year after year.

I thank my mother-in-law very much. Without her help, both my husband and I would not be as successful as we are today in our careers. I am so lucky that the parents of my husband and I lived in the same city. Otherwise, I would have had to do everything by myself, especially taking care of a child like the other teachers who were not from Beijing. If my mother-in-law had not helped me, I would not be the Vice Professor or the head of the department.

Q: So you appreciate what your mother-in-law did for you, right?

A: Yes. However, my mother-in-law had to stop bringing my daughter to and from

school and cooking after my father-in-law became ill. I then had to bring my daughter to and from school by myself every day. You know, at that time I often had to look at my watch in the afternoon because I was afraid to forget to pick up my daughter. And sometimes I had to change my seminar with my colleagues in order to pick up my daughter in time. I also had to help my mother-in-law do some housework after class. Some months later, my father-in-law was healthy again and my mother-in-law continued to help me take care of my daughter. She was so kind.

Q: Why didn't your husband care for the family and your daughter?

A: He was very busy and he still works in the same company. And now he has also become a manager there, and often goes abroad.

Q: I remember that your husband was your classmate in your college period.

A: Yes, you still remember. He was my classmate at the University and we married after graduation.

Q: Why didn't you buy the apartment right away after marriage?

A: We were not financially fit enough after marriage, because at that time the wage for teachers was not as high as it is today. My husband ran a company with his friends, and they even had to borrow some money from relatives. Therefore, our life was normal and the two bikes we owned were the most valuable possessions in the family. But now we are over 40 and the social situation and wages of a teacher are higher than before and my husband now works in a very famous joint-venture company as the manager. We can afford a big house and two cars now.

Q: Now you have a very happy family and enough money. We admire you.

A: Don't worry. You are so young and you have more time. I am already 45 years old.

Q: Have you changed your job?

A: No. I became a university teacher after graduation and did not change my job.

Q: Do you like being a teacher?

A: Yes, of course. I am satisfied with my life and will never regret being a university teacher because compared with schoolteachers, university teachers have more time to relax. The university students are adults and much more mature, and

college teachers have a higher social status. Being a university teacher means to be a knowledgeable and qualified person in society. My daughter told me that some of her classmates and their parents admired me when they found out that I was a college teacher, and the colleagues of my husband respected me as well. I think I love my family more than my career, though. And in fact, I spend more time with the family than at work in recent years. If I could turn back time, I would choose the same way again.

Q: Can you say something about your college period or your classmates?

A: You let me recall my youth. (laughing) Do you need my resume?

Q: (Laughing) Yes, we expect to read it.

A: Long ago, about over twenty years ago, (laughing) I studied English at a Normal University after passing the NCEE in the 1980s. There were more than 20 people in my class at that time. After graduation, only a few of my classmates worked at the University as an English teacher and some of them were English teachers in high middle schools, while others worked in companies. One of my classmates immigrated to Australia some years ago. Before that, he was sent to Australia to study for his Master's degree with a scholarship from his university. He did not go back to China after achieving the degree because of the high wages in Australia. Therefore, he found a job there and his wife quit her job to take their child to go to Australia to live with him. At that time, he persuaded me to go to Australia as well because of the high wages. Well, I also liked money, but I hesitated for a long time and finally gave up this idea for my family and I, because my husband did not want to give up his career and our daughter was also very young.

You know, there was a big party this year at a hotel in Beijing for all of the graduating class of my university. It was the 25-year anniversary, and I met all of my former classmates, even the one who immigrated to Australia. And he is regretful now; he wants to go back to China and hopes to be a university teacher like me. He told me that he never thought the social status and the wage of a teacher would be so high in China today, especially as college teacher. He said that if he would have stayed at a university in China, that he probably would be a

professor or head of a department.

Q: How about your other classmates?

A: Actually, I am stable, and so are the others who work as teachers. We haven't changed our jobs after graduation and others often changed their vocations in order to earn more money. You know, 15 years ago, those who worked in other fields earned more and had a better life than us. But today, working as a teacher, one can earn just as much as them and can have a comfortable life because a teacher doesn't need to worry about the stability of the job and the salary after retirement. Sometimes a teacher can even get an apartment as a benefit from the schools or universities. In contrast with them, they could never get one from the company. At the same time they must work very hard for their money, for they are afraid that maybe one day they will become unemployed.

As I said before, I feel very lucky and satisfied with my life now.

Q: Do you have much spare time? What do you do after class?

A: As a dean of the department, I don’t have to work every day. Therefore, I have much time to take care of my daughter and husband and do what I like, such as cooking or sports. Normally, I have seminars on Mondays and Wednesdays and I usually prepare my seminars for the next day in the afternoon. Every Tuesday, there is a meeting among all the teachers of the department and I must attend. I am free on Thursdays and Fridays this semester. I go to the fitness centre every two days and get a facial treatment once a week. My husband and I visit our parents every week and sometimes there is a picnic for the whole family in the countryside on the weekend.

As a teacher, there are many chances to do part-time work after class. Some of my colleagues have such jobs, but I do not plan to do that. I am very lazy (laugh), because on one hand, I think my salary is enough and on the other hand, I need to spend some time with my family. However, this semester I will help one of my friends to teach in the other college every Friday. She asks me sometimes and I cannot always refuse her.

But now my husband and I want to afford a big house. Therefore, I have to earn

more money and the salary is very high to be a private teacher. But I will not do that forever because it is not stable at all.

Q: Are you a Doctor now?

A: No, I hold only a Master's degree. About fifteen years ago, the University sent me to America to study for my Master's and now I am a vice professor. But I have no chance to become a head professor unless I achieve a Doctorate degree. Did you know that the prerequisites for promotion are not as easy as before?

Q: Can you give us some examples?

A: Well, normally to be promoted as a vice professor, the person should hold a Doctorate title. However, at least in Beijing, there could be an exception for those teachers who were born before 1965 or who have worked for a certain amount of years. Another condition is to pass a language exam. For example, English teachers like myself must pass a second foreign language exam. Of course it is not so difficult for the young teachers. They have learned another foreign language at their universities, because there are the second language and English courses in universities, and they have to pass the final language exam in order to graduate. But for elderly teachers, this kind of exam is not so easy. They don't have the spirit or energy left to learn new knowledge like the young people. They see the language exam as a barrier, although their academic skills are excellent. The third condition is publications. Teachers must publish a minimum of four professional papers each year and one of them must be published in the journals of the province where they live. The last condition is that the candidate must be a lecturer. As a teaching assistant, there is no chance to be nominated as a candidate for the vice professor position before they become a lecturer. Of course, the relationship with colleagues and leaders is also a necessary condition for promotion; it somehow reflects one's way of communicating with people.

Q: OK. Do you have many colleagues from other cities?

A: Of course, and I have no struggle with them. On one hand, I am from Beijing and there is no need for me to compete with those from other cities for the limited numbers of Beijing's registration, which relates to housing and some welfare,

because even if I could not be assigned for an apartment by the university, I could live with my parents. The other teachers from other cities have no house in Beijing and have to compete with the others for this welfare and there are not many free apartments in one department to assign. On the other hand, my mother-in-law and mother can help me take care of my daughter when I work, but the teachers from other cities have to do it themselves and sometimes they have to change the time of their seminars or even ask to be able to leave in order to bring their children to and from school. So I have more time for work than those from other cities, for I have relatively fewer troubles in life.

Q: So you are lucky to be a citizen of Beijing. Look, your daughter will go to university next year and you will have more spare time. Will you go on to achieve a Doctorate degree in order to hold a professor title?

A: Actually, I have no interest in becoming a professor. First of all, I am satisfied with my life now and I do not want to be very tired from work. Secondly, I have no more time to study for a Doctorate degree after becoming a vice professor and a dean of the department. I have many administrative things to do. And finally, I would like to remain healthy because my colleague died at work just last year when he was 40 years old. In fact, I have no interest in the administrative things, but the leaders believe that I could be a good vice dean of the department. Therefore, I must support and help the leaders to manage the department. You know, I am the only female leader in the department. I have to have some achievements in order not to be looked down upon by my male colleagues. My colleagues and I are in charge of the different fields. My main responsibilities are to manage the students, arrange seminars for teachers, and so on.

Q: Do the male teachers have higher educational degrees than the female teachers in your department? Are there more female teachers than male teachers?

A: Generally the male teachers have higher educational degrees than the female teachers, although female teachers are a majority in the department. I think there are some reasons. Firstly, most female teachers pay much more attention to the family and have no time to develop themselves. Maybe it is influenced by the

Chinese tradition that the male is the main earner in the family and he handles everything outside the family, whereas the female is supposed to take care of the family and children. Secondly, there are different retirement ages among males and females: 55 for females and 60 for males. One intention of the regulation is to protect females. However, it reduces the enthusiasm of female teachers to work hard sometimes, because after their children grow up they have more time for their career and they are also middle-aged. They are afraid that they will retire in maybe 5 or 10 years, so they think it is better to maintain the status quo. As a result, some of them do not want to compete with the other younger or male teachers.

Q: Thank you very much for being interviewed.

A: My pleasure. If you have some more questions you can call me or send me an Email.

Q: OK.

A: I hope you can get your Doctorate degree some months later, and we can meet again in Beijing.

Q: Thanks. Keep in touch.

A: See you. Keep in touch.

2. FB

Q: Hello, teacher FB. We are the students of FA, Hua Jiang and Jinsong Gu.

A: Hello. I know; she has told me.

Q: You look very young.

A: (smile) Like a student? Next month I will be 29 years old.

Q: Oh. How long have you worked?

A: Only one year.

Q: Are you a new teacher in the university?

A: Yes.

Q: Are you from Beijing?

A: No, I am not from Beijing.

Q: Was it easy for you to find a job at a university in Beijing?

A: Of course not. I studied and worked very hard, and at the same time, I am very lucky.

Q: Where did you achieve your Doctorate degree?

A: In Beijing.

Q: Could you tell us why you wanted to achieve a Doctorate degree?

A: (smile) There are many reasons to study; I cannot say it in two or three sentences. It is a long story. Can you tell me why you are studying for your Doctorate?

Q: Of course. We finished our Master's study in Germany and we are interested in the topic that we chose; we want to research it. (laughing) We have no long story and no special reasons.

A: Are you from Beijing?

Q: Yes.

A: Look, you are from Beijing and you study in Germany. That means that your families are rich, since your parents could support you to study abroad. So, your lives are easier than mine.

Q: Well, our families are not so rich. In Germany, we must work in our spare time in order to make a living. It does not matter if our parents are rich or not; we are adults and we must support ourselves.

A: Life is hard. I mean, at least you are from Beijing and you do not need to worry about your Hukou. And after graduation, you can come back to Beijing. And although your parents are not so rich, if you have trouble with money in Germany, I think they could help you.

Q: (smile) Yes, our parents supported us in the first two years, and now we make a living by ourselves. About Hukou, we have never thought about it. Maybe we do not think more about it since we are from Beijing.

A: You don't need to. But it is very important for people like me, who are from small cities. You are so lucky to be born in Beijing. I also admire that you can study in Germany.

Q: But why is Hukou very important to you? Can you give us some reasons?

A: Well, one of my friends, a girl, could not find a stable job within one year after graduation. Her Hukou then had to be moved back to her hometown, and she was very sad because she didn't want to go back to her hometown. After some days, she found work in a company in Beijing. She often told me she could not sleep well at night because she was not sure how long she could work in this company without Beijing Hukou.

Q: Do you already have Beijing Hukou?

A: Yes. But you know that if a person has no Beijing Hukou, it means he or she would always be outsiders in Beijing. It would bring psychological pressure. I remembered what my teacher told me when I graduated: she suggested that I find a job which can help me get the Beijing Hukou, even if it would pay low. I accepted my teacher's advice and now I work as a teacher.

Actually, at the beginning I wanted to work in a company with a high salary in Beijing, but they could not help me get Beijing Hukou so I gave up. As a woman, I like psychological stability in my life. Some of my friends admire me very much because of my Beijing Hukou. They always make a joke that if I were a man, they would marry me in order to get the Beijing Hukou. Now you understand how important the Beijing Hukou is for those who are from other cities.

With Beijing Hukou, I have medical insurance and unemployment insurance in Beijing. At the same time, I could get some welfare from the university, such as a “welfare apartment”. On the contrary, my friend who works in a company without Beijing Hukou has no insurance or welfare. She always tells me that she is afraid of becoming ill and she doesn't want to marry, because her child could not go to the kindergarten or school in Beijing later on.

Q: You are lucky and now you can change your job any time if you want. After all, you already have Beijing Hukou.

A: (laughing) I like my job now; I don't want to change it. You know, I am from a small city and my family is poor. I studied hard in order to live in a big city like Beijing or Shanghai later, or at least to get more opportunities for a better job instead of going back to my poor hometown. This is one of the reasons why I

went on studying for a Master's degree after achieving my Bachelor degree. Because the higher the degree, the more chances to get a good job– especially for those who have no Beijing Hukou and no social connections, like myself.

Q: Where are your parents? Do they live with you in Beijing?

A: No, they are in my hometown. Maybe later, after I buy an apartment, I will invite them to come and live with me.

Q: Do you miss them?

A: Of course, but what can I do? My parents are workers and I have worked only one year, so my parents could not help me and I also have no money to buy an apartment.

Q: Or you can find a rich husband. (laughing)

A: (laughing) Good idea. I hope so.

Q: How about your grades in school?

A: Not bad. I was always one of the top 3 in the class.

Q: Did your parents support your education?

A: Yes. I am the only child in my family, and our living conditions were not good. My family could only afford my school costs. Therefore, I had no chance to learn other special skills like playing piano or drawing. My life was always dull and quiet because I had no hobbies. After class I would go home directly to do homework and learn for the next day. Some of my classmates would go to hobby courses after class because their families could afford them, but I had to stay at home alone.

Q: What a pity. Were you interested in your major in middle school? Is there anybody in your family who studied the same major?

A: (smiling) Actually, I didn't know which was better for me and which class suited me in middle school. Just like the other girls, I chose humanity classes. That meant that my future university study would also be in the humanities.

Q: What were your expectations about your future when you were in middle school?

A: I was not like the other classmates who always had plans about their future. I had no other expectations; the only plan was to study at the university in the city.

Q: Did your parents influence your choice?

A: No. Although the NCEE is very important, my parents didn't suggest anything. They respected my choice. As a matter of fact, my parents did not attend a university and they finished their education after middle school. And now they work as normal workers with low wages and their jobs are not stable due to the economic depression. Hence, they hoped that I could study in the university and then find a good job. At the same time, if I could go to university they would get more respect from their colleagues and neighbours, and our relatives would admire my family. Thus, the most important point was that higher education was good for me.

Q: Which discipline did you study in the university?

A: History.

Q: Why did you choose this discipline?

A: Well, I was sent by my middle school to go to the university to study history.

Q: So you did not take part in the NCEE?

A: No, I didn't.

Q: You are so lucky.

A: Yes, I think so. So when the other students were busy doing their homework or choosing famous universities and strong professions, I had already become a college student of the history department at a university in western China.

Q: In the university, was there anybody who thought that you were not qualified for the subject you chose?

A: No.

Q: Why did you choose to be sent to the university instead of taking part in the exam to study the discipline that you liked?

A: Not everyone could get the chance to be sent. Each year only some good students could be sent by the middle school to the university directly. But there were few competitors because few students liked studying history. As a matter of fact, I didn't like it, but this university was in a bigger city, bigger than my hometown.

Q: Who paid the tuition fees? Or did you get any help from the university?

A: In fact this university is a Normal University. I could get some money from the government every month because I had to work at the middle school after graduation. And the tuition was very low. Therefore, my parents didn't need to worry about the costs. I have told you that they are workers and we had no money. My parents thought that it was better for me to be sent to the university by the school instead of taking part in the NCEE. If I could not pass the NCEE, I had no chance to study in the university, but now it meant that I could definitely go to university.

Q: Yes, it was a good choice for you and your family.

A: Right.

Q: Could you get enough money from university? In which field did you take more time: studying, working, practising…?

A: It wasn't enough. In my university period, I spent all of my free time in the library– even during holidays– so that I could save the money that would have been spent to buy the train tickets to go home, even though I missed my parents.

Q: Did you have any special or good memories at that time?

A: (smiling) Like some girls, I made friends at that time.

Q: Your first love?

A: Yes.

Q: How did you meet him?

A: Well, he had a similar family background to me. Actually, we both went to the library every day. We had the same interests, such as the same authors and classic music. Therefore, we began to talk to each other. He came from a small town and his parents could not support him much. He had to work during the holidays instead of going home.

Q: Was he also diligent like you?

A: Yes. He studied very hard, and he already planned his future before entering the university.

Q: What do you mean?

A: After achieving his Bachelor degree, he didn't want to be a history teacher in a

middle school. He expected to earn more money and live in a big city. Hence, he decided to continue studying for his Master's degree and made his dream come true.

Q: How about you? Did you choose to work or to achieve a Master's degree after graduation? Why?

A: My boyfriend liked me and he hoped that I could study for a Master's degree as well so that we could be together. In fact, I did not want to continue studying. I just wanted to find a job quickly after graduation, and normally I would become a history teacher in a middle school. Although I did not dream to become a teacher, this job was stable enough and I did not have to use my parents' money anymore. But I did not want to leave my boyfriend so quickly. At the same time, he told me that Master's students could get some living costs from the university every semester. And since we didn't need to pay tuition as well, maybe we could save some money during those three years. After thinking about it for a long time, I decided to take part in the Master's entrance exam with him.

Q: You mean your motivation to study for a Master's degree was to be together with your boyfriend?

A: Yes, somehow.

Q: Did you continue studying the same major in your Master's study?

A: Yes, in another university in southern China.

Q: Who paid the tuition fees for your Master's study?

A: As Master's students, we could work as assistants at the university and could earn some money from it.

Q: Did you choose to work or to achieve a Doctorate degree after graduation? Why?

A: Three years later, we both got Master's degrees. I studied for a Doctorate degree because I could not find a satisfying job within one year. I wanted to work at a university, but I had no Doctorate degree. If I worked in the middle school, I would not be satisfied, because a Bachelor degree was enough to be a middle school teacher. My boyfriend and I decided to marry after graduation and then to find a stable job, such as in a university or in an office. A few months later, I

passed the Doctorate entrance exam and continued studying history at the University in northern China.

Q: Did your boyfriend continue studying for a Doctorate like you?

A: No. Actually, my boyfriend did not want to study anymore after his Master's study. He wanted to find a job as soon as possible in this city. He liked this city because it was bigger and more modern than his hometown. He wanted to earn money and marry me here. A half year later, he found a job in a private travel agency as a tour guide. The boss would call him when there were travel groups. Although this job was not stable, the city was a tourist city, and almost every day he had something to do. Sometimes he had to work eighteen hours a day. His wage was enough for us to live on, but he thought it was not enough to buy an apartment and to marry.

Q: He did not study anymore. Why did you study for a Doctorate degree alone?

A: I think jobs such as a tour guide like my boyfriend or working in a company are not stable for a girl. I thought I would marry with him after all. If he had no stable job, we would worry about income later.

I hoped that he could earn much money through his job, whether it was stable or not, and I would find a stable job even if the wage was not high. I think for female graduates, most of them will have to face the problem of childbirth after working for some years. A relatively stable job could be a necessary element for them to handle the relationship between career and family, and taking care of the family becomes the most significant duty in most women's lives after childbirth. At last we made the decision: he continued doing his job here and I studied for a Doctorate degree.

Q: Did you miss him when you left him to study for a Doctorate degree? Did he pay your costs during this period?

A: Yes, I missed him. I did not have to worry about the money because I could get some money from the university where I studied and my boyfriend always sent some to me. I only hoped that I could get my Doctorate degree as soon as possible. I also wanted to marry him after graduation.

Q: So you married him at last.

A: No.

Q: No? Sorry, but why? You have finished your study.

A: Well, the ideas of a person always change. You know, after three years I got the Doctorate degree and I wanted to stay in Beijing instead of working in the city in southern China where my boyfriend worked, although I still wanted to marry him. Nevertheless, he did not want to move to Beijing. He was satisfied his job and wage there. He thought if he moved to Beijing, everything must be restarted including work and finding a house. None of us wanted to give up what we had now. Therefore, we separated.

Q: I understand. So you began to work after achieving your Doctorate degree.

A: Right.

Q: Is what you teach the same as what you studied? Do you like your job?

A: Yes, history. I like my job. I work very hard, because I know it is not easy to find a job in the university, especially for a woman in Beijing. Lots of people admired me, my parents too. After all, it is a stable job to work in the university, and to be a university teacher means having a high social status. The wage is also higher than that of a teacher in middle school.

And I have some plans.

Q: Plans?

A: Yes. At first, my Hukou could be moved into Beijing in one year, so I must hand in some forms. Second, I have worked only two semesters until now. I need to study more and get more teaching experience from the others. Third, I wanted to publish more works in order to become a lecturer. Fourth, after mastering more academic knowledge and teaching experiences, I would like to find a part-time job, because I want to earn enough money to buy a small apartment in Beijing and invite my parents to come so that we can live together.

Q: We hope you can make them come true quickly.

A: Thanks.

Q: How about your marriage? It is not one of your plans?

A: I will think about it later. But if my boyfriend wanted to come to Beijing, I would

marry him. It could be seen as a dilemma for me. Actually, I know that he does not plan to come to Beijing. We both need some time to think about the future.

Q: Don't your parents worry about your marriage?

A: Of course they do, but they do not say anything because they know it is not the right time for me to talk about it now. Even though my parents always meet my friends and old classmates with their husbands and children in my hometown, as parents they admired them very much, but they do not want to give me more pressure in my private life. So when the relatives and friends ask my parents if I have married, my parents always say I already have a boyfriend and we are very busy working and have no time to think about marriage. You know, it is so boring. I do not want to go back home. I always invite my parents to come to Beijing.

Q: Don't you want to marry?

A: (smiling) Now I am waiting for my Prince Charming. As a woman, I also want a man to care for me. It is impossible for me and my so-called boyfriend to marry, but none of us want to be the first to say goodbye. You know, I almost forget him because I have no time to miss him. I have to work hard to make my dreams come true. When someone asks me if I have a boyfriend, my answer is that I am still single. In my department there are always nice colleagues who introduce males to me. I have not refused these chances to meet other males besides my boyfriend; maybe one of them could be my future husband. However, I am serious and I do not want to make a wrong choice.

Q: What is the proportion of male to female teachers in your department?

A: I am not sure. I think there are more female teachers than male teachers. But the elderly colleagues told me that the male teachers were always a majority before. As a matter of fact, studying history is not a good choice for middle school students, because they are afraid that after graduation they could not find any jobs if they do not want to be history teachers in school. Some of the male teachers work as researchers in institutes after publishing some papers because some of them like researching, and others hope to earn more money. The female teachers are conservative and they go on to their jobs in the universities. There are very

few young female teachers who give up the opportunity to be a university teacher.

Q: Is there any advantage with your Doctorate degree?

A: The Doctorate degree does not mean that I have a higher educational degree than the others, for most of my colleagues hold this title and only a few of the teachers have only a Master's degree. There is no one who only has a Bachelor degree in our department.

Q: What do you think about the important conditions for the promotion?

A: In my opinion, the academic degree, work experience and relationships are the important ones.

I plan to research archaeology with the elderly teachers in the summer holiday, because on one hand, my dissertation is about that. On the other hand, there are few female teachers who want to go because of the hard conditions in the field. If I could be a member of the research group, it would bring me more opportunities to be promoted quickly.

Q: Maybe you will be the leader some years later.

A: No, I don't want to be the leader. I only want to become a professor in ten years.

Q: Can you feel the differences at work between men and women?

A: I think the male teachers have more advantages than female teachers in terms of teaching or researching fields. For instance, male teachers generally have more seminars every week.

Q: Ok, thanks for your answers.

A: You are welcome.

Q: We hope that you can make your dream come true quickly.

A: Thanks.

3. FC

Q: Hello, FC, nice to meet you.

A: Hello, nice to meet you, too.

Q: Have you seen the questionnaire, which we have sent to you by Email?

A: Yes. Let's begin.

Q: Okay. How long have you worked in this university?

A: Since right after my graduation from university.

Q: I know it was not so easy to go to university in your time.

A: Yes, you are right. In the 1970s, the National College Entrance Exam was very difficult and the entrance rate was 20:1. This meant that only one student was allowed to study and 19 who would fail.

Q: So you must be very intelligent to have gotten that opportunity.

A: Well, I was, but I had no choice and I had go to university.

Q: Why?

A: You are so young and you are both from Beijing; maybe you don't know the trouble of Hukou.

Q: We know it is very important in our lives.

A: But I think you don't know how important it is for a farmer.

Q: Could you tell us about it, if you want?

A: I can tell you something. My parents are farmers, so that means I am also a farmer. My parents had no job; they only worked in the field. Our living conditions were very bad. I wanted to change my life, and studying at university could provide me with a chance to get Hukou. So, I had to study very hard and go to university.

Q: We have heard that in the past, people in China always said that there were two ways to escape from poverty. One was to study in the university and the other was to join the army.

A: Yes, I had the same ideas. I hoped to change my fate and escape from poverty through studying at university. I think there are some problems in Chinese society. The obvious problem is the huge gap between the city and countryside, especially between the rich people in the city and the poor people in the countryside.

I always heard from my parents that the city was modern and big, and people could find jobs and earn a lot of money there. As a city dweller, I would have certain advantages. For instance, the living standard would be better than in the countryside– things like wages, rent and medical insurance, which is a very important point. My children are urban dwellers; they can go to kindergartens and

schools in city. They have nothing to worry about, unlike my parents.

Q: You are successful. Do your parents live with you in the city, or do they still work in the field?

A: They are in my hometown, and one of my brothers takes care of them.

Q: Do you give them some money each year?

A: Of course. My other brother and I live in the city, and we often send them money.

Q: How many brothers do you have? Why does one of them live in the city and another in the country?

A: It's a long story. I have two brothers, and they both wanted to work in the city. However, at that time the firms in the city needed only urban residents with city Hukou, and the countryside dweller had no chance to get such jobs. Eventually, one of my brothers married a girl who was from a city. Then he moved to the city and he was able to work in a state-owned enterprise. However, my other brother was still in high school and he could not join the army because of his age. He had to stay in our hometown with my parents as a farmer until now. You know, my brother and I work in the city and our wages are higher than my brother in the countryside. Therefore, we often send him money in order for him to have a higher living standard. We also want to thank him for taking care of our parents in our hometown.

Q: I think the living conditions in your hometown now are better than they were during your childhood.

A: Sure. Hukou is not as important as before, because the distance between the city and the countryside is not as big as before. The living conditions in the countryside in some provinces are no different than in the city.

Q: Let us talk about your work now. Why do you want to work in the university? Do you like being a teacher?

A: After graduation from university, rural students like me hoped to find a job in the city. It did not matter if it was good or bad, because we just wanted stay in the city and get a stable monthly wage. To be in Hukou instead of going back to do farm work was the desire. In contrast with us, the students from city did not have to

seriously worry about finding a job. This is because at that time, there were only a few graduates, and almost every graduate could find a job. Those from city could be employed very easily, but what they cared about were good welfare and high wages.

Q: To be a teacher could help you get Hukou. Is that right?

A: Yes, at that time a teacher's wage was low, no matter if you were a schoolteacher or a university teacher. Many people with a low educational level, or those who worked in factories, had the same wage as a teacher. As a result, few people wanted to be teachers. But it was the best chance for rural students like me to change my fate and to be able to move to a big city. This is because there were few competitors in this area. It was easy to be an urban dweller if I chose to be a teacher.

At the same time, there are two long holidays each year as a teacher, and after marriage I could use the holidays to take care of my family. I was very satisfied that after graduation I got Beijing Hukou by myself and quickly found a stable job.

Q: How about your husband, is he also from the countryside?

A: (laughing) No, he is from Beijing.

Q: Was he your classmate or colleague?

A: He is a relative of one of my female colleagues.

Q: Is it good to marry a man whose relative is your colleague? Maybe she could help you in your career.

A: Yes, she did.

Q: You are lucky. What do you think about your family?

A: (thinking) I have no relatives or friends in Beijing, and as a girl I was very alone in this big city. My parents could not always visit me because they had to work in their hometown. I needed a family, and my husband could give me what I wanted. In fact, he is excellent. You know, he is also a college graduate and works as an engineer in a factory.

Q: Did you live with your mother-in-law?

A: Yes, I lived with the parents of my husband. How did you know that?

Q: Well, many people live with the parents after marriage.

A: Yes, we had no house. We had to live with them.

Q: Who cared for your family at that time?

A: (laughing) It was my job. I cared for my husband and my son and my husband's parents.

Q: How did you arrange your time? I mean, were you not busy with work?

A: Well, as a teacher I had more free time. There are only two or three classes every day, so after class I would prepare the class for next day in my office.

Q: You didn't go home right after work?

A: No, there were only three rooms in the house: a room for my parents-in-law, a room for my husband's sister, and one small room for our family. I liked studying in my office, because there was silence and I had more free space. After work, I usually went shopping on the way back, and then I would do some cleaning and washing when I first got home. Afterwards, my mother-in-law would pick up my son and I would cook for the whole family.

Q: Didn't your husband help you?

A: His work place was far away from the home, and so he was always the last one to come back. How could he help me?

Q: Did the sister of your husband not help you?

A: (smiling) No, I did almost all of the housework at home, because my own mother told me to. She said that if my husband's sister did not do anything, the parents of my husband would not say anything, but if I did not do anything, my parents-in-law would say I was lazy. I did not want my mother-in-law to say anything. The fact also tells me that if I did nothing at home, my mother-in-law would tell her son that his wife was lazy. On the other hand, if I did do something, my mother-in-law would think it was my duty.

Q: Do you still live with your mother-in-law now?

A: No, we live separately; we bought our own house at the end of 1990s. My son grew up and he wanted his own space; we needed it as well. Hence, we decided to buy a bigger apartment. It was not difficult for us to do, because our wage is

higher and our living condition is better than before.

Q: Is the house you live in the so-called “welfare house”?

A: No, this is not so called “welfare house”. We bought this apartment by ourselves. You know, the social status of all teachers is higher than in recent years. At the same time, the wage is higher than before.

Q: Is your husband’s wage also high?

A: Higher than before. He left his first work place in the 1990s and then worked in a foreign company where he could not only earn more than before, but he could also have better chances for his own development.

In fact, I am conservative. I did not agree with him wanting to give up his stable job in the factory at the beginning. But he said that he was over thirty, and if he could not break a new path now, he would never have another chance again. At last, I agreed with him because I did not want him to regret anything. Even if he failed, at least I had a job and wage to live off. Even though it was not high, it was enough to make a living for the whole family.

Q: You love your family very much.

A: Yes. As a matter of fact, I also worried that my husband would be fired at any time if he did something wrong. At that time, my mother-in-law was angry with me. She blamed me for letting my husband give up his stable job in the factory in order to work in a joint venture company. However, she changed her mind after my husband was promoted some months later.

Q: I think your mother-in-law would have helped you after you moved out.

A: Yes, she would have, but my son was enough old to care for himself and I had more spare time. While I lived with my in-laws, it seemed like I had to prepare for a party every day. I had to do the shopping and cooking for the whole big family. Now, however, it is easy to cook for three people.

Q: You look very happy now. Your son has grown up and you have your own apartment. Do you often go back to visit your mother-in-law?

A: Yes. I must visit her often, because you know my mother-in-law wanted to live with us. After her daughter married and we moved out, she felt very alone and she

told me she could do all of the housework and cook for us.

Q: And?

A: I refused, because I did not want to repeat the hard life again, even though there was no quarrel between us. I really need some space, and if I lived with her again, it would mean to live under her control. I can guarantee there would have been a contradiction between us. As a matter of fact, my mother-in-law was angry about my decision, but she couldn't do anything. Every week I visit my in-laws and help them wash and clean.

I have decided not to live with my son after his marriage, because I don't want to disturb his own life.

Q: Had you thought about employing a babysitter to help you?

A: No. Although we had the ability to employ a babysitter, I felt uncomfortable to have a stranger in my home.

Almost all young teachers in my department had babysitters at home to care for the children because the wage is higher than before. It is also good for them to have more time to develop themselves. In the past, it was too much for a normal family to employ a babysitter and there was more than one child in each family before the 1970s. It was different for the parents to care for each of them. Normally, the older children took care of younger sisters or brothers.

Q: Like you said, you have more time to go on studying something or to develop your career after moving out?

A: Yes, I do and I have to develop my career intensively. In my early years, I took care of my family and my son. Now he is grown up and our living condition is much better than before. It is time to do something for my career.

Q: Were you a vice professor or a lecturer at that time?

A: Lecturer, so I decided to achieve a higher professional title. Not only can the wage be raised, but I can also receive more respect. Because some of the young teachers in the department who had only worked few years are also lecturers, I am afraid that they might laugh at me. I am older than them and have worked over 20 years, after all.

Q: That means that you worry about being surpassed?

A: Yes. In fact, our leader talked to me about my professional title some years ago, but I had no time to think about it at that time because I had to take care of my son and family. I also wanted to be promoted, but I was so tired that I could not go on reading and writing something after finishing housework. I also could not find extra time for papers or publications.

After my son grew up, I told the leader my idea about promotion. He told me it was more difficult to be promoted than in the past, for there were some new conditions for promotion today, which every candidate should fulfil. Although the working years and work experience were still important, they were not the most important conditions. Now people put their focus more on the scientific research. I had to publish some papers in professional magazines. Besides that, the relationship among colleagues and the vacancy of the position were also significant points. But I was lucky: since there was one free position for vice professor in the department that year, I was promoted quickly.

Q: And then you were promoted to professor quickly?

A: Relatively quick. In fact, I never thought of being promoted to professor, because on one hand I did not want to work as hard as ever before my retirement. I was 53 years old, and the wages of my husband and myself were high enough. I had nothing to worry about, and I hoped to spend my last 2 years in the university in peace. On the other hand, I had no energy to publish many professional papers, which would take me very much time.

Q: But how did you become a professor?

A: Well, my relationship with the staff was good and the leader also persuaded me to apply for the title of professor. If I would be a professor, I would have more chances to be employed again by the same university or other universities after retirement. He hoped that I at least would try and grasp the last opportunity. I knew the leader was good to me and my husband told me that I should try it– whatever the result was.

Q: But one of the prerequisites to be a professor is to hold a Doctorate degree. Are

you a Doctor?

A: No, I hold only a Bachelor's degree.

Well, at that time, the educational level was not as important as today. I remember that there were some new conditions in my university for the promotion of professor, including: the candidate must be over 50 years old; have over 30 working years; hold a professional title of vice professor; have at least a Bachelor's degree; pass the foreign language test; and publish more than 5 books in their own area, and each year 5 papers must be published on professional magazines.

Q: You fulfil all of the conditions?

A: No, the foreign language test was a trouble for me. I learned it in my school and university time, but I did not often use it at work, so I had already forgotten most of it except some simple words. I worried that at my age, I could not learn it well enough to pass the exam.

I thought maybe I could choose Japanese to learn, for there are many similarities between Chinese and Japanese. Maybe I could understand the meaning of the sentences, even if I didn't know how to pronounce them. English or other European languages were difficult for me.

However, finally I chose to learn English because Japanese was a new language for me after all. Therefore, I had to go back to social school to learn a new language. It was not so easy for me to be over 50 years old and to learn English. But I was very lucky; I passed the exam with 62 points, only two points above the passing grade.

Q: You are so lucky. Did you publish some papers at that time?

A: (smile) Yes, it was the second trouble for me.

I had already published some works and books in the past, but to be a professor I had to publish 5 papers each year, and I thought I didn't have enough time to finish them.

Therefore, I just sent some papers to the magazines about my working experiences, or how I overcame the difficulties in terms of teaching, and they were published.

Q: Did your husband support you?

A: Yes. He hoped I could have more achievements in my career and gave me some advice. For example, we could employee a babysitter if I had no time to do housework, since we did not worry about the money. Finally, I made my decision to apply for the title of professor. One year later, I was promoted to professor.

Actually, I wanted to have more time with my family. If I were a professor, I would have to spend much time at work.

Q: You must be very happy, right?

A: Well, not really.

Q: Why not?

A: In fact, the professor title is not very important to me. You know I will retire in 2 years, and I have no energy to compete with the young teachers. I only want to remain healthy and help my son find a good wife.

Q: You are a good mother.

A: This is a mother's duty. I only have one child and I must do something for him. I think your parents have the same idea.

Q: Oh, yes.

A: It is right. Now the young people– like my son and you and especially young couples– like to live alone instead of living with their parents. My son is no exception. This means that he must buy another apartment, but he has only been working for one year and he doesn't have enough money to buy one. As his mother, I must help him. I want to earn much money and give him as much help as I can. Now that I have become a professor, I will earn more money than earlier.

Q: Of course, and it is good to earn more money.

A: Yes. Besides the apartment, I have my own plan after retirement. I know I cannot stay at home every day to do the boring housework. I have to find something to do, such as to work as a part-time teacher in universities. Not only could I earn some money, but also I could embody my value and teach more students.

Q: You are a good teacher. Are you satisfied with your situation now?

A: (smile) Yes, I think my family belongs to the middle class in China. The price of

the apartment that my husband and I bought some years ago has doubled. My mother-in-law told me that after she died, her apartment would belong to us. Therefore, I plan to live with my husband in one apartment and rent another to earn money. In addition, my husband and I have pension and it is enough for us to live. I will buy a new apartment for my son, so that he and his future wife can live without any pressure.

Q: You always think about your son.

A: I have to. I have told my son I do not need the money from him. I will buy an apartment for him, and he needs only to work hard and live well with his future wife. I know how difficult it is when there is no help from the parents. My own parents are farmers and they did not give me any support after I worked. I do not want my son to have the same life as me.

Q: You are so great.

Let's talk about your work situation now. Do you think there are discriminations against women at work?

A: No, I think my colleagues and leaders are nice to me. I don't think there is any discrimination.

Q: OK, that's all. Thanks for talking to us.

A: You are welcome.

4. FD

Q: Hello FD, we are Hua and Jinsong.

A: Hello. What can I do for you?

Q: We want to make an interview with you.

A: How long will it take?

Q: Well, about 2 hours.

A: OK. Let's begin.

Q: OK. May we ask how old you are?

A: I am already 36 years old.

Q: You look young and modern. Are you from Beijing?

A: Yes, I was born in Beijing. And you?

Q: Yes, we are also from Beijing. And we also graduated from this university.

A: (laugh) Really? What a coincidence. I graduated earlier than you.

Q: (laugh) Yes, what a coincidence. Where did you live?

A: In West district. And you?

Q: We live in another district.

A: Oh, my parents live in East district and my grandparents live in West district. I lived with my grandparents in my childhood. Of course now we don't live together.

Q: Why didn't you live with your parents?

A: My mother is a doctor, my father is an engineer, and there is only one child in my family. Because my parents were very busy in my childhood, I sometimes lived with my grandparents.

Q: Do your grandparents also live in Beijing?

A: Yes, my grandparents, parents and relatives are all in Beijing.

Although I have no sisters and brothers in my own family, I have many cousins in Beijing. We were sent to the grandparents' home in the winter and summer holidays so that these children could spend their holidays together.

Q: That’s interesting.

A: Yes, but my grandparents hated winter and summer holidays very much, because they had to care for so many children and cook for us at home.

Q: (laugh) We can understand; it was definitely noisy.

A: (laugh) Yes. But it was a little bit quiet at night, because some of the children would be picked up and taken home by their parents after work. The others, like me, would stay with my grandparents during the whole holidays.

Q: Did you like living with your grandparents?

A: Yes. And since then, I have always been very independent and I had my own judgment.

Q: Did you study hard in school? How about your grades at that time?

A: I did not study hard, but my parents said I was very intelligent and my note was always average in the class.

Q: Who cared for your homework when you did not live with your parents?

A: I cared for my study on my own in junior middle school and my mother cared for it in senior middle school.

Q: Your mother?

A: My mother thought that my notes had to be better than those of my classmates if I wanted to go to university. Therefore, she helped me go over and prepare the lessons after work. I could not spend my holidays with other cousins in my grandparents' home; I had to pay all of my attention on homework or exercises after school.

Q: Is your middle school the key school?

A: Yes, and it is made of two parts: junior middle school and senior middle school. I spent three years in middle school, but my graduation note was not enough good to go on learning at the senior middle school in the same school. My parents hoped I could study in the university after graduating from the senior middle school, and not in the vocational high school and then work. My mother thought there were more chances for me to go to university if I learned in the key senior middle school rather than in normal senior middle school. Therefore, she decided to visit my teachers. If they could help me to continue learning in the same school, my parents were willing to pay some money to the school. However, my father did not want to do that. He thought I also could go to the university even if I learned hard in a normal high school. Finally, I stayed in the same school to learn because I won some prizes for the school in some singing and painting contests. The headmaster agreed to let me learn in the senior middle school, and my parents did not have to pay anything.

Q: It was so complicated.

A: Yes, it was. And my mother also sent me to some tutoring schools on the weekend so that I could have more exercises or go over what I learned in the school, even though the cost of such schools was not cheap. After some weekends, I had better notes than before.

Q: It was worth it to pay for the tutoring school.

A: Yes.

Q: How about the notes of your classmates?

A: Among my classmates, female students had better scores than male students in courses such as Chinese and English. The male students' scores in courses such as physics or chemistry were higher than those of the female students.

Q: Normally, the males' notes in the sciences are better than those of the females.

A: Yes. In the last year in my senior middle school, I decided to study humanities in university later. My notes in physics and mathematics were not good, and I liked Chinese and English. Therefore, my teacher suggested that I study humanities.

Q: Did your parents agree with you?

A: My parents, especially my father, thought that a girl ought to have a stable job such as a lawyer, accountant or teacher and find a nice husband. They thought that to study humanities was a good choice.

Q: You father is so conservative. (laugh)

A: (laugh) Yes. And maybe some girls in my class had the same ideas, because I remembered that most of the boys stayed in the science class in the third year and most girls chose humanities class.

Q: What was your expectation about your future work?

A: At that time, I wanted to be a flight attendant or a secretary. I thought that if I worked as a flight attendant, I could fly to anywhere in the world, and I could also have a high wage and often visit different cities. If I worked as a secretary, I could wear beautiful clothes every day. To be a teacher was not my dream. In my mind, the teachers looked so serious all the time, and their clothes were not colourful but rather black and white. If I would be a teacher, I would have to stay in the school my whole life with the children; but I wanted to see the world.

Q: What did you study at university?

A: Chinese, because my notes in Chinese were good in school. And my parents told me that the department of Chinese in the Normal University was better than other universities. I agreed with them. Therefore, my first choice of universities on the form that was filled out before the NCEE by every student was a key Normal

University. Actually, my parents were afraid that I would not be accepted to any university if my scores were low, and the passing scores were not very high in some Normal Universities. In addition, some of them were the key university as well. However, I passed the NCEE with high scores– especially in Chinese and English– and I was accepted to the key Normal University, even though the university was not my dream university.

Q: And did you study there?

A: Yes. My father suggested that I give up this year and take the NCEE again next year, because he hoped I could go to my dream university. However, I did not want to have the hard life again. During that past year, I had to face numbers of exercises or textbooks every day, and I lived under great pressure. Hence, I decided to study in the Normal University.

Q: Did your parents agree with your career choice to become a teacher?

A: My parents thought it was a very good and stable job to be a teacher. There were two holidays in one year. The wage was not so high, but they could support me if necessary.

Q: Did you like your university life?

A: Yes. I lived in the student dormitory during my college period and went home every week. I remember that my classmates admired me very much, because my family could support me and I did not work after seminars. I could also take many delicious foods back with me to the university. I was alive and willing to do everything for my class, and as a result, at the beginning of the second year I was voted to be the monitor.

Q: What did your classmates do after class?

A: They always worked as private teachers after class or as salesmen on the weekend in order to earn some living fees.

Q: In which field did you take more time: studying, working, practising…?

A: Well, 50:50. I always had a picnic or went to the cinema with my friends after seminars.

Q: Didn't you want to work to earn some pocket money?

A: I wanted to do so. Of course the purpose was not to earn living costs, but to meet new friends. There were always boys to introduce some part-time jobs to me, such as a tour guide, because some tour company needed students with good spoken English to lead the foreign visitors, since the students were open and young. Some college students with good English wanted to earn living costs or to support their parents; others like me wanted to practise their English.

Q: How about your parents' ideas about such jobs?

A: They did not want me to do this part-time job. They thought they were not lacking money and they hoped I could study hard. But when I told them I could practise my English and it was good for my note, they agreed and gave me double living costs to buy some food and take a taxi to stay healthy. (laugh) It was so funny, the other students worked in order to earn money, but I would spend my parents' money.

Q: That's interesting.

A: I liked this part-time job as a tourist guide, not only because it was free to visit different tourist scenes, but also because I could meet many new friends from around the world. You know, I could say "Hello" in 8 different languages.

Q: Were you tired?

A: No. You know, when the visitors played and did some shopping I could pause and talk with the other tourist guides, and some of them became my good friends. In a summer vacation, I met a boy who was a student in another university and also was a tour guide as a part-time job. This boy became my boyfriend.

Q: A love story.

A: It's a secret. I will tell you later. (laugh)

Q: Your life in the university was colourful, right?

A: Yes, but the four years flew by quickly. The next step was to find a job.

Q: Yes, we have to work after graduation. How about your work?

A: I remember that in my generation, the university would recommend their graduates to middle schools as teachers, so that we did not need to waste our time finding jobs. My classmates and I were assigned to the middle school to be teachers.

Another two excellent students in my class, who became members of the communist party in the third year, were also the leaders of the student's organization in the college, and were permitted to stay in the university to be university teachers.

Q: At which middle school did you work?

A: I didn't work as middle school teacher.

Q: Why?

A: I told my parents I did not want to be teacher but a tour guide. They thought working as a teacher was a stable job and there were also winter and summer holidays in a year. Even though the wage was not very high, they said they didn't need money from me. But I thought I did not want to be a teacher readily, because the students from the other provinces wanted to live in Beijing and get Beijing Hukou, but I was from Beijing. In addition, as a tour guide I could earn more money than as a teacher. I was young and had a Bachelor's degree; I thought I could find a job easily, no matter if the job was stable or not.

Q: Did you parents agree with your decision to be a tour guide?

A: Not at all. In order to persuade them, I told them that there were two students who could stay in the university to be the teachers in my class. One of them came from the other small city and wanted the Beijing Hukou, and he was willing to stay in his alma mater to become a college teacher. The other student was from Beijing and did not want to be a teacher, and went to study abroad quickly. Actually, I wanted to tell my parents that not only I but also other students did not want to be teachers. However, my mother thought this was a good opportunity for me to become a college teacher. Hence, my mother met with my teacher and expressed that I hoped to be a university teacher.

Q: How did your mother help you?

A: Because she was a doctor and also a leader in the hospital, she had good relationships with some powerful people who helped recommend me to work at the university. The university needed some fresh people, and therefore I became a university teacher.

Q: You are so lucky. Did you want to be a university teacher?

A: I did not know what my mother did for me at all. I knew she just wanted to find a better way for me. At the same time, after thinking about it for some days, I realised that to be a tour guide was suitable for young people, but I had to find a stable job for when I would get older– especially after I have a child. I would have to spend more time to take care of the child and as a tour guide I would have to go to other cities sometimes. If my child would be sick or need me, I could not come back at once. Moreover, to be a college teacher was better than to be a middle school teacher, because the social status of the university teacher was higher than other jobs and I had more spare time to do my own things. Besides, if I was a college teacher, I might find a husband who was better then me, because it was a tradition in China that the husband normally was better than the wife in a family.

Q: Did you like your job?

A: I thought this job seemed like the continuation of my college period.

Q: Why?

A: Being a teacher was not as difficult as I thought. Occasionally a teacher in my department was sick that year, and I was needed to replace her to teach some seminars. You know, I was 22 years old when I worked, and my students were only 18 years old. This meant that I was from the same generation as my students. Because I was nice and young, I built very good relationships with my students. They thought of me not as a teacher, but as a friend and sister. After seminars we often went shopping together. (laugh)

Q: It sounds cool.

A: I think so. But actually, I had to face some difficulties during my process, for I had no teaching experience after all. Sometimes I had to prepare for the seminar until midnight. Some older teachers and my colleagues gave me useful advice in terms of teaching methods or preparing the seminars. This way, I could adapt to the job within one year. After the sick teacher came back, I was arranged to work as an assistant in the department, in charge of some daily office tasks.

Q: Was what you taught the same as what you studied?

A: Yes.

Q: So you could not teach anymore?

A: Well, at that time not. But in my fifth year of work, the university was divided into some small colleges, which were previously the different departments; my department was no exception. It was enough for me to be a secretary, but I missed my time as a teacher. I thought that if I worked as an assistant, I would have something to do with my discipline and become an administrative staff in the future, but not a teacher. Actually, my parents had the same opinion. They thought that as a teacher I could gain some practical skills and they would be helpful for my own development. After discussing with the leaders of the department, I was appointed as a teacher for the new students. In the third year, I was promoted as a lecturer.

Q: Are you still a lecturer now?

A: No, but if I wanted to be promoted continuously, first of all I needed a higher academic degree. In addition, some new teachers in my department held higher degrees than me, so for the first time in my life I lived under pressure and I decided to go on studying for a Master's degree.

Q: Where did you study for your Master's degree?

A: There were always chances for university teachers to study continuously. That year, the leader sent four teachers with a wage to study. Two of us went to America to study, and the others in China. Because my English was not bad, I had no child to care for, and my husband and parents also supported me, I was picked to achieve my Master's study in America.

Q: How long were you there? Who paid the tuition?

A: Two years, and these two years passed very quickly. Since I did not need to pay the tuition fee and the Chinese college gave me a wage every month, my life abroad was relatively comfortable. In my leisure time, I always visited different cities. Of course, I worked very hard for seminars and homework. In my college period in China, I only wanted to hold the Bachelor degree, and now I knew it was important for a person to study– not only to hold a higher degree, but also to have

a better future.

Q: Did you miss your family when you were in America?

A: Yes, I missed them very much. My husband visited me twice during the two years, and we toured in America and Mexico. Before my graduation, my parents came to visit me and participated in my ceremony. We then flew back to China together.

Q: So you had the preconditions for the promotion?

A: You are right. After coming back to China, I decided to apply for vice professor, and I prepared my works and published two books one year later. The two years studying in America allowed me to pass the foreign language exam quickly. One and half years later, I was promoted to vice professor.

Q: You said you are married. Who is your husband? Is he the boy who you met in a summer vacation as you said before?

A: Yes. (laugh)

Q: What does he do now? A tour guide?

A: After his Bachelor graduation, he worked in a foreign company and earned more than me.

Q: When did you marry?

A: When I was 27 years old.

Q: When did you have a child?

A: I did not have a child until I was 34 years old.

Q: 7 years later?

A: Yes.

Q: Why so late?

A: Because my friends and colleagues around me had all children. I admired them and I also wanted to become a mother.

Q: How old is your baby?

A: My baby is 3 years old. You know, I save money now for my baby's education in the future.

Q: Who cares for the baby?

A: Both my and my husband’s parents care for my baby, and I had to reduce my time

at work sometimes. My baby was still young, and when he was enough old, I let my parents take care of him.

Q: Did you live together with your parents?

A: No, my husband and I were both the only children in our families. Our parents had good jobs in Beijing so they bought an apartment for us together. And we did not cook at home. Sometimes we had supper with my family, sometimes in my husband's home.

Q: You are rich to be able to buy an apartment after marriage.

A: I was the first teacher to buy a private car in my university, even earlier than my headmaster. Both my parents and my husband's parents had good jobs. Therefore we did not to give the parents money every month, and our parents always bought something for us. My husband and I did not save money. At that time, the private car was a symbol of wealth, not a tool of transportation. My husband and I decided to buy a car and our parents also gave us some support. My colleagues, who came from the other provinces or from normal families in Beijing, admired me because I had no pressure. For instance, I did not need to worry about the apartment because our parents had already bought it for us. Our parents had jobs, and they did not need any help from me. The hourly worker would help me to clean the room.

Q: Now we have some questions about your department.

A: OK.

Q: What is the proportion of male to female leaders in your university?

A: I am not sure. Most of my colleagues are women, but the leader is male.

Q: Normally the leader is always male.

A: Yes, but you know I admire my leader not only because he holds a Doctorate degree, but also because he is excellent in the teaching field. The leader hopes that all teachers can pay much attention to get new knowledge after class. Some teachers of other departments think the relationship in my department is very complicated. Because there are many female teachers, maybe they would struggle for wages or professional titles, but until this day I do not notice these problems.

Q: Is the relationship among your colleagues good?

A: My colleagues are all nice and they always help each other– especially my leader. He plays a very important role at work because he gives every teacher a fair chance in work. If I were a leader, I would not be as successful as him. In fact, as a woman I prefer thinking about myself, not about others.

Q: What is the academic degree among male teachers and female teachers?

A: All of my colleagues have Master's degrees or Doctorate degrees. Everyone likes to learn from each other, and there are always opportunities for the teachers to get continuous education each year. Every teacher in my department wants to make more progress in his or her own career– whether female or male. The female teachers are as successful as their counterparts at work.

Q: I hope you can be promoted to professor quickly.

A: Thanks.

Q: Thank you, too, for coming to the interview.

A: You are welcome.

5. FE

Q: Hello FE, nice to meet you.

A: Hello, nice to meet you, too. My brother is also in Germany; he is as young as you are.

Q: Oh, really? What does he do there? Study?

A: No, he works there. He runs a company with his wife.

Q: Have you been there to visit them?

A: No. Their baby was born this year. Maybe I will visit them later.

Q: You have a good relationship with your brother.

A: You are right; I treat him like my son.

Q: Really? Why?

A: My mother's educational level was low and my father had no time to educate him. I was his first teacher, and you know I gave him money until he finished his study abroad.

Q: I think your brother appreciates what you did for him.

A: Yes, and I am also very happy to hear that he lives very well.

Q: You said your father was very busy. What did your mother do?

A: My father was a driver and he retired many years ago. My mother had no job.

Q: Are you from Beijing?

A: Yes.

Q: Normally people your mother's age have a job.

A: Yes, but my mother is not from Beijing. My parents were farmers. My father had a driving licence and he found a job in Beijing driving the truck in a factory, and my mother came with my father to Beijing in 1960. Because her educational level was low and she also had no skills, she could not find a job in Beijing. And one year later, I was born, so my mother became a housewife to care for the family.

Q: Your father worked alone and your mother's educational degree was not high. Who cared for your studies in your childhood? How about your grade in school?

A: Well, I had to take care of my homework myself. I was diligent, and my note was always good in my primary school and junior middle school.

Q: And then did you go to senior middle school?

A: As a matter of fact, my mother hoped that I could go to vocational high school and find a job quickly after 2 or 3 years, because my little brother was born in my last year in middle school. My mother thought only one wage from my father was not enough to support the family. She thought that as a girl, I did not need to have a high education. It was important for me to have a job and find a good husband like my father or a rich man. But my father thought that I had good grades and it would be better for me to go to senior middle school and then study in university. He did not want me to have a low education like him.

Q: Your father was right; education is important for a person. Can you tell us something about your senior middle school?

A: The living condition in my family was very poor at that time, especially in the three years during my senior middle school. The family had no savings; therefore I studied very hard in order to study in the university later. Sometimes I had to work

a part-time job to support the family.

If I could not pass the NCEE, I would not go to university. This meant that I would have wasted these 3 years in the senior middle school, and I would have to find a job with my senior middle school degree. The wage would be much lower than those with university degrees.

Q: So you had to go to university.

A: Yes, you know when the university informed me that I was allowed to study there, my father cried. My father had never cried, even though our family was very poor and he always borrowed money from the unit for the family. But this time he cried.

Q: We can understand. At which university did you study? Who paid the tuition fees?

A: In a Normal University.

Q: Why the Normal University? Did you want to be a teacher?

A: Because at that time the Normal University students did not need to pay tuition. At the same time, they could get some money every month from the government. Therefore, I decided to go to the Normal University in order to save some money for my parents. The other reason to go to the Normal University was that after graduation, the students could find a job in middle schools easily and quickly. I did not want to waste much time finding a job because I wanted to help my family as soon as possible.

Q: You thought so much about your family.

A: Well, actually I thought much for myself, because I knew my family did not have any social connections to help me find a job.

Q: Did you have any help in university for your study?

A: No.

Q: Could you tell us about your life in the university? Were there any special things? Did you have a boyfriend at that time?

A: I was a shy girl I did not have many friends in my life. In my college period I studied very hard every day and I went home to help my mother do housework every week. As a result, I had no time to meet boys.

Q: Did you live on campus?

A: Yes.

Q: Was the university far away from your home?

A: Of course. You know, there were not many buses at that time.

Q: Yes, Beijing is too big and the transportation was not as easy as today at that time.

A: Yes, so my father hoped I could stay in the dormitory to study on the weekends instead of coming home every week. He thought I might be very tired if I did so.

Q: Your father was so good to you. Did you go home every week?

A: Yes, my mother had to take care of my little brother and cook for the family every day. I wanted to help my mother so that she was not very tired. I told her not to wash the clothes because I would do it on Sunday. I cared for and played with my brother and gave my mother time to have a rest or visit the relatives. On Sunday night, I had to go back to the university before the door of the dormitory was closed. Sometimes I took some food from home to the university in order to save money. In the 4-year college period, my life was always the same.

Q: How about your grades at the university?

A: I always had good grades in my college period, so I became the only one in my class to become a university teacher after graduation.

Q: Oh, that's good. And how about your classmates?

A: Some of my classmates from other provinces worked as middle school teachers in order to get Beijing Hukou, although they did not like this job at all; others from Beijing found other jobs, but not as teachers due to the low wage.

Q: Ok. Did you become a teacher?

A: Well, because of the poor status in my family, since I already had Beijing Hukou, I only needed a stable job to earn money for the family.

Q: Did you give your wage to your family after graduation?

A: I gave my entire wage to my parents.

Q: Did you live at home?

A: No, I lived in the single dormitory in the university after graduation. My parents' home was too far from the university, and it took much time to go home every day.

Q: You had finished your study and you also could earn money. Now your parents

must have been satisfied.

A: No, my mother persuaded me to meet a boyfriend and marry quickly.

Q: Oh, (smile) why did she worry about your marriage? You were still young.

A: She thought if I was too old, I would not be able to find a man with a good status.

Q: Did your father also have the same idea as your mother?

A: No, my father thought that I held a higher education and was a university teacher. Even if my wage was not much, I had a high degree and a good job. He did not hope that I found a normal boy like him without a degree, although he worked as a driver in the unit and his job was stable. Therefore, my father told his idea to his colleagues; he hoped they could introduce some good boys to me.

At the same time, since my mother had few friends and she knew our farmer relatives could not help us because our family was the most well off out of all of them, she hoped I could find boyfriend among my classmates or colleagues.

Q: So did you find a boyfriend yourself?

A: I have to say yes. There were always nice people in the unit. One of my colleagues introduced me to a boy who was my first boyfriend and later became my husband.

Q: Where is he from?

A: He comes from the countryside in southern China. He worked in an institute in Beijing and studied for his Master's degree in Philosophy in Beijing at that time.

Q: His educational degree is higher than yours. Were your father and mother satisfied with it?

A: My mother thought he was not handsome, and that he was also short and hairless. His degree was high but his wage was low. There was only one point which satisfied her, and that was that his parents were not in Beijing. He had two brothers at home who worked as well, and they could take care of the family so that he could pay all of his attention to his own family in Beijing. My father thought this boy was a normal boy, but he had high degree and his job was stable and so he had more chances. Although his wage was temporarily not high, he was young and could develop well.

Q: So your father liked him.

A: Not really. He worried that this boy came from the countryside and his parents were farmers. You know, those from rural areas have different ideas about everything. He was afraid that I would be excluded by my husband's family.

Q: What did you think?

A: I thought this boy was very honest and had a high educational level. He worked very hard and got Beijing Hukou by himself. If I married him, a room in a dormitory from the institute where he worked could be arranged for us. This way, we could live independently, and my parents had more space at home.

Q: The house is a problem for everyone.

A: Yes.

Q: Did your parents agree with your marriage?

A: Yes. Several months later we married and moved to a 15-m² room with a public kitchen and toilet in my husband's unit.

Q: Was the ceremony great?

A: No, it was simple. Our families were not rich. My husband's parents only gave me a silver ring, and my parents bought some furniture for us.

Q: Didn't you need to give your parents living costs after marriage?

A: No. I gave my parents half of my monthly wage but not my entire wage like before, because my husband's family also needed such money. We were frugal and saved some of our limited wage every month.

Q: Did you visit your parents every week after marriage?

A: Yes. I helped my mother wash and clean like before, and my husband would help care for my little brother and do some heavy work for my father. He liked to do that, but my father told me not to come often because I had already married and my husband and I needed more spare time. My father did not want to waste our time and he thought it was unfair for his son-in-law to do housework for him on the weekend. But I was satisfied with my husband, because he always did something for my family on the weekend and said nothing. My husband told my father that his parents were not in Beijing, and he regarded my parents as his own parents.

Q: Your husband is nice.

A: Yes, he is, so my parents were very happy that they did not make a wrong decision about their daughter's marriage.

Q: Were your parents-in-law good to you?

A: I did not see them until my son was 5 years old, because I preferred to send them living costs every month instead of visiting them by train.

Q: Who cared for the family after marriage?

A: I did more housework.

My university was not near my home. I had to spend 2 hours on the way by bike, and after work I liked do some shopping in the market. My husband lived and worked in the yard of the institute, and he had no time to help me do some housework because he was very busy. He had to publish some papers each year.

Every morning I would get up earlier than my husband and prepare breakfast for him. Then I would go to work by bike in both good and bad weather. We would have lunch in a canteen, and after work I would do some cooking at home.

Q: (smile) Well, you supported your husband.

A: Yes, I supported him to achieve his Doctorate degree and gave up the chance to achieve my own Master's degree. I had to spend more time to take care of this family and my son, as well as my parents.

Q: Your husband must be very happy to have married you.

A: He promised that after his Doctorate graduation he would do all of the housework and take care of the baby. He thought I was tired and he also hoped that I could make some success in my own career.

Q: Did he keep his promise after achieving his Doctorate degree?

A: No, but it was not his fault. After graduation, the institute wanted to send him to go abroad to study for a post-doctorate. Of course, he made the decision by himself.

Q: Did he want to go abroad?

A: In fact, he did not want to do it. He thought after marriage he did not do anything for the family and if he could not stay at home, I would not only work but also care for our son alone every day. At the same time, my mother was sick and she

could not help care for the baby like before. I had to often go back to take care of her. Hence, he decided to give up the good opportunity.

Q: What a pity to give up the good opportunity!

A: Yes, I have the same idea. I am a traditional Chinese woman. My idea is influenced by my mother that the husband must be better than the wife, no matter in which field, and she would be proud of her husband's success. I told my husband he had to make some achievements in his youth; otherwise he might regret making a wrong decision in his later years. I also told him some advantages if he studied abroad. For instance, his wage could be doubled every month: one part from the institute and the other part from the project. After graduation, he could have more chances to be promoted. I told my parents my opinions, and they agreed with me. They also persuaded my husband not to pass up the opportunity. At last, he agreed to go abroad to go on studying and to come back as soon as possible.

Q: Did you have time to care for your parents?

A: I did not have much time to care for my parents after my husband went to study abroad. I just gave them more money than before; I hoped that I could compensate them with money.

Q: So you cared for your son by yourself?

A: Yes. Every day I escorted my son to and from school. You know, life was very hard for me. In the morning I got up at 4 o'clock to make breakfast for my son and then prepared lunch for him, because my university was a little far away from home and I could not go back home in the afternoon. He would take his lunch to school and have it there. In the afternoon at 4 o'clock, I picked him up from the school directly after I finished my work and I did some shopping on the way home. At home, my son did homework while I prepared supper, and after supper I checked his homework and helped him prepare the lessons for the next day. At about 9 o'clock, he had to go to bed and I prepared my seminars. Every weekend I sent him to some classes to learn drawing in the morning, and after lunch he went on learning swimming and playing football. Only on holidays he and I could visit my parents and help them do some housework.

Q: You had no spare time on the weekends during that period; you had to do everything by yourself.

A: Yes. My parents wanted to help me, but their health was not good, and they could only take care of themselves.

Q: How about your brother?

A: My brother had already grown up and already became a college student in my university. He could give my parents some help so that I did not have to visit them every week.

Q: Didn't your mother-in-law want to help you?

A: They wanted to help me but I refused, because there was no more place for them to live in this 15-m² room.

Q: How tired you were when your husband was not at home!

A: Yes, it was not easy for me. After all, this life passed after 2 years when my husband came back with his post-doctorate degree. He told me he was used to saving the money, and he took almost all of the scholarship when he was back.

Q: You were richer than before.

A: Yes, it was also the first deposit in the family. Before marriage, I gave my whole wage to my family and after marriage I gave them half and used the rest as living costs. My husband was the same as me, because his parents needed more money in the countryside.

Q: Didn't you think it over to buy an apartment with your first deposit?

A: To tell the truth we had a plan, but the institute gave him an apartment quickly to replace the 15-m² room because my husband published some works within one year and was also promoted. We used all of our deposit to pay for the apartment and buy some furniture.

Q: The real life just began, right?

A: Yes. I thought my life before could be seen as a fight; both of us fought with a hard life. Our life was much better than before. My brother graduated and found a job as an office assistant in a company. He could help me care for my son and I could visit my parents on the weekend. I also invited my husband’s parents to visit us

because we had enough rooms to live.

However, three years later my brother wanted to go abroad to study but he had only worked for two years. He didn't have enough money to go and my parents could not help him anymore. I decided to give him some of my savings to help him make his dream true; my husband agreed, too.

Q: You became poor again.

A: Yes, but this time was not as bad as before. Firstly, my brother grew up and he could care for himself and make his living overseas when he studied there; secondly, we still had some savings and our own house, and we did not need money urgently.

Time passes by so quickly. When I looked back on my life, I found my son was already a middle school student and my husband also finished the post-doctorate and was promoted. We moved to the big apartment, my father retired, my brother had already grown up and went abroad to study.

Q: Did you have spare time after your husband came back to China?

A: Yes, I could have a rest and breathe freely again.

Q: Didn't you think about your career?

A: Of course, yes. I realised that I was middle-aged when I found some grey hair on my husband's head. My face was never young again. I had already worked almost 20 years, but I was still a lecturer. The last promotion from teaching assistant to lecturer was over 10 years ago, and there were many young teachers with Master's and Doctorate degrees in the department. I had already given up many chances for the family or for my husband; if I would not catch up with the other teachers then, I would have no time, because I was 40 years old after all. So I decided to study for my Master's degree and my husband supported me very much. He thought as a college teacher I should learn more new things. In the past, I had no time to learn because I had to take care of the family and support him; now it was time to do it.

Q: Where did you study for your Master's degree, in China?

A: No. I got a chance from the department to study for a Master's degree in the USA. In fact, I wanted to study for my Master's degree in Beijing so that I could go

home every day. But the leader told me that the same degree achieved abroad was better than in China; to think about my future I should do it abroad. Moreover, I could speak English very well, so it would be easy for me to fit into the life there. At last, I decided to leave my son and husband to go to the USA.

Q: How many years did you take to achieve your Master's degree?

A: Two years.

Q: Did you go back to China immediately after graduation?

A: Yes, because I missed my family very much.

And within the following year, I published some papers and two books. In the second year after my Master's graduation, when I was 45 years old, I was promoted to vice professor.

Q: Did you go on studying for a Doctorate degree?

A: No, because I had no interest anymore to continue studying. In addition, I was not young anymore; it was difficult to remember some new things. After my marriage I paid attention to the family and my son, and in my middle age I had to study again. I was tired and it was also enough for me. I decided to relax and make a pause and enjoy life.

Q: Do you regret having such a life?

A: No, of course not. Now I am happy. I am a vice professor and my wage is higher than earlier. My son grew up and studies in the university, my husband is a leader in his institute and we have an apartment from the unit of my husband. Also, my brother has a good family. My father's pension is enough for him and my mother, and my husband's parents are cared for by their other sons in the countryside. I have nothing to worry about.

Q: What will you do later at work?

A: I will work hard in my university and teach more excellent students in the future. I thank my husband very much. He did not say anything when I gave money to my parents and supported my brother; he is a good husband. I believe that perfect souls would be given cake and ale.

Q: How about your relationship with your colleagues?

A: Good. I often discuss new and hot topics with young teachers after class, because I must know what the students like; otherwise the students will not like the old examples and programmes.

Q: Now we have some questions about your department. What is the proportion of male to female teachers in your department?

A: There are more male teachers than female teachers; like most departments, all leaders are males.

Q: What do you think about the reasons?

A: I think it has something to do with the educational degree. In general, the educational degrees of the male teachers are higher than those of the females. As a consequence, their professional titles are also higher than those of the females. In my opinion, most of all female teachers my age or older spend much time in terms of caring for children and doing housework. The young female teachers between thirty to forty years old have less brothers or sisters than those in my age; therefore their parents could help them care for the children. At the same time, they are open-minded. Some of them like to employee a babysitter or hourly worker instead of their parents. Normally, the female teachers under thirty years old do not marry or have no children; their lives are easier than others. I think some years later, after the male leaders retire, those young female teachers might be the leaders. They hold high educational degrees and they also have working experience.

Q: Do you think so?

A: Yes, I think so.

Q: I hope you could be a leader quickly.

A: (laugh) I hope so.

Q: Thanks for your interview today.

A: You are welcome.

6. FF

Q: Hello, are you FF?

A: Yes.

Q: We are Jiang and Gu.

A: Oh, sit down please. I have seen your questionnaire; it's interesting.

Q: Thanks.

A: Let's begin now.

Q: OK.

How many years have you worked?

A: 4 or 5 years.

Q: You have been a teacher for 4 or 5 years?

A: No, that is my second job. I worked at an institute 2 years before that.

Q: (laughing) You are so young, and you have had many jobs.

A: (laughing) Only two.

Q: Why did you leave the institute?

A: After my Doctorate graduation, I found work in the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, because it is an authorized institute in China in that research field. However, after 2 years I found I could not develop anymore there; every day I just repeated the same thing: tasks such as researching the weather and writing reports. It was not my dream and I hoped I could find new projects in the lab.

Q: Well, it is not easy to work there. What a pity to leave there!

A: I did not want to do the same thing like a robot for the next 30 years. I wanted to be a university teacher, because I could always learn new branches in physics and gain new knowledge. At the same time, there were more chances to study than Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, because there were more exchanges among different universities, different cities and different countries. The leader in the department hoped that the teachers could always study more and could attain a greater understanding.

Q: You like challenges?

A: Eh, (thinking it over) maybe yes. But in fact, there are more chances to go on studying in the university. For example, I was sent to London University to do a post-Doctorate Object in 2007. I just came back this year.

Q: You ought to be a vice professor now.

A: Not yet. I will apply for it.

Q: You are doing fantastically well. Look, you are new here and you have already been given a chance to study as a post-Doctor abroad.

A: In fact, some of my female colleagues did not want to study in the other cities or abroad because they needed to care for their family and children. But I thought I have already studied so long in China and I needed new experiences in other countries. I also wanted to develop myself when I was young, (I am only 32 this year) so that I would not regret not taking that opportunity when I was older.

Q: Yes, we agree with you. Your discipline was Physics. When did you develop your love of science?

A: In the third year in the senior middle school I was one of the few girls in science class.

Q: Did your parents affect your choice?

A: No, they are workers in the same factory.

Q: How about your grade in school?

A: Not bad. I spent my primary and middle school period in my hometown. That is a small town in southeastern China. Because of my excellent grade, I could study in a key senior middle school outside of my hometown, which is the best key high school in the province.

Q: Did your parents want you to go to university later?

A: Oh yes. They considered my future and they thought it would give me more opportunities to study at university if I was in a key senior middle school than in the normal senior middle school.

Q: So you had to live in the school?

A: Yes, I began my independent life without the care of my parents. I would eat and live with my classmates in the senior middle school every day.

Q: Did they give you some money every month?

A: Yes, but you know as workers their wages were not very high. I knew the status of my family and understood my parents very well. Therefore, I saved money for

food and books. I didn't buy any new clothes during my time in senior middle school.

Q: So you studied very hard in your class?

A: I had to. My family was a normal family. The students from the families who were worse off than mine also studied very hard. Therefore, I had to study hard so that I wouldn't fall behind.

In addition, our living conditions were not good. We had no time to think about anything other than studying. Almost everyone wanted to go to university and change his or her lives. I was also one of them, and I used all of my time to study like the others.

Q: You studied science in your class. How about your grade in school?

A: My grade was always better than the others in my class–including boys. I do not know why. My teacher said maybe I have a talent for science. She also said to my parents that they did not need to worry about the scores of the NCEE because I would definitely go to university later. My parents were told they should save for the tuition fees.

Q: Your teacher was right. Where did you study for your Bachelor degree?

A: In southern China, and it was far away from my hometown.

Q: What did you study? Why did you want to choose this major in university?

A: I studied atmospheric physics. In fact I liked my discipline, but at the beginning of my study I did not know what it was; I only knew I liked physics and wanted to study at the university. However, at university I found there were many branches of physics.

Q: In the university, was there anybody who thought that you were or were not suitable for the subject you chose?

A: No. But the courses were not as easy as I had imagined. Sometimes I could not understand what the teachers said, even if I prepared carefully. I became shy at university due to my bad family background, so that I kept quiet instead of asking questions. In fact, I lost my interest in the second semester. But when my parents told me that they would support me until graduation no matter what– that they

would even sell their house or donate blood to the hospital in order to have enough money for my study– I felt reassured. I knew how much my parents wanted to encourage me and have me succeed. I appreciate what my parents did to support me. As a result, I recovered my confidence and motivation to study.

Q: Did your parents pay your tuition fee?

A: Yes.

Q: Your hometown was far away from the university, but would you go back every semester?

A: No, I wanted to reduce the economic pressure on my parents, so I only went home once a year.

Q: Did your parents agree with you?

A: Yes. Actually, in the four years in the university, I learned to make decisions by myself. And I always told them everything was good so that they would not worry about me. You know, in my school time I liked to tell my mother everything, such as what happened in the school every month. My mother would help me wash my clothes at home, and my father would cook some delicious food for me. Sometimes, I also took food back to school. You know, I was envious of some of the students who came from this city. They were able to go home every weekend. I was very lonely on the weekends when they went home.

Q: How many roommates were there in the dormitory?

A: At that time, eight students shared one room, and only three of us came from other cities, including me. One of the other two went to her boyfriend’s home on the weekend. He was born in that city. The other girl was in the higher class so she was used to the city and spent her time working on the weekend.

Q: So you took more time to study?

A: Yes, especially on the weekend. Actually, I just stayed in the room on the weekends. I was alone and every weekend I would stay in the library until ten o'clock. I was jealous of the students from this city, especially when I saw them coming back with clean clothes and delicious food.

Q: What did you do besides studying?

A: I worked. In fact, in the second year at the university I decided to work. On one hand, I could do some practices; on the other hand, I wanted to send some money to my family so that my parents could have a better life. At the same time, I would not feel so lonely on the weekends.

Q: What kind of work did you do?

A: Well, I worked as a family teacher after class and on the weekends.

Q: Was it enough to support your life?

A: From the second year on, I did not need money from my parents anymore.

Q: Did you choose to work or do a Master's degree after graduation? Why?

A: To tell you the truth, I had no plans to work after my graduation. My aim after my Bachelor was to go on to do a Master's degree, and my good grade helped me make this happen.

Q: How about your classmates, what did they do?

A: They had different ideas. One of them who came from this city found a job in a hotel through her parents and relatives. Another got married to her boyfriend in the city and went on to work at a school there. The girl who was older than me went to another city to work. I was the only one to go on studying in the dormitory and I was also the best student in my class. I was permitted to enter my Master's programme without an extra exam in the same university. I was very lucky, because the entrance exam was difficult, and there was tough competition for the places. Avoiding taking the exam saved me more time and I could work as a family teacher instead of preparing for it. This meant I could earn more money for my next study period.

Q: What did your parents think about your decision?

A: They supported me. They missed me and hoped that I could go home and visit them after my Bachelor's graduation and before the start of the Master's, but I needed to earn money. That would allow me to do something I always wanted, and I planned to take a tour of other cities with the money I had earned. As a matter of fact, I missed my parents and wanted to go home, but I could not afford to waste any time and needed to earn as much money as possible. In the end I

decided to go home, but I needed to reduce the time I spent at home. I stayed at home only one month instead of the three months that my mother had hoped.

Q: Where did you do your Master's degree?

A: I studied for my Master's in the same city and the same university. It was easy for me to adjust; otherwise I would have needed time to adapt to my new surroundings.

Q: Is there any difference between your Bachelor and Master time period?

A: I had no special feeling in this period and my life was similar to my Bachelor period of study and work. Maybe the only difference was that I as a Master student could get some money from the government every month. Although it was not much, it was better than nothing. I had more savings in this period.

Q: That means your university paid your tuition, right?

A: Yes.

Q: Did you have classmates during your Master's study?

A: Yes.

Q: What was the proportion of male students to female students? Was there any difference between female and male students?

A: My supervisor had only 10 students, including 7 males and 3 females.

We had a meeting once a week to talk about our papers or discuss our topics. I thought both girls and boys in the group would like to do something together.

Q: In which field did you take more time: studying, working or practising?

A: As I said before, this period was a repetition of my Bachelor period, so study and work.

Q: Did you decide to work or do a Doctorate degree after graduation? Why?

A: Yes, after I did my Master's degree in 3 years, I decided to study for a Doctorate degree. I liked studying my discipline intensively.

Q: Did your parents agree with your decision?

A: Maybe because I left my parents very young, I was used to making decisions by myself first and then told them my idea. Normally, my parents would not go against me. It happened again when I told them that I would go on studying for a

Doctorate, because they believed their daughter could make the right decisions. They knew I am always excellent and they didn't need to worry about my study; to agree with my decision was enough for them.

Q: Where did you study for your Doctorate? Was it in the same university?

A: No. This time I studied in Beijing.

Q: Who paid the tuition fees this time?

A: I didn't have to pay anything. As a Doctorate student, I had a wage every month. Although it was not very high, it was enough.

Q: Were you busy during your Doctorate study?

A: Yes, very busy. I did not have very much free time every day. I was always busy with my experiments. Sometimes I forgot to comb my hair in the morning. This was the reason why I was always with short hair as a student. As a matter of fact, I envied the female Doctorate students of art at the university, because they had time to wear make up and always dressed beautifully. They also had much more spare time and would always finish before me.

Q: What did you spend most of your time doing: studying, working or practising?

A: Studying and working.

Q: Did you share one room with your classmates as well?

A: No. I lived with my husband.

Q: Oh, you're married?

A: Yes.

Q: Where?

A: In Beijing.

Q: Was your husband one of your classmates?

A: No, he worked in the same university as technical support in the computer department with a Bachelor degree.

Q: OK. Actually, we thought you were still single.

A: I had already left my parents for 12 years. I lived independently since I was 16. Nevertheless, I also needed someone who cared for me, and my husband was the one I waited for. And he is 5 years younger than me.

Q: It sounds unusual for China. I mean, his educational degree was lower than yours and he is 5 years younger than you. Were your parents happy with you?

A: At the beginning they did not agree, but I did not care what they thought. I believed my happiness and future should be my decision and nobody could change my mind. No matter what happens in the future– fights or divorce– it is my decision. I did not mind that my husband's degree was lower than mine, or that he was younger than me. Our marriage does go against some Chinese traditions.

Q: We think you are independent and you have your own ideas about life.

A: Yes, I do. I am happy now with him and I also need him. In fact, I knew my parents were very conservative; I told them after the ceremony. At the beginning they were angry due to my husband's low academic degree or perhaps the age. But finally they thought the happiness was the important thing for their daughter, so long as my husband loved me and treated me well.

Q: Did you still live in the dormitory after marriage?

A: No. My husband worked for a few years, and as a Doctoral student I had a wage so we could afford a small apartment near the university.

Q: You said you were busy at that time, but who cared for the family?

A: My husband knew I worked very hard in order for me to do something by myself. Thus, he did all of the house work. I went to the lab at nine o'clock in the morning and my husband was ready with breakfast on the table for me. He left at eight, and we would have lunch in the university. When I arrived at home after work, he had already put the dinner on the table for me. I felt like the house was a hotel for me to sleep in, and my husband was my babysitter who cared for me. I feel very happy and thankful for all he has done. I think it proved that my marriage is right.

In fact, I had no interest in cooking, because firstly I was busy and had no time to cook, and secondly I was not interested in cooking. I prefer to eat in the cafeteria or at a restaurant. I did not like to do the same things that most women did. For instance, most of my female classmates liked literature in school; I preferred science. Most of the women liked cooking and caring for their families; I

preferred researching.

Q: Your husband is nice.

A: (smiling) Yes he is.

Q: Did your parents visit you often?

A: Well, my parents visited me one time after my wedding. My mother cried and said to me that I looked like I was 35 years old, even though I was just 28 at that time. And my mother did not understand why her daughter was always with short hair that was not combed. She also did not understand why my husband loved me as I could neither cook nor do the housework. My mother was very sad for my husband, but not for me. (laugh)

Q: (laugh) Your mother is so lovely.

A: Actually, I like long hair, make up and summer skirts but it was not convenient in the lab. You know, if I could choose again, I would study art and dress beautifully in order to find a boyfriend in my Bachelor period. (laugh) I did not like the busy life in my Doctor period; there was only the lab and my academic thesis in my boring life. If my husband was not beside me, I do not know how I could have finished my study.

Q: When did you begin your job?

A: After graduating, I started work straight away. My work is always busy like before and I still have no more time to care for my family. I don't have a child yet, but I would love to have one. You know, I am only a lecturer now. I think I am like a machine with full battery and I cannot stop.

Q: Does your husband understand you?

A: He understands me and cares for me like before. He knows I have no time now and agrees to wait a few years to have a baby, because we still have time.

Q: Does your family support your career? Is your husband satisfied with your life status now?

A: Yes they do. Oh, my husband is satisfied with his job and there is no need for him to do a Master's because his job needs only skill but not a degree. He told me that he had no pressure at work. But you know, as a female I would prefer that I had a

Bachelor's degree and he had a Doctorate and our roles were reversed.

Q: Do you regret studying for your Doctorate?

A: Well…if I could choose again, I would prefer to work after my Bachelor degree and have a child straight away. Well, life is like a wall: people always think the other side is better than their side. My classmates and friends in my hometown are like that. They admire me very much for doing my Doctorate and having a good job in Beijing. However, I also admire them for having children even though they have no high educational degrees and only have small wages.

Q: Ok, let us ask you some questions about your department. Are there more male teachers than females in your department?

A: Most of my colleagues are males.

Q: Do you know who cares for their families? Your colleagues or their wives?

A: I think their wives care for their family and children.

Q: Are there many teachers with Doctorate degrees?

A: Most of them hold Doctorate degrees. Our leader has a Doctorate degree. Some of my female colleagues are the secretaries for the staff in the department. They hold only a Master's or Bachelor's degree.

Q: Can you tell us some differences between male and female teachers at work?

A: The fact is that all male teachers pay all of their attention to work. On the contrary, most female teachers take time off for their family. That might explain why there are more male teachers than female teachers. Of course, I would prefer to do research than housework.

Q: You are so lucky you have a good husband. I hope you can have a baby quickly.

A: Thanks.

Q: Thanks for the interview.

A: No problem.

Male interviewees

7. MG

Q: Hello MG.

A: Hello, you two.

Q: We think we have seen you some years ago when we studied in this university.

A: Maybe, I have already worked here many years. Have I taught you?

Q: No, you haven't, but we know you.

A: (smile) Oh, I live in the dormitory in the teacher's dormitory, so you can always see me.

Q: Maybe. Can we begin our interview?

A: Of course.

Q: Were you interested in your major in middle school?

A: When I was in middle school, I was interested in foreign languages, especially English.

Q: Is there anybody in your family who studies the same major?

A: I was influenced by my mother, because she taught me in the middle school as an English teacher.

Q: How about your grade in school?

A: I was not good at any subjects; however, my grade in English was the best in the class. My classmates always said that my mother taught me at home as well. But in fact, she has never helped me at home in terms of English because she was busy doing housework and taking care my little brother, little sister and grandparents.

Q: Why was your English good?

A: I was afraid that my mother might criticize me if I had a bad score in English; therefore I had to study English very hard. But I also liked sports. You know, I was born in northern China and I was always taller than the others my age. The sports teacher always liked to train the taller students and let them take part in the sports competitions to win prizes for the school. So I was always trained after class in the school, because I could escape from my class for a while. I liked being trained very much.

Q: Why?

A: Because I could play with other students on the sports team after class, and my

mother would not criticize me for that reason. It was the most important thing for me to play, but not learn, at that time. My mother also hoped that I would be trained in the school, firstly because she as a teacher and my father as an officer were very busy at work. They hoped that somebody could look after me and that I would not play outside with strangers and learn bad habits. If I were trained in school, the sports teacher could help them to take care of me. Secondly, my mother thought I could take some exercises and keep healthy. Thirdly, if I could win some prizes for the school, I could be evaluated as school student with sports talent and could have added points to my scores in all kinds of graduation exams, like the graduation exam of primary school, junior school, high school or the NCEE.

Q: Did the girls have better grades than the boys in your class?

A: Yes. Generally, girls always had better grades than boys– in Chinese, history, mathematics, physics and chemistry.

Q: Did you attend any contests of the major you choose in middle school?

A: No, I hadn't, but I had already won some prizes in some sport competitions in my school.

Q: What was your expectation about your future in middle school?

A: I never thought that being a university teacher would be my career later. My expectation about my future job was to be a solider or an athlete.

Q: Why did you go to university?

A: I was not such a student with good notes in my class, and my parents always hoped that I could be educated until university because they had many expectations for me. I did not think about going to work after junior middle school like most of my classmates. In fact, I wanted to continue my high school learning in the same school, but my scores on the entrance exam to the high school were not good enough to go to the same school. However, because I won some sports prizes for the middle school, I was permitted to learn there as a student with talent.

Q: You were so lucky.

A: No, I was not lucky. You are lucky because you were not influenced by the

political movement.

Q: What do you mean?

A: There was a political movement during this period. Many schools were closed. It was not important to go to school at that time, and I do not want to talk about that period anymore. You know, my mother had to teach me English at home and she also asked her other colleagues to teach me other subjects. As a result, my English was always good. I also never wasted time in that special period, but always learned in my spare time. In fact, I thanked my mother very much. If she did not insist that I went on learning, I would have wasted all of my spare time playing like my other classmates in school. I thought it was my mother's strong will that I should never give up learning in order to change my life.

Q: When did you take part in the NCEE?

A: I took part in the National College Entrance Exam in 1979, the third year after its restoration in 1977. There was a total of more than 4,68 million students participating in the exam at that time. I thought I was very lucky to be permitted to go to the university because the entry rate was only 6.1% during that year.

Q: How can you remember that so clearly?

A: I cannot forget that year.

Q: You were really lucky. Was your mother happy?

A: When I received the acceptance letter from the university, I cried, but my mother did not. She only said to me that I must persist in studying even after graduation and try to be a person with a high educational level. So I made up my mind to get some success in the future and thanked my mother. I studied very hard in university, and was chosen as the best graduate in my class.

Q: What did you choose to study in university?

A: Actually I chose English as my profession. On the one hand, I liked it; on the other side, I anticipated that I could find a good job with my language skills in the future. After the Cultural Revolution, China began to communicate with the world, and foreign languages would be useful tools.

Q: What was the proportion of male to female students in your major?

A: I remembered more female students than males chose foreign language as their discipline when I studied at university.

Q: Which course did you think was the most interesting course, and the most uninteresting course?

A: During my time in university, some courses that I liked included oral English and listening comprehension because I liked to communicate with people, and I could practise my English in the oral course. I liked the listening comprehension course because I could watch some original English-language movies. Not every university had as many original movies as my university at that time. Black-and-white television was even a luxury for some families, and radio was more popular than recorder.

Q: Who paid the tuition fees?

A: In the 1980s people didn't have to pay tuition fees for the university.

Q: Did you have a part-time job?

A: You know, during my college period there was no part-time job to do for the university students. They were not the same as the students now, who have beautiful clothes, colourful spare time, and various part-times job such as private teacher, tour guide or salesman. But the life of the students in my time was not very colourful. We did not think about clothes or making friends, and there wasn't so much entertainment for the young people like cinema, disco and Internet. At that time, nobody knew what a part-time job was; we only knew that after graduation we would work the whole day until retirement like our parents.

I remember I worked in my spare time to help the professor translate some materials, so that I could learn more knowledge and also afford some parts of my living expenses; my family afforded the other parts. But it was not very easy to get the chance to work with a professor. Because my grade was good and I was a leader in the class, I got the chance to help the professor.

Q: We think the students at that time were very simple.

A: I would say the students at that time were a little bit foolish and conservative. They did not talk about money or which job was comfortable, but they talked about how

they could make a contribution to the country. Some young people voluntarily worked in the small cities or the poor areas in China so that they could realize their value and make some good changes for the poor and undeveloped areas. On the contrary, the young students now like to live in the big cities and expect to have relaxed work with high wages. They are selfish and they think about only themselves, and they see fortune as the most important thing in their lives.

Q: There are so many differences between the students now and those in the past.

A: Yes, the young people in the past were very stable. They could endure hardships and were able to do hard work. On the contrary, the young people now could not overcome any troubles whatsoever in their lives or at work.

Q: Can you give us some reasons for that?

A: All of us cherished the opportunity to study in the university very much. We knew it was not so easy for us to get the chance at that time. We had already wasted lots of time during the Cultural Revolution, and we had to pick up the knowledge again that we had lost. We wanted to help and change the country through our knowledge and by our hands.

Q: Had you changed your expectations about your career during the period in university?

A: At the beginning of my life in university, I anticipated that I could find a good job with my language skills in the future, for after the Cultural Revolution, China began to communicate with the world and foreign languages would be helpful for it. Some years later, it was proved that I was right.

Q: Did you choose to work or to achieve a Master's degree after graduation?

A: After my Bachelor graduation, I was sent by the government to England to continue my Master's study.

Q: Did you continue studying the same major in your Master's study?

A: Yes.

Q: Who paid the tuition fees for your Master's study?

A: The government. Because the university chose me, I didn't need to pay anything. Still, I worked in my free time.

Q: Did you choose to work or to achieve a Doctorate degree after graduation?

A: After my Master's study, I went directly back to China and came back to my alma mater to become a young university lecturer. It was not popular for the teachers with Master's degrees, especially those with a background abroad at that time. Therefore I was quickly promoted to vice professor.

Q: Is what you teach the same as what you studied?

A: Yes.

Q: Did you continue to study during your work?

A: Until some years ago, I had not planned to achieve a Doctorate degree, for I always devoted myself to my work and to my students.

Q: What was your motivation to achieve a Doctorate degree?

A: However, these days, more and more young teachers with Master's and Doctorate degrees become university teachers. It seemed like a pressure on me, and I thought that as a leader of the department I must be the best in both work and educational degree.

Q: Was your major the same as it was during your Master's study?

A: Yes.

Q: Did you achieve your Doctorate degree in China or abroad?

A: I achieved my Doctorate degree in America.

Q: Who paid the tuition fees for studying to be a Doctor?

A: University.

Q: What was the proportion of male students to female students?

A: No matter in Chinese or foreign universities in my time, the proportion of female students was always higher than males.

Q: Are there differences between Chinese students and foreign students?

A: The female students abroad liked to discuss with their classmates or professors, whereas Chinese female students then were shyer and preferred to study by themselves. At first, I was also a little bit shy because I could not wholly understand what the professor or classmates said. But after a few weeks, I joined my classmates to discuss the topics in order to finish my homework, because

sometimes I had to do it with my classmates. I liked this kind of way to study.

Q: Had you changed your expectations about your career while achieving the Doctorate degree?

A: Sort of. In fact, my expectation about my future occupation after university was to become a translator, and my job now as a university teacher somehow fulfilled this dream, for I translated some English books into Chinese.

Q: Did you choose to work after graduation? Why?

A: I thought I was not as young as the other students in the university. I felt much more pressure and I wanted to finish my study quickly and then go back to work, even though I had a scholarship. I also missed my wife and daughter when I studied in America. I flew to China to visit them when I handed in my Doctoral thesis.

Q: Have you changed your job?

A: No. I was already a vice professor before I went to America to study for my Doctorate degree. Five years later when I achieved my Doctorate degree, I published many books and papers, and became a professor and the supervisor of the Master students.

Q: What do you think about the important conditions for the promotion?

A: I think academic degree and relationship with colleagues are very important. Because of my good relationships and excellent academic skills, I became the vice leader of the department when I was vice professor.

Q: Does your family support your career?

A: Of course yes.

Q: Tell us something about your marriage and your wife.

A: OK. Because I was busy with my career and study, I married very late– at about 35 years old. My daughter was born when I was around 40 years old. You know, I lived in the university before marriage. When I was over 30 years old, my mother worried about me and persuaded me to find a girlfriend after my little brother and little sister were married and already had children. But I had never worried about myself. I knew I would find a very good wife if I was excellent. It was very

helpful for me to work hard in my life, because I met my wife at work. My wife was an editor of a magazine, and I always published some papers in this magazine. We married quickly, some months after we met each other.

Q: Who cared for the family after marriage?

A: My wife and I are both the type who cares for the career more than for the family. Therefore, we did not want to have a baby immediately after marriage. We lived in an apartment on the campus after marriage. It was very lucky that there was only one room, so we didn't have to do much housework. We used to eat in the cafeteria in the university every day, and every week my wife would wash the dirty clothes in the laundry.

Maybe you think I am too funny. Everyone wants to live in a big room, but I like a small room.

Q: Yes, a little bit. Why?

A: Because it was easy to clean. Everyone likes to put more furniture at home so that it looks warm and comfortable. But in my room there was only a bed, one table and one closet because I had no time to buy furniture.

Q: Did your wife like this life?

A: My wife is very nice; otherwise she would be angry about my actions.

Q: Do you still live in one room with your wife and daughter now?

A: When my daughter was born, I changed my mind. I thought I must do something for my daughter, such as to move to a big apartment and decorate my home so that it looks more warm and comfortable.

Q: Who cares for your daughter? You or your wife?

A: I had already made a good base in my young period. I had some savings, and so I was capable to do such things for my daughter. However, I had little time to take care of her because of my work. My wife also spent much time for her work, so we had to hire a babysitter for our daughter. In fact, I don't believe in having a stranger care for my daughter. As a result, I found a relative from my hometown to come to Beijing to help my wife care for the family and my daughter. This relative lived with us, and every month we would pay her and every year we would buy

the ticket for her to go home. Sometimes we would buy some new clothes for her. You know, it was not cheaper to employ my relative rather than the babysitter. I had to buy tickets, gifts, and clothes for her. But she was my relative after all, and I thought it was much safer than hiring a stranger as a babysitter.

Q: You said you studied for your Bachelor's in China, finished your Master's in England and achieved your Doctorate degree in America. What do you think is the difference between studying in China and abroad?

A: In my work, I think my overseas experience is helpful. My British teachers influenced me in terms of teaching technique and teaching style. For example, normally in Chinese class– whether in schools or universities– there was a lack of communication between the teachers and students before. It might be an effect of the traditional concept of education. That is, what the teacher said is right, students should obey them absolutely, and the students are used to doing it. However, it may restrict the students' thinking– especially in universities– because they cannot have creative ideas. Therefore, I always list some topics at the end of the seminar, encouraging my students to find materials about the topics by themselves instead of just listening and writing in the seminar. Or, in other words, I tried to change my students' old behaviours. As a result, the students in my class have better abilities in terms of reading and understanding. Besides this technique, I encourage my students to do presentations in class so that they can practise their English and have much more self-confidence.

Q: Do you like your work at present?

A: I love my job as a university teacher and professor. I am willing to be together with students forever because they are active and creative. I would be forever young with them. At the same time, you know the world develops very quickly. At anytime I have to learn something new, such as computer or Internet knowledge, so that I could know what my students like to do. And it may sometimes make me think about new topics for my seminar.

Q: Do you have part-time jobs besides your career?

A: No.

Q: What do you do for leisure?

A: I like to listen to European and American music and watch the original films. I thought I need to find some new topics for my students, and at first I did these all for my students, but later they became my hobbies. My wife said to me that I was old, but my heart was young. There is a Chinese saying: “the face reflects the heart”. What do you think? How old am I?

Q: You have already said you had a baby when you were 40 years old, so you are over 40 years old. But you look younger than your age.

A: Some people said so. If you want to be young forever, I suggest you become a teacher after graduation and keep the heart young forever like me.

Q: We will think about it. Are you satisfied with your life now?

A: Well, you know, there are different kinds of people in work. One type thinks career is the most important. These people want to develop their career and to be the best in their work, and they do not care to be a leader or have a high status; they mention only their value. The second type thinks the professional title is more important than the work. This type pays more attention to achieving their professional titles and pursues to be promoted. The other type consists of those who are always satisfied with life. This kind of people has no big ambition. They care for their family more than their work. They think finding a stable job and having a peaceful family are important. They are willing to have a simple life until retirement, and they are not interested in being promoted or continuing to study.

I think I belong to the first type of people. I do not care about which professional title I have, and I like to study in order to be the best of my department. Certainly, I love my wife and daughter, but I could not give up my work to care for the family. I do not expect to be a perfect leader, and I want to use more time to read and learn more new knowledge.

Q: If you have to face some problems– whether at work or in your life– how can you solve them? Is there anybody who can help you?

A: I remember that in order to be promoted as professor, some preconditions have to be fulfilled. One of the most difficult conditions for me was the second foreign

language, and this was a very important element for the promotion in a foreign language institute. I chose to learn Japanese, for I thought there were many Chinese characters in it and I might know the meaning without understanding the words. Nevertheless, it was not as I had expected. At last, I had to take part in a Japanese course in my spare time to pass the exam. Of course, my wife can help me find solutions when I have trouble in my life.

Q: What is the proportion of male to female teachers?

A: I can't say it accurately. In our institute, female teachers are the majority.

Q: What is the proportion of male to female leaders in your department?

A: Among 5 leaders, there are 3 men and 2 women.

Q: Can you feel the differences at work between men and women?

A: Maybe because there are too many female teachers, the male teachers might have some advantages, for "the rarer, the precious". The male teachers in the university are always thought of highly by the leaders. For instance, I do not care about whether or not I am promoted; I just pay more attention to my study. And my leader often mentioned to me that I should do something for my professional title or for promotion. Some years ago, I thought that work, relationships with colleagues and promotion had nothing to do with each other. But now I, as a leader, think I have to handle them well; otherwise I would be in trouble.

Q: Are there any differences between before and after you became a leader?

A: As a matter of fact, whether a lecturer, a professor or a leader: studying and researching are the foundations in work. People should not be evaluated by the professional title or high social status. Although I am a professor and a leader of the department, I am still a teacher and I have to teach the students at least two courses every semester so that I can always refresh my knowledge. Because there is no end to learning new knowledge.

Q: Is there discrimination against women?

A: I don't think so. My female colleagues have the same chances to be promoted and sometimes work under pressure like the male teachers. Their incomes are the same as their male colleagues; hence, I don't think there are discriminations. In

fact, I support the female teachers to study in China or to be sent abroad for advanced study. It is good not only for them, but also for their students. My mother is a good example: As a schoolteacher, my mother was sent to study in New Zealand as a visiting teacher for half a year, and she brought some new methods and experiences in terms of teaching school students back to her school. I hope that all the females are not only the best mothers and wives in their family, but also the best teachers.

Q: How can you handle the relationship between family and career?

A: I try to spend more time with my family. I do not have a part-time job like other teachers in the department. I think career and family should not be mixed up, and there is no end to earning money. I need to have a high quality of teaching, as well as a high quality of life.

I enjoy the life in my work with the students and colleagues and in the family with my wife and daughter. Actually, I think I am a good teacher at the university and a responsible husband and dad at home. I can handle the relationships very well. I love my work and life. I also miss my childhood and, if I had a second life, I would want to be a good teacher like my mother.

Q: OK, that's all. Thanks for coming.

A: You are welcome.

8. MH

Q: Hello, MH, nice to meet you.

A: Hello, you two. Nice to meet you, too.

Q: Did you receive our Email?

A: You mean the questionnaire? Yes, I have already seen it.

Q: Oh, that's good. Can we begin now?

A: OK, let's begin.

Q: Were you interested in your major in middle school?

A: Actually, I was interested in drawing when I was a boy.

Q: Could you tell us why?

A: I was somehow influenced by my painting teacher in school, because he drew very well– with both pencil sketch and watercolour. And at that time my painting teacher wore very popular clothes, such as jeans and colourful T-shirts with long hair. I admired him very much and wanted to be such a man later.

Q: Is there anybody in your family who studied the same major?

A: No. My father is an engineer and my mother is a worker. So there is nobody who works as artist in my family, including my parents, relatives and friends.

Q: Did your parents support your hobby to draw?

A: My parents found my talent and tried to cultivate me consciously. They sent me to some painting classes and bought me some painting books. And they brought me to galleries when they had time, although the tickets were not cheap and their salaries were not high. Therefore, I appreciate what my parents had done for me until today; otherwise, I could not be as successful as today.

Q: Do you have other sisters or brothers?

A: No, I am the only child in my family.

Q: Have you attended any contests of the major you choose in middle school?

A: Yes, I participated in many painting competitions and received some prizes when I was in primary school. So, it encouraged me at that time to be an artist in this lifetime.

Q: What was your expectation about your future in middle school?

A: My expectation in middle school about my future career was to become a scientist, not a painter, since I thought a scientist creates something new every day. The painter, however, sometimes draws something that already exists. Such an idea influenced my discipline in university later. You know, I liked to break all of my toys or electronics– such as small model planes or cars, or even the clock– and then I tried to repair them again. I was successful except for one model car; my parents had to buy a new one. Once, I wanted to break the most expensive TV in my family. My father was very angry and hit me, because at that time, like lots of families, my family was not rich. My parents saved for 2 or 3 years in order to buy the TV. It was a luxury object in our family.

Q: Did your parents support your hobby?

A: My father thought that I had inherited his hobby, because he is an engineer. Therefore, he hoped I could also be an engineer. After that, he taught me to repair the bike. I had interest in it at first (laugh). You know, I repaired all of the bikes for my neighbours during one semester holiday.

Q: Really?

A: Yes. I was a child at that time after all, so I quickly became bored with repairing things and found my new hobby: painting.

Q: What did you study in university?

A: Art.

Q: Why did you want to choose this major in university?

A: It is my hobby and I wanted to study something I liked in the university.

Q: Did your parents agree with your choice?

A: In my childhood, my father thought painting was only my hobby and I always had no patience to do something; maybe I would give up painting soon and find another new hobby. As the parents, they also did not expect that I would study art in the university. They did not know what could I do after graduation. In their opinion, if a student studied medicine, he would be a doctor; if he studied law, he would be a lawyer after graduation. If I studied art, maybe the best way would be to become a schoolteacher. But to be a schoolteacher means low wage and low social status. So my parents didn't hope that I went on learning to paint. They were afraid that I would draw for someone on the street later or I would sell my paintings to make a living.

Q: We think your parents are conservative.

A: Yes, so when I told them I wanted to apply to the art department in my form that would be filled before the NCEE in the last year in the high school, my parents disagreed.

Q: Why did they support you to study art later?

A: My teacher explained my thinking to my parents, firstly, about my future career. If I studied art in the university, I could be a designer in a building company or an art

teacher in middle school. Secondly, my notes in Math, Chinese and English were not good. If I would apply for other subjects, maybe I could not pass the high education entrance exam and could not study in the university. If I applied for the art subject, my special skills would help me to pass the exam, because the level of painting would be more significant than the scores.

Q: Did your parents agree with you to study art finally?

A: Yes, finally they agreed, but the precondition was to apply to the Normal University.

Q: Why?

A: They thought to be a teacher was better than working in the company, because in their opinion, being a teacher was a more stable job than being an employee in a company.

Q: What did you think?

A: I had to agree with the suggestion in order to study painting in the university.

Q: Where did you study?

A: In my hometown in northern China.

Q: Did you have any different ideas about your major in university?

A: No, I had my own idea. I always thought drawing and art were not only my hobbies but also my dreams. I wanted to create some new objects for the people, and so I became an artist.

Q: How about your classmates?

A: Because it is a Normal University, there were more girls than boys, and most of the students in my class would be schoolteachers in the future. They thought drawing was not their hobby, but their future career. I did not understand why my classmates had no great ideal and goal; all they wanted was to become a painting teacher in school.

Q: That means that you didn’t want to be a teacher?

A: No, I had different ideas about the future than my classmates. And I liked to do some special things at that time, like design something or draw some special things.

However, I was still young at that time and always wanted to play instead of studying or creating something. I played football every day and often went to the cinema after class. I also liked to talk with my classmates; since most of them took part in painting classes when they were young, we could find some interesting topics together. At the same time, I could gain some inspiration from them.

Q: Did you change your expectations about your career during the period in university?

A: No, I believed I could make my dream true, because I knew I had such abilities.

Q: What did you do after graduation?

A: In the year that I graduated, the government did not assign jobs to graduates like before. That meant that the graduates had to find the jobs by themselves, and for excellent graduates, the university would recommend them to some schools. However, there were only a few such work places, and I was not an excellent graduate. Because my university is a Normal University, most students were distributed to middle schools after graduation. I should have found a job by myself, but one student who could have been assigned by the university gave up his opportunity, and therefore I got the chance to be a drawing teacher in a middle school.

However, as I said before, being a middle school teacher was not my hope and dream.

Q: What did your parents think?

A: My parents were very happy because their son graduated from the university with a Bachelor degree and my job as a teacher was stable. They were satisfied with all of my accomplishments.

Q: How did you do?

A: I told my parents that I did not want to work and I was not ready to work. I was willing to continue studying in western countries.

Q: Why did you choose to achieve a Master's degree after graduation? What was your motivation to achieve a Master's degree?

A: Because in the university, after class I often talked about my ideas with my teachers. One of them was my favourite teacher in the university; I admired him

very much due to his abilities and his style. I thought the teacher influenced my behaviours and ideas. I thought this teacher was the person who led me to study design in the university, because he opened my eyes and developed my thinking. You know, I might not have studied abroad if it weren't for him. My teacher studied design for 5 years in Japan, and some of his works won prizes in China. He thought I made the right choice to study art, because my ideas were always different to others. And that is important for a designer, for they have to create something new. At the same time, he encouraged me to go to study abroad in order to accept western concepts; it would make me have more inspiration for my work.

Q: But why in western countries?

A: Because design was created in America and it developed much more quickly in western countries. I wanted to study and find different kinds of art abroad.

Q: What were your parents' ideas about studying abroad?

A: My father was surprised when I talked with him about it because he thought painting was only my hobby in my childhood; he did not think that I had the idea to study it and that I looked it as my career in the future. My father thought it was good that I went on studying in order to make my dream true. He had only one child, and he expected that his child could have a better future. Although my parents' wages were not high, they gave me all of their savings to support me studying abroad.

Q: Where did you achieve your Master's degree?

A: In Germany.

Q: Why in Germany, but not America?

A: I considered the economic status of my family and myself, and I chose a German university because students didn't need to pay tuition in Germany.

Q: We have the same experience, so we know it is very difficult for us to study abroad.

A: Yes, you know I faced my problems and I had to solve them by myself.

Q: Can you speak German?

A: Well, I could not speak one German word when I arrived in Germany, and my

English was also not good. Hence, the beginning of my life in Germany was very hard, and I had to do everything by myself.

Q: Such as renting a room, is that correct?

A: Yes, you know, everything. The first thing for me was to find a room to live in and then I had to look for a language school to learn German. I was lucky to know some friends per Internet who could help me do such things.

Q: Oh, then you were lucky.

A: Yes, they helped me find a room, but I had to pay for it by myself. The living costs in Germany were more expensive than in China. Therefore I was very frugal and I had to learn do some cooking here, although I could not cook at home.

Q: Who paid the tuition fees for your Master's study?

A: In fact, the foreign students who are not enrolled in the university are not permitted to work. I had to use the money of my family.

Q: But when you are admitted to the university, then you can work.

A: Yes, but during the period when I was learning the language, I was not permitted to work. I am an adult man, and I did not feel good when I used the money from my parents. In addition, my family was not rich; my parents also needed money. I studied very hard at the language school so that I could go to university and work quickly.

And one year later I passed the entrance exam of German universities and was admitted by a university to study architecture in southern Germany, I was very satisfied and I thought I could make my dream come true quickly.

Q: Oh, that is good. You could begin to study architecture in Germany.

A: But you know, this university was small and the materials were not modern enough for my discipline. I was supposed to study in a large university. After studying there for one year, I decided to leave.

Q: But it is not easy to change the university for foreign students.

A: Yes, even though I had Bachelor degree in China and a recommendation letter from the professor of my university in Germany. After waiting for about 5 months, I was accepted by Bremen University in Germany to study design.

Q: What did you do during the five months?

A: I worked in some factories in order to earn some money for my study.

Q: And then you studied in Bremen?

A: Yes. And I liked the discipline in Bremen, for it was more interesting than architecture, and I decided not to move again and study hard to finish my Master's study. I also thought that I had already wasted one year to learn the language and one year in the first university; I had to spend all of my time to study.

Q: Were there some Chinese students in your class?

A: In that year, only three Chinese students passed the entrance exam of this German university. I was one of them, and until today I am proud of it.

Q: You could study in the university and you also could be permitted to work, so you did not need money from your parents.

A: Yes, but I had to spend extra money for my discipline, even though I did not pay tuition for the study. For instance, I had to buy some special papers and pens for some seminars. Sometimes the students had to go to other cities to collect inspiration, and we had to afford the costs by ourselves. I also needed a good camera to take photos. Even though my family could afford parts of my living costs, I had to work during the holidays in order to pay all of them and to make a living. If I could not earn enough money, I had to find part-time jobs besides my study. Working with Germans also helped me practice my language, for if I couldn't speak German well, I would not wholly understand what the teachers or classmates say in the seminars.

Q: In which field did you take more time: studying, working, practising…?

A: I liked travelling very much because I liked communicating with people from different regions, and I could find out some different features in terms of architectures or cultures. You know, there were only three parts in my life in Germany: studying, working and travelling.

Q: What is the proportion of male to female students?

A: In my class, there were 10 students: 5 boys and 5 girls. We were all active in and after class.

Q: Did you get any help for your Master's study?

A: We communicated with each other often so that we could learn something new from each other. Almost all of the professors in my department were nice. However, some of them were busy with their own projects and I could not find them sometimes– even during their office hours– which made me angry. I think the German teachers are independent and strong-willed.

Q: Did you choose to work or to achieve a Doctorate degree after graduation?

A: I chose to work and I found a job as a university teacher in China after achieving my Master's degree in Germany.

Q: Why?

A: I hoped to run my own studio later. Being a university teacher is not my ideal occupation; to be a designer was always my goal. However, there were too many competitors for one position in the job market– no matter in China or in other countries. At the same time, I wanted to find a job as soon as possible, because actually I took about half of the year to look for a job in Germany after graduation. I was not allowed due to my lack of work experience, and I didn't want to waste any more time. Occasionally this university needed some young teachers who have studied abroad, and then I made my decision to work in China. After working here for some months, I thought being a university teacher is not a bad job for me.

Q: Is there a difference between the teachers who have overseas experience and those who do not?

A: In a Chinese university, under the same circumstances, sometimes a teacher who has studied abroad has more advantages than those who graduated from Chinese universities. For example, when competing for a position, those from other countries are easily accepted. In my department, most of the teachers have studied abroad. Some were in the USA, some in England, and others in Germany. They are divided into three groups, and people in the same group often gather to go to a bar or have a picnic. People from other groups are not permitted to take part in these activities. I find this atmosphere interesting.

Q: Have you continued to study during your work?

A: No.

Q: Do you want to learn other subjects, such as foreign languages, computers or psychology in order to achieve a higher degree now?

A: Yes, I want to learn English.

Q: Why?

A: I think that foreign language is important for international communication. For example, one time, a German delegation visited my department, and I was the only one who could speak German. It was easier for me to understand what they were talking about rather than my colleagues who can only speak English. But what if there is a delegation from the USA? So, I want to learn English.

Q: Does your family support your career? Does your career influence their work, or is it reversed?

A: My family supports my career– especially my wife. She always helps me find modern designs, from materials or the Internet, which are helpful for my seminar. At the same time, my career influences my family as well. For example, my parents never noticed the design of products before, but now after finding something new, they will tell me and give me some advice on how to use them in my seminars. Not only from my family, but also from the students I can learn something, because they are young, they are active; they always have some new ideas. I would be forever young if I kept staying with my students.

Q: What does your wife do?

A: She studies abroad. I met her in practice at school after my Bachelor graduation. Both she and I practiced in the drawing department in the same school. I thought I was very lucky that I won the heart of the beauty, because there was so much competition for the girl. I planned to run a studio, and then I would be the boss and my wife would be my secretary. Until now, my wife has not finished her Master's degree abroad, so I must wait for her and then plan my studio. Now, I must visit my wife every year.

Q: Do you have part-time jobs besides your career?

A: Yes. In my spare time, I work in a company as an interior designer, for I think from the society I would touch the trends of fashion, and they are what a designer such as myself should know. At the same time, I could tell my students about it in seminars so that they can develop their ideas.

Q: Do you hold any professional title now?

A: I am only 33 years old and have worked in the university for 2 years, so now I am a lecturer. I hope I can be promoted to vice professor in the next two or three years. However, I have to fulfil some preconditions, such as how long I have worked, how many publications I have, and some private conditions such as the relationship between my colleagues and I and my educational level. But first of all, I have to be sure that my seminars are attractive for students; otherwise, if there isn't anybody in my class, I could not stay in the university and I would lose the job.

Q: Can you feel the differences at work between men and women?

A: Do you mean sexual discrimination in work? No, I have not seen it in my department; whereas I had some difficulties while I found practice, because most of the firms hoped to find female students.

Q: What is the proportion of male to female leaders?

A: There are a total of 5 leaders in my department: 4 of them are men; only one is a woman.

Q: What is the proportion of male to female teachers?

A: I have 11 male colleagues and 2 female colleagues.

Q: What is the academic degree among male teachers and female teachers?

A: Maybe 50% have Bachelor degrees, 45% have Master's degrees and 5% achieved Doctorate degrees. And one point is that almost all male teachers except one achieved a Master's or Doctorate degree. Nevertheless, most of the female teachers only have a Bachelor degree. In other words, the female teachers in my department normally have lower educational levels than my male colleagues.

Q: What do you think the reasons are?

A: I think one reason might be that few female students in this profession are

recruited each year, and after graduation from university they chose to stay in China to find a job instead of continuing to study abroad because China needs such people today. Another reason is that although there is no longer discrimination against women in Chinese society, lots of Chinese women still choose to take care of family more than career; thereby, they lose some chances to achieve a higher degree.

Q: How can you handle the relationship between family and career?

A: In my opinion, they are both important. I would not say there are any differences between them.

Q: If you and your wife have a chance to be promoted at the same time, who would take care of family?

A: (smile) My wife would support my career, because I know she is the traditional Chinese woman. She thinks the husband in a family would be more important than the wife. So I think she would give up her own career for me, because she has even wasted one year to help me find a job after I achieved my Master's degree. We plan to have a child in 2010, for we thought it would be better to have stability before we have a child.

Q: Thanks for coming.

A: You are welcome. If you have any questions you can call me later.

Q: Oh, thanks.

9. MI

Q: Hello MI. We are Hua and Jinsong.

A: Hello, you two.

Q: Can we begin the interview now?

A: Yes, let's begin.

Q: Can you explain how you developed your interest in your major?

A: I was interested in physics and chemistry since junior middle school. I remember in classes the teachers showed us some experiments, which I thought were

fantastic– especially some chemical reactions. From then on, I began to read books of some famous physicists and chemists and did some easy experiments myself by using the limited materials in my home.

Q: Is there anybody in your family who studied the same major?

A: No, my parents are university teachers in my hometown in southern China, but they don't teach chemistry or physics.

Q: How about your grade in school?

A: Because I liked physics and chemistry, I had the best results in the exams in physics and chemistry among my classmates.

Q: Have you attended any contests of the major you chose in middle school?

A: I was permitted to go to the Olympic School of Physics and Chemistry without attending the entrance exams; it was very odd. After junior middle school, I was sent to a key senior middle school due to my excellent results in the competitions.

Q: You were so perfect!

A: Thank you.

Q: What were your expectations about your future in middle school?

A: In middle school, I never thought what my future job would be. All I wanted was to have good scores, and the only goal was to go to a university in Beijing, for I thought the lower the educational degree, the easier to be eliminated by society.

Q: Why did you think so?

A: I can take the situation of peasants as an example. Until today, some of them have no chance to go to school. They just do farm work, they have no any welfare, no insurance, and they are poor; at the same time, they have to pay taxes to the government for the fields. Therefore, lots of them go to cities to find work in order to escape from poverty. But what if they could be educated? They might bring new technologies to the farm work, they might get much more income from their fields, they might become rich, and would be willing to stay in the countryside. I think that is why almost all parents in the countryside try their best to send their children to study in university– or at least to go to schools in cities. Because they realise that education could change the fortune of people.

Q: You think education could change fortune. So that was the reason why you went to university?

A: Yes. I think you can understand it, because we are the same age. Let us now look at the situation of workers in the state-owned factories. Their living conditions are better than peasants, because they at least receive the 9 years of compulsory education. They live in cities, have stable wages, and could get an apartment from the factories after working for some years. However, some of them became unemployed since the middle of 1990s because of the political reform. They could not find a new job quickly due to their low educational level. I have told you my parents are teachers. I remember when I was a boy; the parents of my neighbour were factory workers. My family was relatively poorer than my neighbours because at that time, factory workers could earn more than teachers– no matter schoolteachers or university teachers. I will not forget that my classmates went to school by bikes, but I had to go there by bus. Even though there were two bikes in my family, my parents needed them to go to work and they could not afford a third bike for me. You know, I liked sports but hated sports class very much in my childhood because my shoes were always one size bigger and I could not run quickly. The reason was that if my parents did not have to buy other sport shoes within 2 years, they could save some money. I knew my parents had no money and they had to save it to buy necessities. I understood them well. Nevertheless, from the 1990s on, the wages of my parents rose each year. On the one hand, people's value system changed. They realised that "science and technology are the primary productive forces", and teachers were much more respected than before. On the other hand, the government took education more seriously than ever. In contrast with them, because of the open-door policy and the introduction of new machines or technologies, some of the state-owned factories were shut down or they didn't need as many workers as before. Those who stayed could not get the same wages as before; hence, their living quality kept falling.

In short, I think to be highly educated is important, and that is why I made my decision to go to the university when I was still a middle school student. I thought

after graduation I could find a job with a high wage. I admit that I thought about my future very much when I was in middle school. Of course, my parents also hoped their only child could study in the university and have a good job in the future.

Q: Why did you want to choose this major in university?

A: I passed the NCEE with an excellent score. Therefore, I went to a key university that I wanted to go to and studied chemistry there in a big city in southern China. First of all, chemistry was the discipline I liked; second of all I thought to study science might help me find a job easily after graduation.

Q: In which field did you take more time: studying, working, practising…?

A: Actually, I spent almost all of my free time to do an internship. On the one hand, I could practise what I studied in the seminar; on the other hand, I could afford my living costs. At that time, I thought I should learn to be independent.

Q: Who paid the tuition fees?

A: From the internship I could get an income, so during the 4 years in university I could pay by myself.

Q: What was the proportion of male to female students? And were there differences between male and female students?

A: In my class in university male students played a dominant role, since few female students studied science. And male students had better results on the exams than their female counterparts, although sometimes the female students spent much more time studying. I think that might indicate that men have better logical thinking abilities than women.

Q: Did you have any different ideas about your major in university than when you were in middle school?

A: As I said, I chose chemistry as my discipline because I liked it. And another important point was I thought it might bring me a better life, and that is what everyone wants. Now in China, the middle class meets some difficulties as well. Even though their educational levels are higher than others, or they have stable income, teachers also belong to this class. You know, those people live better than

others like peasants or normal workers, but worse than businessmen or executives of some companies. The three main difficulties of the middle class include housing, healthcare and the education of their children. These days, there is no such welfare where employees can get an apartment from the unit where they work; they have to buy a house by themselves. But the price of a house is so high that they have to pay some money as a down payment and the rest in monthly instalments. And the houses are normally not small because they think a house is not only a place to live, but also a place where people enjoy their lives. Therefore, the bigger the house, the higher the prices, and it brings them new hidden pressures. To talk about healthcare, I think in today's China, to go to a hospital means a high cost. People have to pay much more than maybe 5 years ago. Even if they are members of an insurance company, they cannot be paid back all that they spend. At last, the education of children. There is only one child in today's Chinese family. Parents in each family hope their child will receive the best education. Therefore, they invest in tutoring or special classes such as foreign languages, dancing or musical instruments so that their children have one talent that others don't have, even though the costs are high. The tuition of university keeps rising each year, and the parents of middle class families have to work hard to afford it.

Q: You are right, these are the serious social problems in today's China. Do you have some suggestions?

A: Well, that is not my job; it's yours. (laugh)

Q: OK, we'll try to find some solutions. (laugh)

Did you change your expectations about your career during the period in university?

A: No. But now I think I might find another job with a high wage or do some business by myself so that I don't have to worry about money.

Q: Did you choose to work or to achieve a Master's degree after graduation?

A: I studied for a Master's.

Q: What was your motivation to achieve a Master's degree?

A: People always have ambitions. I was satisfied that I could study in university, and it could be seen as the first step to my successful life. And the second step was after graduation to find a job and to earn money. Actually, my parents said they could help me find a job in the city where they lived if I wanted to work there after achieving my Bachelor degree. The city is big in southern China, and my parents had many social connections there. Some of my classmates admired me to have such a good opportunity to work there. But at last, I decided to continue studying for my Master's degree, for my hope was to work and live in cities like Beijing or Shanghai, even though I had to do everything by myself. I always thought it was important to have a Bachelor degree from a key university, to choose a good discipline during the period of achieving a Master's degree, and to find a good supervisor when studying for a Doctorate degree, because these are useful and successful for a good future. I also thought that each person would meet many options in his life; only the right ones can be chosen. For me, I chose to study continuously. Although I could have found a good job in my hometown through my parents, I was not satisfied and wanted to do something independently.

Q: Did you continue studying the same major in your Master's study?

A: Yes.

Q: Did you achieve your Master's degree in China or abroad?

A: I stayed in the same university as where I got my Bachelor degree in China.

Q: Who paid the tuition fees for your Master's study?

A: Every month I could get allowance from my university, which was enough for life.

Q: In which field did you take more time: studying, working, practising…?

A: Actually, I had not much free time to work outside the campus. Almost everyday I had to do some experiments with the people in my group, and then we had to discuss and finish the paper together. Sometimes we needed to have some seminars for the undergraduate students if our supervisors were busy. I was very nervous at the beginning, because I had never done that before, to meet more than fifty people in a big classroom. Although I was tired at that time, I was happy with the fulfilling life; or in other words, I enjoyed the time.

Q: What was the proportion of male to female students?

A: In my group, there were a total of ten people: eight men and two women.

Q: Were there differences between male and female students?

A: I as a man was tired every day; for the two women it was even worse. They were often sick during that period; however, they insisted on coming every day. I thought they were very active. At last, these two women were recommended to work in the same institute of chemistry.

Q: Why were you so tired and busy in this period?

A: You know, I had to work hard and finish the part of the project for which I was responsible on time; otherwise, the other colleagues in the group would complain about the person who put off the speed of the plan, and the professor would not give the group a new part of the project. That meant that the graduation date would be put off. Nobody wanted to delay the date of the graduation because that would mean the time to earn much money and find a job would also be put off. At the same time, the whole group wanted to graduate as soon as possible; therefore, everyone in the group was diligent like a bee.

Q: Did you choose to work or achieve a Doctorate degree after graduation?

A: Achieve a Doctorate degree.

Q: What was your motivation to achieve a Doctorate degree?

A: I think I am a perfectionist, for I tried my best to do everything. Therefore, after finishing my Master's study with an excellent score, I was advised by my supervisor to achieve my Doctorate degree in Beijing. As a matter of fact, I had the same idea. Since some people in his group became competitors for one job, I thought that as a Doctor, I might have fewer competitors.

Q: Was your major the same as during your Master's study?

A: I changed my discipline from chemistry to a branch of physics that had a relationship to chemistry when I studied for my Doctorate degree.

Q: Why did you change it?

A: I considered this branch developed quickly and would bring me more economic benefits in the future, and I also expected a better life. Another reason was that I

could get more economic support from the institute where I studied if I chose this branch. I even could save some of the money.

Q: Who paid the tuition fees for studying for a Doctorate?

A: I got a scholarship.

Q: In which field did you take more time: studying, working, practising…?

A: I was very busy while studying for my Doctorate degree. I had to spend the whole day in the laboratory– sometimes until midnight– and there was no day off. I admired those who studied humanities very much, because they could study at home and had leisure time. I could tell you a story. At a time, one experiment was not finished and it had to be observed for 72 hours incessantly. My colleagues and I appointed that every one of us would observe it for 8 hours. That was in winter, and it was a very cold in winter in Beijing and nobody wanted to work at night. But we had to do it for the experiment. It was very hard for me as a man to get out of the warm bed to go to the lab– especially since it snowed at that time. I went there by bike at 1 o'clock in the morning, because there was no bus that went there directly. At that time, there was nobody on the street and it was also dark. My female colleagues told me they were afraid of the dark, but they had to do that like their male colleagues. I thought it might be one of the reasons why there were few women who studied this discipline; it was really hard work.

Q: But you have to overcome such difficulties.

A: Yes, because I have also gains. During my Doctorate period, I published some papers in some professional magazines and I built a very good relationship with my supervisor so that I might be recommended to work in some famous institutes. You know, it was very important in China. Without social connections, people could not do anything– especially in today's society. With too many competitors in the labour market, sometimes these social connections become a vital element. The relationship was more important than ability sometimes. However, that does not mean ability is not significant. Only when two capable persons fight for one job, the one who has better relationships with leaders or colleagues would be the winner.

Q: Did you choose to work after graduation?

A: After achieving my Doctorate degree, I worked as a post-Doctor in Italy. My supervisor in China is a friend of a professor who works in an Italian university, who is famous in this branch. If I could work for him, I would get valuable experience. Hence, I agreed with my supervisor and worked in Italy.

Q: Can you speak Italian?

A: No, we communicated in English.

Q: How about your work in Italy?

A: I worked as a project leader in Italy due to my excellent abilities in terms of researching and organizing. It was an important event for me, because it indicated that Chinese could also be a leader.

Q: Why did you come back to China?

A: Because I thought in China I would have broader spaces for further development in the field I researched. Of course, there were some of my colleagues who chose to stay in Italy to work. Well, different people have different opinions. Certainly, it also depends on some potential elements as well, such as family background, financial status, and so on.

Q: What do you mean?

A: I can give you some examples. If a student comes from a poor family, and his parents could not help him to find a job after achieving a degree in foreign country, it would be better for him to stay in the country to work. For his family, it might also be a good solution, because they would not have to worry about his life. At the same time, the student might help them in terms of sending back money. In contrast with that, if a student from a relatively rich family could find a good job through his parents, he would rather go back. I will give you another example. One of my professors in a Chinese university who studied in England 30 years ago was promoted to be the president of a key university in Beijing. At that time, only he gave up the work in England and came back to China at once after his Master's study, while some of his Chinese classmates found jobs as teachers in universities in England. Now most of them were still teachers in England, but none of them

could be promoted as the president. Hence, I mean that people should have a long view. I decided to go back to China at that time because I realised that with the quick development of economy, I would have a good future in China.

Q: Is a Doctor with a diploma from a foreign university better than those with a diploma from Chinese universities?

A: That must be expressed separately. At work, the one with a foreign diploma has better abilities than the one with a Chinese diploma, because in universities of foreign countries one can learn more than in Chinese universities, and his attitude towards the knowledge is more serious. However, if the one with a foreign diploma could not find a job, his advantages then could not be found out. How can he compete with the one who graduated from a Chinese university and has work experience? In my opinion, academic knowledge and work experience are both important.

Q: When did you begin to work?

A: After my post-Doctorate I became a university teacher in Beijing.

Q: Is what you teach the same as what you studied?

A: Yes.

Q: Do you like your work at present?

A: Yes. In my opinion, to be a university teacher was better than to be a researcher in a research institute. As a teacher, I could have a stable wage every month. In a research institute, however, one has to find or apply for projects by oneself; otherwise, one could not make a living. Furthermore, once there is a project, one has no time to do anything but the project; maybe he or she has to stay in the institute until midnight, if needed.

Q: Have you changed your job?

A: Maybe later. I have my own plan about my future. To be a university teacher is not the only career for me. I must work hard while I am young, and make more relationships with companies and other universities. After getting some experience in my area, I would run my own company, and then I could get more projects and earn more money. Now is the period to get experience, and university is the right

place for it. I am only a lecturer now, but I am ready to be vice professor. I have already applied and now I am sorting out the reference materials. Maybe next year I will be promoted in my professional title.

Q: Are you married?

A: Yes.

Q: Tell us something about your wife.

A: My wife is younger than me. We studied in the same university. When I studied for my Master's, she just began her Bachelor. In fact, my wife is a very normal girl.

Q: Sometimes you have to face some problems, whether at work or in your life. How can you solve them?

A: Of course, I had some difficulties in my life. At the beginning of my career, my wife and I lived separately. Nobody cared for my life, because she worked in another city, and every two months we met each other. After three years, she found a job in Beijing, and we lived together after all. However, you know I came from southern China, and my wife's home was in northern China. The weather is different, and we have different eating habits. Therefore, my wife was often ill when she came to Beijing. I had to go to the hospital to take care of her every day after work. (laugh) I could not sleep at times due to the exhaustion and pressure, but I kept doing it because I loved my family; I could do anything for us.

Q: Does your family support your career?

A: Actually, my wife still supports my career– especially with the housework. I eat at home directly after work because my wife has already cooked for me so that I have more time to take care of my students.

Q: Your wife is so good to you. She is so young. Does she like to care for you but not her career?

A: I am a traditional Chinese man. I think the male must be better than the female– whether in career, wage, academic degree and so on. But as the female, she tries her best to reduce the gap between her and males. For example, I am a post-Doctor, so my wife should be at least a Bachelor. I could accept that my wife earns less than me, but she must have her own career. I would not do any

housework, because I must earn money and I have no time. If my wife does not like to do it, I would employee a babysitter to do it. I think it is enough for my wife with a Master's degree, and she also has a job in Beijing now. So she only needs to care for the family and me, and I am in charge of earning money. I admit that I am selfish– not only for my wife, but also for my colleagues.

Q: You are only around thirty years old. How do you have this opinion?

A: As a matter of a fact, I come from a traditional Chinese family. My opinion of family is influenced by my father. He thought the role of the husband in a family must be more important than the wife. This means he must have a higher wage than his wife. He should take care of his career more than his family; otherwise, the husband would be looked down upon by his friends or neighbours, and even his wife. I have the same idea. I think the wife should pay more attention than men to the family– including housework and children– because this is the tradition in China.

Q: Do you have a child?

A: I do not like children, but I have to have one to become a father. I know it sounds a little extreme; however, that is my real opinion. I plan to have a child after working for at least 3 or 4 years. I think a man should have his career at first, and then the family. If a man has a baby at first, he might not be as active as before, because his thinking and values might be changed.

Q: Can you feel the differences at work between men and women?

A: I think there are some difficulties for female teachers, however I don't think there are discriminations. For instance, sometimes teachers of the physics department have to do some experiments in the laboratory. Some rays or gases might be harmful for women– especially the pregnant women– and therefore females are forbidden to do some experiments.

Q: What is the proportion of male to female leaders in your university?

A: In my department, male leaders are more than our female counterparts. The rate is about 3:1.

Q: What is the academic degree among male teachers and female teachers?

A: Generally, male leaders' academic degrees are higher than the female leaders' degrees. All male leaders have a Doctorate degree; female leaders have a Master's degree.

Q: What is the proportion of male to female teachers?

A: Among teachers and staff, 16 of them are female and 9 of them are male. Females play a dominant role in the department.

Q: Would you still go abroad to study if given the chance again?

A: Yes, because to be a human being, man has to learn from the outside world in order to be able to develop himself. I want to be the best in my area.

Q: Thanks for coming.

A: You are welcome.

Q: We hope you can make your dream come true quickly.

A: Thanks.

10. MJ

Q: Hello, MJ, nice to meet you.

A: Hello, nice to meet you, too.

Q: Thanks for coming today.

A: You are welcome. Your ages are as same as my children, so I'd like to help you.

Q: (smile) Yes, maybe we can call you uncle MJ, but not teacher MJ.

A: (smile) Ok, if you want to, you can.

Q: Can we begin our interview?

A: Ok.

Q: Are you from northern China?

A: How do you know that? From my dialect? Yes, I was born in a small city in northeastern China.

Q: You are a sports teacher, aren't you?

A: Eh, it was just a chance. My first job was in the factory.

Q: It sounds very interesting. Can you tell us something about your childhood?

A: Ok, what do you want to know?

Q: Were you interested in your major in middle school?

A: You mean sports?

Q: Yes, sports.

A: I did not know if it was an interest or not. I think everyone likes playing in childhood, of course myself included, because there was no exam in sports class. So I liked sports class when I was young.

Q: How about your grade in school?

A: You know, there were many children in one family when I was a child. I was the oldest son in the family. My parents did not care for my study like the other parents at that time because they were too busy as workers. But I was diligent, so my notes were not bad.

Q: What were your expectations about your future in middle school?

A: I remembered I wanted to join the army and broaden my horizons after graduating from high school when I was 20 years old, because I thought if I would be a solider, I would be sent anywhere in China by the army.

Q: Did you join the army?

A: No, my mother did not agree with me leaving the family. She hoped that she and my father could live with me when they are getting old, although they also had other children in the family.

Q: Did you obey the tradition to stay at home with your parents?

A: Yes, I stayed in the family because in my hometown, parents have traditionally ruled with absolute authority.

Q: How about your classmates? Did they also stay at home like you?

A: Well, at that time there were three ways for students like me. The first way was to be a solider, and my parents disagreed. The second way was to go to college. I knew I could not pass the high education entrance exam with my notes, so I had to choose the last way: to be a worker like some of my classmates.

Q: It was your first job.

A: Yes. You know, there are some differences between past and present. At that time,

to be a worker was a good job– better than college students– because the wage of the worker was higher than other careers.

Q: What kind of job did you do?

A: I remembered it was not easy to find a job in the factory. My father helped me find a job in a steel factory near the family. Some of my classmates worked here in different departments, but my work situation was the heaviest in the factory. Because the leader thought I was tall and strong, it was not fit for me to work in other departments.

Q: (smile) It is not good to have a strong body.

A: (smile) Yes, I was tired after work every day. But my parents worried about me; they thought I could not do such heavy work my whole life. Although I was healthy and strong, they did not want me to be sick after retirement. They still looked for other jobs for me.

Q: What was your second job?

A: In the year that I graduated from the senior middle school, my school needed a young sports teacher to replace the old teacher who was sick. I was very tall– over 1 meter 80– and also graduated from this school. All of the teachers knew me, and I won some sports prizes for the school. Hence, the headmaster wanted me to be the sports teacher at school. Although I liked sports very much, I did not want it to be my career for my whole life. So I refused, but after working in the factory, 3 months later my father knew that the school still needed a sports teacher. He told me to ask the headmaster. I did not like the job in the factory. Therefore, I went to the school, even though I did not want to be a teacher either.

Q: You mean that you worked as a worker in the factory only for a few months and then you were a sports teacher in your middle school.

A: Yes. I remembered my wage as a teacher was lower than as a worker, but it was enough for me because I lived with my parents and also ate at home.

Q: Did you still live with your parents after marriage?

A: Yes, I married a little bit late.

Q: Why? Is your wife also a teacher? Tell us something about her.

A: No, she isn't; otherwise I would not have married so late. My classmates and friends married one after another in those years, but I was still alone. My parents worried about me and asked the relatives and friends to find a daughter-in-law for them. The older teachers introduced some new-coming female colleagues to me, but my parents thought my wage was already not high. If my future wife were also a teacher, our life later would be hard– especially after childbirth. As teachers, we would both have winter and summer holidays. We would have time to care for the family and the children, but we would worry about the money often. Hence, my parents chose a wife for me quickly through one of our relatives. The girl was a worker in a state-owned factory. One year later, we married and lived with my parents. My wife was very diligent and she cared for my parents and me. She was very honest. As said before, the wage of workers at that time was higher than teachers, but my wife did not complain about my low wage. Our life was still peaceful.

Q: You are so lucky to have a good wife.

A: Yes, I also have good children.

Q: Children, how many do you have?

A: (smile) Two.

Q: Two. Is it permitted?

A: Yes, I had a daughter quickly after marriage. My mother was very happy, but she thought I was the oldest child in this family and she hoped that I could have a son. Because the Chinese people have long held the idea that boys are better than girls, due to their dominant position in the family and society. But there was already propaganda about the one-child policy in the society at the end of the 1970s. I thought we should obey this policy of the country. Our wage could support one child; if we had two children, our living conditions would be worse than now. In fact, I had no assurance that the second child would be a son. But my wife liked children and she wanted to have a second child, whether it was a girl or boy. One year later, we had a son.

Q: That is so good. Was your mother very happy?

A: Yes.

Q: You were still in your hometown as a sports teacher in the middle school. We are curious– how did you work in the university and come to Beijing?

A: It's a long story. In the beginning of the 1980s, my school was promoted to the academic college by the local government, and after senior middle school, the students could study for 3 years in this academic college and they would get the short circle study degree. The college hoped that all teachers could achieve their own degrees and go on studying new knowledge. As a result, almost all teachers who had no high college degree had to study in college to get a degree; otherwise, they could not be teachers anymore. I was one of them. I worked as a sports teacher after graduating from senior middle school, and now I had to go on studying in order to keep working there. The college sent some teachers to different colleges and universities to study with a wage, and I was sent to the University in Beijing to go on studying.

Q: Who paid the tuition fees?

A: My unit in my hometown.

Q: Did your family support you?

A: In fact, I did not want to leave my hometown and I wanted to care for my children and parents. But I had to go to Beijing to study in order to achieve a degree. My wife understood and supported me. She told me she would care for the two children and my parents by herself. She had no ambition and she did not want to become a leader or go on studying. She only needed to go to work every day and after work, to come back home to do cooking and cleaning and caring for the family. My parents expressed that they supported me and they would help my wife care for the two children.

Q: How about your life in university in Beijing?

A: I arrived in Beijing and lived in the dormitory and ate in the canteen in the university. I finished my short circle study in two and half years, and the other half-year I did an internship in Beijing.

Q: Did you go back home after graduation?

A: I think I was lucky, and after graduation the Capital Normal University hoped that I could stay to work because they needed a sports teacher with experience. And the university would help me, my wife and even my children come to Beijing.

Q: It is so legendary.

A: I also think so.

Q: Did you and your wife want to come to Beijing?

A: Yes, of course. You know, I went to my hometown and told my parents and wife this information. My wife thought this was a good chance. There were many people in China who wanted to go to Beijing, and now her husband had a chance. In addition, not only could I go to the capital, but also the whole family. Therefore, she persuaded me to grab the opportunity. My parents also knew it was good for me if I could stay in Beijing. Not everyone in my school had such a good opportunity. They encouraged me to go there, although they did not want me to leave them and this family. However, as parents they always hoped that their children could be happy and be better than themselves.

Q: Was it not easy to come to Beijing?

A: No, after working in Beijing for half a year, my wife and children came to live with me with all of our valuable things– books, clothes, etc. Our home was an apartment with only one room. We did not buy much furniture because of the limited space. We had to share the kitchen with neighbours.

Q: Did your children go to school or to the kindergarten?

A: They went to school in Beijing.

Q: How about your wife? What did she do? Did she also work in the factory or in the university?

A: The children went to school at once, but my wife was a worker before, and it was difficult for her to find a job in Beijing. Half a year later, with the help of my friends, she found a job in a factory.

Q: Was your wage in Beijing better than in your hometown?

A: At that time, my wage was also low, even though I was a university teacher. I spent my whole wage to support the family and had no more money to send to my

parents in my hometown.

Q: How could you handle the relationship in your university?

A: As a new teacher in the new unit, I worked very hard and often helped others. I had very good relationships with colleagues.

Q: How could you handle the relationship between family and career?

A: My wife cared for the family and the children the whole time. She made good use of every cent we earned. For instance, she knew that the food near the university was expensive, so she would like to go to another market by bike for 2 hours to bring some cheap food back.

Q: Do you like your work at present?

A: Yes.

Q: Have you changed your job?

A: No, it is difficult to find a stable job like being a teacher.

Q: Have you continued to study during your work?

A: Yes, I studied for a Bachelor degree here.

Q: Why did you study for a Bachelor degree?

A: Some years later, I thought that my children grew up, and one room was not enough for the whole family. I needed a big apartment. However, although I had worked some years in the university, I did not fulfil all of the preconditions for a house from the university. One of them was the professional title, and the professional title depended on the degree. With a Bachelor degree, I had the chance to get an apartment. Therefore, I decided to study in order to achieve the Bachelor degree quickly, for my short cycle study was not enough for the application.

Q: Where did you study? Also in your unit?

A: No, in the night college

Q: Who paid the tuition fees?

A: Myself. I worked during the day and studied at night.

Q: Does your family support your career? Does your career influence their work, or is it reversed?

A: My wife knew I was very busy and she went home quickly after work to do some shopping, cooking and caring for the children to finish their homework. After dinner, I went to the night college by bike– whether in rain or snow– and she would do some washing, tidy up the room and put the children to sleep. When I came back at 10 o'clock, she would do some cooking for me. In fact, I thanked my wife. Without her support, I could not have concentrated on my study.

My wife always worked in the factory and she cared for the family and the children. Consequently, she had no chance of promotion due to her low educational level, and was always a worker until retirement when she was 50 years old. Although she had not involved herself into her career, she worked 8 hours every day and after work she spent all of her time for the family.

Q: In how many years did you get your Bachelor degree?

A: It took me 2 years to hold the degree.

Q: Were you permitted to apply for a big apartment?

A: With the degree and my work experience, I was promoted to lecturer quickly. The next year I got the bigger apartment from the university. The whole family was very satisfied. We had our own apartment, after all. In my hometown we had no room and we had to live with my parents, and in Beijing we lived in one small room with 4 people in the past.

Q: Do you have part-time jobs besides your career?

A: No. You know, I am a sports teacher and my discipline is not seen as being as important as others like foreign language or economy. But at that time, I had 4 seminars every day because many students chose it as an elective course, and there were not many teachers in the department. I was in charge of all students in the first and second year in the university. In a Chinese university, there were normally 4 seminars in the morning from 8 o'clock to 12 o'clock, and every seminar lasted 45 minutes; and there were 4 classes in the afternoon from 2 o'clock to 6 o'clock. The sports seminar would not be the first and second seminar in the morning, but rather in the afternoon. So I had no time to do other things.

I went home very late and I had no time to do some shopping and cooking for the

children. In the morning there were always meetings in my department to make plans and arrangements, and I would also prepare the classes for the afternoon. For example, I would teach the students to swim in summer and skate in winter. You know, the sports class was not as easy as we thought. The students could not always be running; it was too boring. They also liked new and interesting things like swimming, skating, playing the balls or Konfu, and of course also some theories. If the students played basketball, football or volleyball, I also could not sit on the chair to watch them. I have to teach them by hand or be a referee. I always stayed beside the swimming pool under the sun the whole afternoon and made no pause, because I had two seminars for different students. As a result, after class I was always tired and did not want to do anything. My wife understood and did all of the housework.

Q: That means your wife supported your career very much.

A: Yes, she did. In fact, from the beginning of 1990s, some state-owned factories were closed in China, and most workers lost their jobs. My wife was very lucky. Although her factory was closed in 2000, she was the last group of workers who were over 50 years old and had pension and medical insurance after retirement. Some other colleagues of my wife were young and could not get any help from the unit. My wife was very satisfied. Although her pension was a little bit low, it was better than nothing. She wanted to find another job to do because she was only 50 years old, but I thought she was too tired in these years and she needed to have a long rest and use the time to do something she liked. Because my wage was higher than before and it was enough for the family, I thought my wife would stay at home after retirement. I hoped that she could have a comfortable place to rest after all she did for the family. And at the same time, the two children should have some private space. I decided to buy a bigger apartment.

After retirement, my wife still went to the cheap market by bike to buy the food every morning like before, or she went to the neighbourhood committee; she became a leader of it. After dinner, my wife and I would discuss the information of houses: if there were some new buildings, which one was cheap and which

location was good. If we liked the house, we would go to visit the house by bike on the weekend. One year later, we sold the old welfare apartment and made a credit and bought a new bigger apartment.

Q: Time flew so quickly. You have changed your apartment three times.

A: Yes, my children are also old enough to work. My daughter and son both found jobs after graduating from college. My daughter will go abroad to study and my son will marry next year. Because the children did not need to be cared for by the parents, my wife had more time to do her things. She was used to doing shopping in the morning, because she thought the vegetables were fresh in the morning. She went to the so-called "old people's college" to learn drawing, because she did not want to stay at home the whole afternoon. There is no more housework to do now. She has more spare time to do other things. You know, I am 59 years old and I will retire next year. After that I will travel with my wife. Because my wife did many things for the family and for me, I want her to be happy for the rest of time.

Q: What do you think about the important conditions for promotion?

A: It is different between present and past. I think now at your age, the degree is the most important, but in my time the work years were also important. In 2005, I was promoted to vice professor. I was in the last group of teachers who were promoted with the old conditions in the university, which focus on the work years and work experience. The new rules of promotion included: the male teacher was over 50 years old; worked over 30 years; the professional title was lecturer; the educational degree was at least a Bachelor; published more than 3 books; and passed the foreign language exam. I think I was very lucky. I did not expect that I could be vice professor before retirement. Actually, the authority of the university considered that some of the older teachers had worked many years and most of them only had Bachelor degrees. They owned rich teaching experiences but relatively less publications; hence, the preconditions for them were not supposed to be strict. But if I stayed in my hometown, I would have been a professor some years ago, and I also could have gotten a big apartment there. It was difficult for everything in Beijing. There were so many talented people in Beijing. But I do not

regret it, because my family of 4 have Beijing Hukou now, which is a difficult and admired thing.

Q: What is the proportion of male to female teachers?

A: There are a total of 4 female teachers in my department: one of them retired some years ago because of sickness, another is middle-aged, and the other two females graduated from this university two years ago.

In the past, there was only one female teacher in the department. The leader thought more females should be recruited in the department, and then they chose some graduates who had good notes and were healthy. After passing some tests, they became teachers in the university, and one of them could be sent to study for a Master's degree.

Most of the teachers are male in our department. Some of them are over 40 years old with a Bachelor degree, and a few with a Master's degree. Only one male teacher has a Doctorate degree. The rate of Bachelor, Master and Doctorate is 8:4:1.

Q: The academic degree is very important for university teachers, right?

A: Yes, of course. The academic degree associates itself with professional title, wage, and welfare; therefore it encourages the teachers in the department to study for a Master's or Doctorate. I think in a few years when the old teachers retire, there will be no teachers with just a Bachelor degree; all of the teachers will hold at least a Master's degree. If I were 50 years old, I would study for a Master's degree so that I would have the chance to compete with the others. Now I am a vice professor but without a Master's degree, because I am lucky. If I were 10 years younger, I would only be a lecturer– no matter how many years I had already worked.

I think being a university teacher is not an easy job anymore. In the past, the teacher only needed to work hard, but now only working hard is not enough. This means that as a teacher, one must always study to improve his or her abilities– including educational degree; otherwise, he or she would be surpassed by the young teachers and the society. One consequence is that the teachers have more pressures

than earlier.

Q: That's all for the interview. Thanks for being interviewed.

A: You are welcome.

11. MK

Q: Hello MK. Nice to meet you.

A: Hello, you two. Nice to meet you, too.

Q: Have you seen the questionnaire?

A: Yes.

Q: Can we begin the interview?

A: Okay.

Q: How old are you?

A: 42.

Q: Are you from Beijing?

A: Yes.

Q: What do you teach in the university?

A: Computers and English.

Q: Eh? Two disciplines? What did you study?

A: It sounds strange, right? I studied two disciplines in my youth.

Q: English and computers?

A: Yes, a Bachelor degree in English and a Master's degree in Computers.

Q: First tell us: why did you study English?

A: (smile) Oh, I must tell you a story from my childhood; otherwise it is not easy to tell you the reason why I studied English and Computers.

Q: (smile) That's fine.

A: You know, my parents were workers in a state-owned factory and they were busy. So I did everything by myself when I was still a boy– including cooking and going to school, especially after my father became an accountant. I could see him only 2 or 3 times a week. This kind of experience cultivated my spirit of

independence.

Q: You mean you could care for yourself when you were a boy?

A: Well, I could do lots of things.

Q: You are so great!

A: So in my childhood I was always the leader among my friends. I invented some new games and used to be the best player. I remember that my teachers in primary school said I had the talent of being a leader in my lifetime later.

Q: How about your grade in school?

A: In my class, I belonged to the good students. I could get good scores on exams– particularly in Chinese– even though I spent much time playing with my friends after class. I remember I always prepared for the exam 3 days before, and I could remember all of the texts in a short time. It might be hereditary from my mother, because she had a good memory.

Q: Were you interested in your majors– English or Computers– in middle school?

A: No. After entering the junior middle school, I started to have an interest in literature– both novels and poems– and I began to write a diary.

Q: What was your expectation about your future in middle school?

A: I had no plan in middle school. My parents noticed that I liked literature and hired a college student who studied Chinese to teach me in my spare time. My parents hoped I might be an author later on. I also wanted to be a novelist in the future.

Q: And were you successful in your interest?

A: Within the 3 years in junior middle school, I wrote some texts and sent them to magazines and newspapers; some of them were published. I was very happy when I saw my texts in newspapers, and my parents were proud of me. As a result, my grades in Chinese and English were better than in the other subjects such as mathematics, physics or chemistry. Hence, to be a novelist in the future was my hope at the time. In the third year of the junior middle school, I became the captain of the football team in my school. (smile) I think it might testify to what my teacher in primary school predicted: that I would be a leader later.

Q: You were successful in your junior middle school, and how about your senior

middle school? Were you also successful in your senior middle school?

A: I nearly went to vocational school.

Q: Why?

A: My mother tried to persuade me to go to a vocational school so that I could give the family some financial support. But I wanted to be a novelist, and I had to go to university. After discussing with my parents, I made my decision to continue my senior middle school education in the same school.

Q: You liked literature very much and you definitely chose to study in the humanities class in senior middle school.

A: (smile) Yes, you are right. I entered the humanities class because of my excellent grades in Chinese and English. In fact, at that time I planned to study literature in a key university in Beijing. However, my score on the NCEE was not good enough. I was admitted by another university to study English in Beijing.

Q: You didn't want to study English in university, did you?

A: I should say that besides literature and Chinese, I liked English as well. And I thought English is the world language; if I could master it, I might become a translator later.

Q: Which course do you think was the most interesting course, and the most uninteresting course?

A: My favourite courses included oral, listening comprehension, translation, as well as extensive reading. The lecturers of oral and listening comprehension were Americans who were not able to speak Chinese. Therefore, the students were forbidden to speak Chinese to each other. It was a very effective way to practise the foreign language. And students had chances to watch some original movies in the courses; some of them were famous, such as Gone with the Wind, My Fair Lady, and so on.

Q: Who paid the tuition fees?

A: My parents afforded most of my living costs during my university period. I did some part-time jobs sometimes, such as a server in a restaurant or as a private teacher for middle school students. I also worked as a translator for a newspaper. I

liked this job; not only I could be paid more, but I could practise my language skills as well.

Q: Was it easy for you to find a part-time job at that time?

A: Yes. You know, at that time the entrance rate of higher education was not as high as today. Therefore, lots of parents needed college students to help their children consolidate what they learned in schools. On the one hand, college students have learned such knowledge; on the other hand, to hire a college student was not as expensive as hiring a schoolteacher. The parents had to think about their financial situation. I taught a total of 5 middle school students, and all of them were admitted to universities. I was proud of it.

Q: What was the proportion of male to female students?

A: In the university where I studied, female students were a majority. From the traditional ideas, girls seemed to have a better ability than male students to study language because they were patient, gentle and quiet.

Q: Were there any differences between male and female students?

A: Although females always had higher scores on exams than males in the class, their oral English was not good as their written English because they were shyer than the male students. They liked to study by themselves instead of discussing things together with teachers or classmates. Our teacher often said that one important method to practise oral English was to talk with people, and I agreed with him very much. I liked talking with people– no matter with teachers or classmates– so that I would be able to speak freely if I met a native speaker.

The students from the countryside– both boys and girls– would rather spend most of their free time in the library rather than communicate with other students or teachers. In my opinion, they hoped to stay in Beijing after graduation. Beijing is big and modern, and being a dweller in Beijing meant more advantages such as a good education and better living standards. One way to stay in Beijing was to be an English teacher in a middle school. However, not all of them had the chance. They were competitors with each other; therefore, each of them tried his or her

best to study hard so that he or she had more opportunities than the others to stay in Beijing. I was very lucky that I am already a Beijingner. And some of my female classmates from the other cities wanted to make friends with me so that they could have Beijing Hukou after marrying a Beijingner, but I refused. I thought it was unfair for me, because I did not know if the girl liked my Hukou or me.

Q: Did you already have interest in computers in middle school?

A: Actually, in my third year of university, I saw a computer for the first time and was already interested in it, for there was a computer course in my university. At the beginning, I had no idea what the computer was, and I was curious of what man could do with it and how. After class, I began to read some books about it and got some basic knowledge from my teacher, who was one of my neighbours.

Q: Now we understand why you are a computer teacher: because you like it.

A: Yes. And I graduated with a good grade and achieved my English Bachelor degree, so my teachers recommended me to some middle schools to teach English. But, I refused.

Q: Why?

A: I had my own opinion. I wanted to achieve another academic degree in the discipline of computers. On the one hand, the teacher told me that the computer was a new technology and it would be very helpful for the human being. At the same time, it would bring a revolution of people's way of communication. On the other hand, most of my classmates in the university worked as teachers in middle schools or workers in a library. I was not interested in such jobs; I hoped to find something new.

Q: Did you choose to work or to achieve a Master's degree after graduation?

A: To go on studying.

Q: Did your parents agree with you?

A: No, and it was not easy to persuade my parents to support me. They thought that to have a Bachelor degree was enough for me, because at that time the entrance rate to the university was low; only a few middle school students could be permitted. The

job as a teacher in middle school was stable; one could stay in the school until they retire.

Q: What did you do to make your parents agree with you?

A: At first I tried to talk with my parents peacefully, but they didn't agree and insisted on telling me to give up my idea. I then quarrelled with my parents and went out to live with my friends for a couple days. Finally, my parents compromised and agreed to let me do it. You know, now I am very sorry about the quarrel with my parents. I should have found a better way instead of doing that; it might have hurt them.

Q: Did you achieve your Master's degree in China or abroad?

A: I went to an adult university to study computers in Beijing in order not to take part in the NCEE again. Furthermore, the time to go to the university was flexible; I didn't have to go there every day.

Q: Did you have any difficulties to study this new discipline?

A: Of course it was hard for me to study a new discipline, a discipline of sciences. I had to study it from the very beginning. However, I was very diligent. Sometimes I recorded what the teacher said in class with a small recorder so that I could hear it after class. I spent almost all of my spare time to read and do homework.

To tell the truth, there was a period that I planned to give up, since it was very boring and difficult at times. After class, if I had questions, nobody could help me. But I persisted on until the end. So I thanked my parents and my girlfriend (who became my wife later) very much, because they encouraged me often to overcome the difficulties. My girlfriend gave me some advice on how to relax as well.

Q: Is there any difference between the state-owned university and the adult university?

A: The situation in the adult university was not good. There were only 4 computers in the university, which meant that 4 or 5 students shared one in the class. Sometimes I had no chance to practise. After class, there were only two hours for students to do exercises; I often had to wait for an hour to use the computer. You know, one of my dreams at that time was to have a computer at home. At the end of the 1980s, buying a computer was a luxury; my family could not afford it. I was lucky that I

had good relationship with my teacher. I was his favourite student, so I could use his computer in the office to practise what I learned in class.

Q: How many years did you study in total?

A: 3 years. In fact, it should be studied within 4 years, but I wanted to finish it as soon as possible. Until now, I can remember how surprised I was when I held the diploma.

Q: Did you choose to work or to achieve a Master's degree after graduation?

A: Work.

Q: What did you do?

A: Due to my good results, my teacher advised me to stay in the university to work with him. However, I had no interest to be a teacher; therefore, I refused. After a few days, I was recruited to work in a small computer company as a programmer. I was satisfied with it; I could do something I wanted. At the same time, my wage was higher than others around me, including my neighbours and my friends. My parents were glad as well, for their son made a correct decision. My classmates in the university also found work quickly, for only few people at that time studied the discipline of computers and they were needed in many fields. It was not easy to be a programmer– especially at that time. There was a lack of helpful books in China. It was the hardest work in the IT field. I sometimes had to spend a whole day in order to find out or repair one small error in the system.

Q: You gave up the chance to be an English teacher in middle school after your Bachelor degree, and again you gave up a chance to be a computer teacher in the university. You preferred to work in the computer company rather than to be teacher. Were you satisfied with your choice?

A: Yes. At the beginning, there were a total of 4 people in the company. My boss and I graduated from university, and we worked as programmers; the other two worked as salesmen. We were only beginners in this field, with limited knowledge. Hence, my boss and I had to help the others if we had problems with the system or hardware, or if they were not able to explain things to customers clearly. I acknowledged that I was always tired after work. You know, at times I slept on the

bus when I went home and passed my station. However, under such circumstances I got rich and helpful experiences. Two years later, with the popularization of the computer, the company was enlarged. I was promoted to be vice manager, in charge of technical support. In 6 months, my boss planned to promote me to be the manager of a subsidiary company in another city to help train the staff there.

Q: You did very well in the company.

A: Yes.

Q: But your boss sent you to another city to work. Did your family agree and did you want to go?

A: No. After discussing it with my wife, I decided to stay in Beijing because my family and parents needed me. If I worked outside of Beijing, I could only come back on holidays. I would rather be together with my family than work as a manager.

Q: Did you stay at the company in Beijing?

A: No. After working for 5 years in the IT field, I realised that I needed a change.

Q: Why?

A: On one hand, this seemed to be a new technology and it would develop quickly. More and more universities offered the discipline of computers, and more and more students chose to study this discipline. The government also encouraged people to learn some knowledge of it. As a result, the knowledge would be updated very fast. The workers who worked in the field for some years had to meet new knowledge every day; otherwise, they would be surpassed by young competitors. It would bring them pressure. On the other hand, I was always busy within the 5 years. I did not even have time for my family; my wife then did everything without complaining. I wanted to share some of the work with her so that she could have more leisure time. Another reason was, actually, that my wife and I liked children and we hoped to have a baby as soon as possible.

Q: You left your company to find a new job, didn't you?

A: Yes, I found a job in the university.

Q: You began to work in the university after working for 5 years in the IT field?

A: Yes.

Q: Why did you choose to be a teacher, but not another job? Do you like your work at present?

A: I thought being a university teacher was a suitable job for me, and I had some advantages. Since lot of universities offered the discipline of computers, the number of students who studied this discipline rose each year. Facing the large number of students, each university definitely needed such people with working experience like me to support the teams. I also thought that I knew how to teach a beginner, for I had taught the two salesmen in the company. At the same time, if I worked in the university, I might have more time to study this discipline intensively so that I would be able to get in touch with the newest knowledge. However, there were also some disadvantages as a university teacher; one of them was that I would have less income than ever. But I thought that the government attached importance to education. They invested into it and the situation of teachers would be better very quickly; hence, I didn't worry about it.

Q: Is what you teach the same as what you studied?

A: I studied English and computers, but now I teach only computers.

Q: Why did you choose this university?

A: I sent three universities my resumes to ask if they needed computer teachers. After a week, two of them responded and offered me chances to be interviewed. Actually, both interviews were successful. Both universities were satisfied with me– especially my work experience– because at that time, not so many people had such experience like me. Both universities thought I would be able to help them build the new department of computers. I prepared my test seminar carefully and passed the test.

At last, I chose the university that could offer me the position as a lecturer and promised me that I could teach seminars in the English department if I wanted, since I had the Bachelor's degree in English as well. You know, I never gave up practising my English after graduation. I insisted on listening to English radio every day and translated some short stories for a newspaper when I was working

in the computer company. During the interview at the university, some of teachers from the university spoke with me in English and found that my English level was enough to teach new students in a translation course.

Q: Have you changed your job?

A: No, I like this job. And in the second year in the university, my first baby was born. My family was all happy about that.

Q: Sometimes you have to face some problems, no matter at work or in your life. How can you solve them? Is there anybody who can help you?

A: As a matter of fact, during the first two years in the university, I was very busy since there were only 5 teachers in the department and we had to teach more than 100 students. At the same time, we also had to communicate with colleagues from other universities often in order to gain more experience in terms of building the department. Besides the work in the department of computers, I had one seminar in the department of English as well. However, I liked this kind of full life. It brought me another kind of feeling in contrast with working in the company. My colleagues were nice. I had good relationships with them; after class we often went to have a picnic together.

Q: Does your family support your career? Does your career influence their work, or is it reversed?

A: Yes, my wife still supports me. My department recruited 3 new teachers when I worked there for about 3 years. I had more spare time to do something for my family, such as taking care of my son and helping to do some housework.

Q: Have you continued to study during your work?

A: Yes.

Q: What was your motivation to achieve a Master's degree?

A: Because I had pressure. All three new teachers were younger than me and they all had Master's degrees; I graduated from an adult university. Although I possessed more experience, I thought I should enhance my academic knowledge. As a result, I applied to the university to achieve my Master's degree. At first, the university didn't accept my application because I was one of the important teachers in the

department of computers. I had many seminars, and the new teachers had a lack of experience and they studied different branches. Hence, there wasn't anybody who could teach some of my seminars. Nonetheless, I insisted on studying for a Master's degree. Finally, the university agreed with me, but the precondition was that I must come to the university two days a week to teach my seminars. Of course, I agreed without hesitation.

Q: Did you continue studying the same major in your Master's study?

A: Yes, computers.

Q: Where did you achieve your Master's degree, in China?

A: I studied for my Master's degree in another university in Beijing after passing the entrance exam.

Q: Who paid the tuition fees for it?

A: I paid all costs during this period myself. I could not only get some money from government every month, but I also had my wage from the university.

Q: What was the proportion of male to female students?

A: Most of my classmates were male. I thought it might because few girls have interest to do such a "boring" job. That means that girls don't like to face lots of symbols or numbers every day.

Q: How long did you study for your Master's degree?

A: Two years later, I achieved my Master's degree and involved myself into my career again. In addition, I had my second child in this year: my daughter. Both my wife and I were the only children in each family. Therefore, we had the right to have two children and I was happy to have one son and one daughter.

Q: Are you satisfied with your present life?

A: (smile) Yes, of course. I was promoted to be vice professor just one month before the interview. I fulfilled all of the conditions, such as work years, or publications, and I am satisfied with my life now.

Q: Would you support your wife if she had the chance to be promoted?

A: Yes, I would definitely support her because she spent too much time for the family and my career.

Q: What is the proportion of male to female teachers in your department?

A: Most of the teachers in my department are males. There are only three young females in my department. I think one reason might be that there were no female students studying computers some years ago. But now, more and more female students study computers in the university, so there are more female teachers in the department than before.

Q: What is the proportion of male to female leaders in your university?

A: The leader is also male; I think it is always the same in all units in China.

Q: Is the academic degree important in the university?

A: Yes, it is. There are only two older teachers with only a Bachelor degree; others have a Master's degree. Some teachers– especially the young teachers– have Doctorate degrees. I plan to study for a Doctorate degree next year in order to be promoted to professor; I am young, after all.

Q: Do you have part-time jobs besides your career?

A: I have no part-time job. In fact, there are many teachers having projects for other companies in order to earn more money after class. Until now, I have no project to do because I still studied in these years, and I will go on studying for my Doctorate degree next year. Therefore, I never have time to earn money except in the university. I do not care about the money; otherwise, I would not be a teacher.

Q: We hope you can achieve your Doctorate degree quickly.

A: Thanks.

Q: Thanks for coming today.

A: You are welcome.

12. ML

Q: Nice to meet you, ML.

A: Nice to meet you, too.

Q: (smile) We think you don't look like a teacher in the university, but rather a white-collar worker in a company.

A: (smile) Why?

Q: Because of your clothes.

A: (laughs) Oh, I know in your eyes the teachers are simply dressed, right?

Q: Normally, yes.

A: I had the same opinion like you before I worked in the university, but now I changed my mind. Now almost all teachers– whether in the universities or schools– dress very exquisitely because their living conditions and wages are better than in the past. They could even buy an expensive house.

Q: Yes, we should also change our minds.

A: Yes. Ok, let's begin our interview.

Q: Ok. Can you explain how you developed your interest in your major?

A: I think there is some relationship with my father and my family.

Q: Is there anybody in your family who studied the same major?

A: Yes, actually. My father studied economy in the university. Because of it, I wanted to be an economist in the future. In my childhood, I admired my father very much. In my eyes, my father was a man who knew everything; I hoped I could be a man like my father. It might be the first influence for why I chose economy as my discipline in university.

Q: What does your father do?

A: He worked in a private company as a department manager.

Q: What does your mother do?

A: My mother was also a graduate from a university, and taught history in a key middle school.

Q: Your mother is a teacher?

A: Yes.

Q: Normally the child of a teacher always has good grades in school. How about your grades in school?

A: Yes, my grades were always the best in my class in primary school.

Q: Were you interested in your major in middle school?

A: Not at all. I didn’t know what economy really was at that time; my father only told

me that economy included mathematics and politics.

Q: What were your expectations about your future in middle school?

A: After entering the middle school, I found I had no interest in politics or mathematics. Although my grade in mathematics was not bad, I could not understand the relationship between mathematics, politics and economy. In contrast, my grades in English and Chinese were good. As a result, in middle school, my ideal careers in the future were to be a diplomat or an actor instead of being an economist.

Q: You were still a boy at that time after all, so you often changed your mind.

A: Yes, I was a child at that time, after all.

Q: Did the girls have better grades than the boys?

A: In my class, the female students had better grades than the male students in English, Chinese and politics. In contrast, the male students were in a dominant position in physics and chemistry.

Q: Have you participated in any contests of the major you chose in middle school?

A: No. You know, I was the only child in the family. I was spoiled, not only by my parents, but also by my grandparents. I spent almost of my time with them at home. It might be the reason why I was not open as a boy.

Q: Why did you want to choose this major in university?

A: I remembered my parents did not force me to study any discipline in the senior middle school; they discussed it with me. In fact, I wanted to study humanities in university, because my grades in mathematics and physics were not as good as in English and Chinese. But my parents hoped I would choose sciences, such as business, economy or trade. At that time, those disciplines were seen as the so-called “hot disciplines”; that means that with the economic development and the open policy, China would have more chances to communicate with the whole world. A student who studied those disciplines didn’t have to worry about his job after graduation, because there would be lots of job opportunities in the job market. Hence, numbers of parents encouraged their children to study such disciplines. Certainly, I told my parents my ideas about my future careers, but my parents

didn't agree with me. Finally, they spoke with my teacher. The teacher thought that, according to my grades in the class, it would be easier to be permitted to go to university if I chose business or economy, since the entrance rate for "humanities students" was higher than for "sciences students". I acknowledged it; my parents didn't force me to do anything. They merely gave me some advice to help me make a right decision. After thinking it over carefully, I decided to study sciences in university.

Q: Did you study in China or abroad?

A: In China. In my hometown in eastern China.

Q: Which course do you think was the most interesting course, and the most uninteresting course?

A: In fact, I thought my decision was right. There were some courses I liked, such as marketing, administration or personnel. These courses were more "humanities" than "sciences", because they still focused much on theories. On the contrary, other courses, such as accounting or statistics, I found to be boring, for I had to face lots of numbers or formulas.

Q: What was the proportion of male to female students?

A: In my class, male students were a minority; only 1/3 were males, even though it was a sciences discipline.

Q: Were there differences between male and female students?

A: The favourite courses between males and females were also different. Males liked economic theory and practical courses; females were fond of accounting or English. No matter in or after class, males enjoyed discussing things together. For girls, each of them would like study alone. Even though they joined the discussions occasionally, most of them just sat there and listened to what the others said.

Q: Who paid the tuition fees?

A: My parents paid for my living costs during the four years in the university. They were able to afford it, and they didn't want me to worry about it so that I could concentrate on my studies.

Q: In which field did you take more time: studying, working, practising…?

A: Half and half. You know, two of my friends and I worked as assistants in a research company in our spare time in order to accumulate experience and earn pocket money. Our jobs were to conduct interviews with our questionnaires in some families, which were randomly chosen by the computer. It was not as easy as it sounded to do that. Some people didn't want to be disturbed by strangers, even though we showed them our ID cards or explained what kind of work we did. I remember my friends and I saw different kinds of people during the period working as interviewers. Some were nice, some were angry and others treated us like thieves. We were sometimes even scolded. I thought I grew up after this job. However, we also learned something from the job. At least we got some methods of how to communicate with strangers and how to make strangers trust us. Such methods would be helpful in our lives.

Q: Did your parents support you?

A: My parents didn't support me doing such a job at all when I talked with them about it. On one hand, they didn't think it was a suitable job for me because I was not as open as other teenagers; I was a little shy. On the other hand, they thought it would take me much time, and that I would have no time to do my homework. Nevertheless, I wanted to have some experiences through the job to overcome my shyness. In my words, I needed a challenge to see whether I could change this weakness or not.

Q: Did you change your expectations about your career during the period in university?

A: Yes. In middle school, I wanted to be a diplomat or an actor later. Nevertheless, after studying economy in university, I found my discipline was not as boring as I thought before. I had more interests than ever, and lots of people who studied economy would be needed in society. After graduation, I hoped I could work in a joint venture company due to the new management approaches. In my opinion, employees in such a company could develop themselves through working, such as their abilities and their modes of thinking. At the same time, the high wage was another attractive point for me. Working in a joint venture company meant a high

salary at that time, and a high salary represents one's value in some ways. Of course, if I wanted to change my work later, the work experience in such a company was an important advantage. The relationship between employees was not as significant as in the state-owned factories. In a joint venture company, employees were much more independent.

Q: Did you choose to work or to achieve a Master's degree after graduation? Why?

A: After graduation, as I expected, I found a job in a joint venture company as an accountant. In my work, I not only practised what I learned from the university, but I had intensive knowledge about accounting. I found accounting had many branches; each one had its own theories, and at the same time they were all related to each other. One of the important events during that period was that I had many tests to pass. At first, I had to pass the professional examination, including preliminary and senior tests. At last, there was the most difficult one: the CPA (Certified Public Accountant) examination. You know, for most people, it would take them at least 2 or 3 years to pass all tests; I was one of them. However, with the development of economy, new theories or methods would be acquired. As a result, textbooks about them would also be updated constantly. All accountants had to pass the new test. Therefore, in my words, those tests exhausted me. I spent almost all of my spare time to prepare for them. After working for 4 years, I decided to study for a Master's degree.

Q: What was your motivation to achieve a Master's degree?

A: I thought I should find a new goal in my life. After graduation, my goal was to find a good job, and I had achieved it. Four years later, I was aware that I had no energy to do this work like before; I needed some changes. Therefore, I considered it would be a nice change for me if I studied for a Master's degree.

Q: Did you achieve your Master's degree in China or abroad?

A: I went to a foreign country to study for a Master's degree.

Q: Why did you choose to study abroad?

A: At that time, to study abroad became easier than before. People were richer than ever. More and more normal families could also afford it. As a result, they sent

their children to foreign countries such as the U.S.A. or England.

Q: Where did you study?

A: I chose to study in Germany.

Q: Why?

A: Like many students who went to Germany to study, I chose Germany because there was no tuition fee for higher education. So I was able to save some costs for my life there. Actually, my parents hoped that I could study continuously in a foreign country, so that I would be able to have a better life later; hence, they supported me. I spent one year in a school to learn German, and then I went to Germany.

Q: Did you meet some troubles in Germany?

A: Studying and living in a foreign country was not as easy as I had imagined. At first, I found the German that I learned in China was not enough at all. I could not understand what people said, even if I wanted to pay for what I bought in the supermarket. I was very sad, because I never expected it. However, my parents often called me and supported me. I myself also wanted to pass the language exam as soon as possible. Thus, I found a language school quickly to learn German. In the school, I met some friends who helped me very much. One year later, I passed the exam and went to a university to study.

Q: Who paid the tuition fees for your Master's study?

A: I saved some money during my job in the company in China. In addition, my parents sent me some regularly. My friends from the language school recommended me some jobs as an assistant. My income was enough to make a living.

Q: What was the proportion of male to female students?

A: It is difficult to say an accurate ratio of male to female students in my class in university, because there were different people in each seminar. I think it was about 50:50.

Q: Were there differences between male and female students?

A: I thought that both males and females were active in studying. Through

presentations or discussions, I found that females had a better ability of oral expression than the males in seminars, at least in the seminars that I attended. It was very different between Chinese and German female students; the German girls were more open.

Q: Did you continue studying the same major in your Master's study?

A: Yes.

Q: Did you have any different ideas about your major in this period compared with your ideas during your Bachelor study?

A: I thought the courses in my Master's study were much more interesting than those in my Bachelor study because they were more practical. In contrast, the courses before were more theoretical.

Q: How many years did it take you to achieve your Master's degree?

A: Three years.

Q: Had you changed your expectations about your career while achieving the Master's degree?

A: I acknowledged that my idea about my future career changed again after achieving my Master's degree. I would like to do something in the research field or teaching field instead of working as an accountant. I found what I learned during my Master's study was much more systematic and practical. For instance, in some seminars in university, my classmates and I had to read lots of correlative documents and made some modes by ourselves in order to accomplish some research projects. I found it was very interesting. For my thesis, I had to do the same things by myself; I could not forget how I happy was when I finished it. I felt very successful at that time.

Q: Did you choose to work or to achieve a Doctorate degree after graduation? Why?

A: I planned to find a job in Germany with my Master's degree. However, competition exists everywhere, and Germany is no exception. Although some companies interviewed me, I got no contract. At last, I just found a company to be an internship student. And at the beginning, the boss told me it was impossible for me to work there after the internship because it would be more expensive to hire a

worker than an internship student. I thought the other companies might also have the same idea.

I returned to China after the internship, for I found a position in a university to achieve my Doctorate degree. My notes in the German university were good, and my professors wrote me some recommendations. Hence, it was relatively easy for me to find a position, and I didn't have to take part in the entrance exam.

Q: Was your major the same as it was in your Master's study?

A: My Doctorate degree included marketing, labour market, as well as economic growth, which were the main topics in China.

Q: What is your dissertation about? Is it something to do with your career?

A: About economic growth in China. I chose such topics to study because I thought they might help me find a job easily after graduation. I was also a common person; I had to think about my life.

Q: What was the proportion of male to female students?

A: Among all of the students of my supervisor, there was not one female. We didn't meet often, for we all had different projects. Once a month we were together to talk to each other about our works.

Q: Who paid the tuition fees for studying for a Doctorate degree?

A: During my Doctorate study, I paid all of the living costs by myself. I got a wage from my supervisor and the government, and I lived with my parents. I even could save some money in the bank.

Q: When did you begin to work?

A: After the graduation of my Doctorate study. I found my job in a career fair, where lots of companies or units such as universities or schools that needed new employees were gathered in a great hall. Students or workers could hand over their résumés to the positions they were interested in, or talk with people from the companies or units personally. In a few days, the companies or units would invite some of people who handed over their résumés to interviews, and then some of them would be hired. I was invited to be interviewed only two days after the career fair; my interview was successful.

Q: Do you like your work at present?

A: I like my job as a lecturer in the university. I thought what I learned could be used in my teaching; I was satisfied with it. At the same time, I could do some research in my spare time. What I imagined came true. Another reason was that I could get more income from it besides the job in the university. Sometimes I worked with famous professors. I could learn a lot from them. I had a good relationship with the students. It might be because I was not as old as the other teachers in the department; the students and I had common topics.

Q: Is what you teach the same as what you studied?

A: Yes.

Q: Have you continued to study during work?

A: No.

Q: What is your professional title at present?

A: Lecturer. I know it is difficult to be promoted as vice professor. In addition, I am new in the university and have a lack of experience. I have to fulfil many conditions for that, such as publications, working years, quality of my seminars, and my research achievements. Maybe in four years I could think about it.

Q: Does your family support your career? Does your career influence their work, or is it reversed?

A: My parents support me.

Q: Did you get married?

A: No, although I am already 35 years old. But I will marry in a short time. In fact, I have never planned to have a baby. I have to have an "economic base" at first, so that my baby has a happy and rich life.

Q: What is the proportion of male to female leaders in your university?

A: In my department, male teachers are in a dominant position– both as department leaders or normal teachers.

Q: Can you feel the differences at work between men and women?

A: I think that generally, the males have better abilities than the females– in academic abilities, teaching abilities, educational degree and professional title. Maybe the

married female colleagues spend more time for their families. Or, in other words, they accepted their social roles as mothers and wives. They see their family as the most important element in their lives. The job for some of them is only a way to get more income for their families. They spend lots of time with their family; as a result, they pay less attention to the seminars they teach. They do not have enough time to think about other methods which could make the seminars attractive, and therefore, some of their seminars are boring to the students. After marriage, most of the female teachers choose to take care of their families instead of achieving higher degrees, which is why their academic degrees are lower than their male counterparts.

Q: Is your academic degree the highest in your department?

A: No. I think my Doctorate is not high in my department, because many teachers have a Master's or a Doctorate degree. Of course, some older teachers, who will retire in two or three years, have only Bachelor degrees.

Q: Did you studying abroad give you an advantage at work?

A: I must say, the experience of studying abroad is for me an important event in my life; I would never regret doing that.

Q: That is all for the interview.

A: Oh, good. It is so nice to talk with you.

Q: We also think so. Thanks again for coming.

A: You are welcome.