

2016-17 National Youth Observation Competition-Investigative Reporting

Student Portfolios



Contents

Social Responsibility Section

P2

Autism in China:

Parents with Autistic Kids Struggle for Help

Hangzhou Foreign Language School A-level Center, Jingyi Yuan;
Shandong Experimental High School, Chen Cao;
The Attached High School of Nankai University, Yuhuan Zhang

P8

Two Families of Eight Million: Families with Alzheimer's Disease Patients are Suffering

Shandong Experimental High School, Xichen Li / Xinyi Meng / Zihe Han;
Zhenhai High School, Jiayi Lin

P14

Traffic-cheating of The Chinese Old People

Nanjing Foreign Language School, Heyou Pan / Tianchun Ni / Mengqiao Cai

P19

Which to Quit? Another Angel or the Only Job?

Nanjing Foreign Language School
Zhanzhi Cao / Longqing Chen / Weijia Song / Tianhui Xu

Contents

General Section

P27

***Vanishing Treasure: Modernization Wipes Out
Handmade Laces Techniques Die Out***

The Affiliated High School to Hangzhou Normal University,
Lingyi Hang / Jiamin Sun

P33

“Did you like my post?”

The Psychology in WeChat Moments

Shandong Experimental High School, Yujia Gao / Ran Wei / Haoyang Xie / Wei Xu

P40

***Sharing Bicycles and Sharing World:
Chinese’s Sharing Economy***

Chengdu Foreign Language School, Muxi Zhuang/ Yichi Liu/Zhujun Sun;
Hefei NO.8 Senior High School, Runqi Jiang

P45

The Firmest Supporters Behind Superstars

The Affiliated High School of SCNU, Ruxiang Yang
Alcanta International College, Danyu Chen

Youth Investigative Reporting

Social Responsibility

2016-2017

Investigative Reporting-The First Prize

Autism in China

Parents with Autistic Kids Struggle for Help

Hangzhou Foreign Language School A-level Center, Jingyi Yuan
Shandong Experimental High School, Chen Cao
The Attached School Of Nankai University, Yuhuan Zhang

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When Ms. Chen's daughter was diagnosed as having autism 14 years ago, Ms. Chen's life took a sudden turn: The submarine engineer decided to commit herself to helping children and parents who struggle to fight autism. At age 30, she started the first autism treatment center in the affluent city of Southern China's Hangzhou.

Looking back, the engineer turned the education professional, Ms. Chen said she simply had no other choice because of the limited resources for autistic people in Hangzhou. "I was anxious and searched Hangzhou all around but could not find any suitable school or training center for her."

Mainly for her daughter, in 2003, Ms. Ma sold her apartment and founded Hangzhou Carnation Children's Autism Treatment Center in Hangzhou. Now, there are now 60 autistic children like Miaomiao and 30 teachers in the center.

Ms. Ma's daughter Miaomiao, He, 16, was first diagnosed as having autism in 2002. "Children usually start to communicate with people around them by words and sentences around two years old, but Miaomiao showed no

attempt to communication," said Ms. Ma.

Miaomiao is one of the most fortunate autistic children whose families can afford the high medical costs for treating autism in China. Currently, there are over 2 million autistic children in China, but many of them lack financial means and don't receive professional treatments, according to a report on the Development of Autism Children in China published in 2014.



Ms. Ma was talking to her autistic child, Miaomiao.

Photo provided by Chen Ma.

The Scarcity of Resources for Autism

According to Beijing Disabled Person's Federation, 1.53% of children under 14 years old in Beijing have Autism, while another estimate by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shows the number could be as high as 6.54%.

"After diagnosis, many parents don't know where to get professional help," Ms. Ma said. "Although there are some resources on the internet, many of them are usually misleading." Because the credentials of the training centers differ greatly, parents often have little idea about which center suits their children most.

For many parents with autistic children in China, it is common for them to travel long distance just to find suitable treatments that are not available in their home cities. "We go to Jinan regularly for the remedy of sleeping disorder. There is no such remedy for autistics in Hangzhou, so we have to travel from Southern China to the North," said Ms. Ma on the train from Hangzhou to Jinan, a city in Northern China, with Miaomiao on July 31, 2016.

Ms. Ma said high costs can also be a burden for parents. "Every year we recruit about 10 teachers. However, after two or three years of training, only two or three teachers choose to stay." said Ms.

Ma. The salary of one teacher in the treatment center

per month is between 3000 to 4000 yuan, which is far below the average monthly salary of 4,831 yuan in Hangzhou.

Private treatment centers face the paradox between using high salaries to attract qualified professionals and keeping the tuition at a relatively low level. While a higher salary may keep the center's staff stay for longer periods, Ms. Ma said increasing operating costs will add to the already high education costs and discourage parents from getting professional help for their children.

"Even if they can gain access to an education center, it sometimes means that they have to wait two or three years before receiving the training due to the lack of qualified teacher and resources," Ms. Ma said. As there are only four universities and vocational colleges have the major in special education, training centers often face the difficulty of recruiting qualified professionals.

On the other hand, the public school system does not support the autistic children. Nearly 90% of the autistic children at preschool age could not receive proper treatment, according to China National Radio.

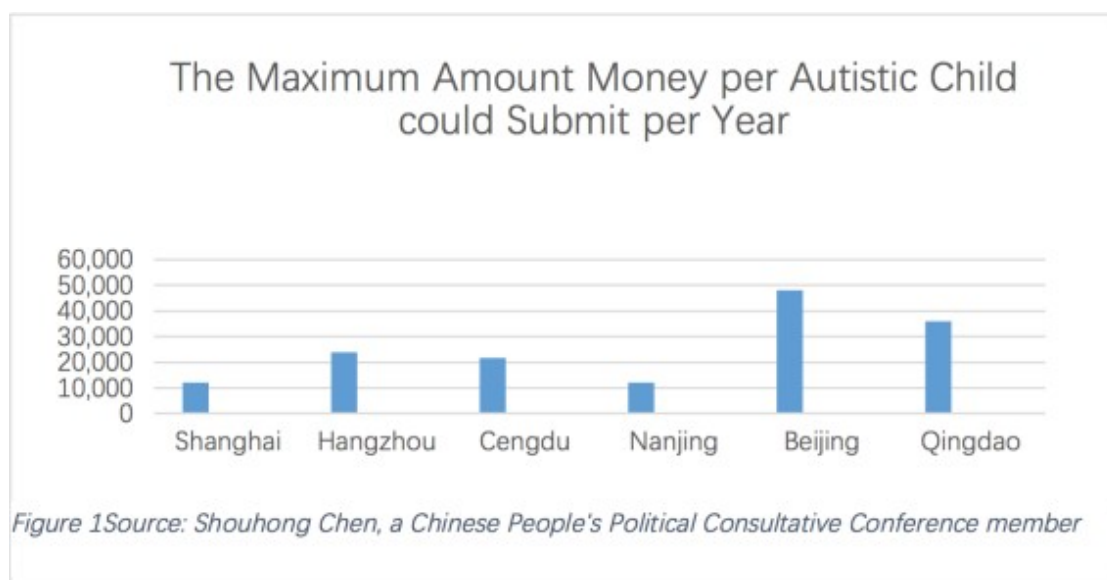
On April 6, 2016, the first public school that recruit autistic children in Guangzhou began to enroll students. However, it could only enroll 17 students for the first grade, while there are as many as 100,000 autistic children in Guangzhou. In order to get their children enrolled, some parents had to wait

outside the school for three days, according to Yangcheng Evening News.

“Such scarcity of resources seriously affects the therapy’s effect,” said Guoling Zhou, a doctor specialized in treating autism at Hangzhou No.7 Hospital, “The earlier the child starts to receive treatments, the better he or she would recover.”

Government and non-profit organizations: How helpful are they?

“Concerning the nature of autism, I am not optimistic about the future for autistics,” said Mr. Zhou. As autism is a genetic disease, there is no cure for it. “Our remedy now is specific to the symptoms but not to the root of the disease. This is why many cases take progression so slowly and parents can hardly insist to take treatment more than three or four years, both economically and psychologically,” Mr. Zhou said.



In Hangzhou, the Federation of Disabled Persons can cover up to medical costs of 24,000 yuan per year for families with autistic children. However, parents in Hangzhou still face significant financial

burdens, as typical annual medical costs in a non-profit organization are often more than 50,000 yuan. Notably, not all cities in China have similar policies as Hangzhou, and many of them do not have

any official subsidies for families with autistic children.

Many families also face the difficulty of balancing between time commitments for taking care of the autistic children and full-time jobs. In order to look after their children, some parents have to quit their full-time jobs to accompany their children's needs.

In the meantime, with the increasing attention paid to Autism, volunteer work like "Give the Mothers of Autistic Children a Spare Sunday" becomes more and more popular. However, as most of the volunteer lacks understandings of autistic children's need and cannot provide lasting and professional help, many of volunteers soon lose their interest in this kind of work.

The high turnover rate of volunteers makes it hard for volunteers to build trust

among autistic children, because these children often need longer term time commitment from the volunteers, according to a research done by Professor Wang Wizen from Hangzhou Normal University in 2015.

It is hard for the autistic children to well communicate with someone whom, they think, "intrudes" their lives. Volunteers are often not effectively operating their work to help the teachers. They are easily disappointed.

"Although we visit the treatment center more than ten times, most of our group members are not familiar with how to communicate with those children," said Mingchen Sun, one volunteer from the Attached High School of Nankai University.

The Future of Autistics and the Possible Solutions

Is inclusive education possible? The answer is yes.

According to Report on the Development of Autism Children in China published in 2014, 95% of the disabled children from 6 to 21 years old attended normal schools. By contrast, there are only 10.43% of the autistic children in China could attend normal schools in the same year.

Miaomiao was rejected by primary schools, so she has to stay with the training center. Although more and more people get to know the concept of Autism, the society still don't have a healthy environment to provide sufficient tolerance for autistic children to blend into the mainstream society," Ms. Miao said.

In the United States. Chamberlain and Harrick's research shows that most of the school faculty and students possess positive attitudes toward the autistic children and successfully build warm relationships with them.

In France, education concerning autism has been carried out for more than ten years. Every autistic children study in both treatment centers and normal schools, and their curriculum are personalized to suit their needs. The government has also financed over 500 education institutions for autistic children and 800 welfare institutions for autistic adults.

While in the U.S. and France inclusive education is widely implemented, autistic children in China are mostly prevented from taking classes with other students.

“Although 9-year compulsory education is free to every Chinese child, autistic children are always rejected by the public schools,” Ms. Ma said. This makes it harder for these autistic children to feel inclusive in the society and to improve their communication abilities through day-to-day interactions with other children.

“Miaomiao is a typical type of autistic child — it's hard to recognize her progress day by day. But thanks to my persistence, she now can communicate with strangers, do chores and control her mood.” The latest picture in Ms. Ma's Moment in WeChat, a popular social media platform in China, shows Miaomiao smiles in front of the camera. “When she noticed that I was taking photos of her, she smiled at me and tried to make poses.

Ms. Ma said her biggest hope is Miaomiao can take good care of herself. “As parents of autistics, we all share the same anxiety – what our children's lives will be like after we die.”

Investigative Reporting-The First Prize

Two Families of Eight Million

Families with Alzheimer's Disease Patients
are Suffering

Shandong Experimental High School, Xichen Li
Shandong Experimental High School, Xinyi Meng
Shandong Experimental High School, Zihe Han
Zhenhai High School, Jiayi Lin

山东省实验中学, 李熙琛
山东省实验中学, 孟欣怡
山东省实验中学, 韩子誅
镇海中学, 林佳怡

Mrs. Qiu huddled up in the armchair, rubbing her hands ceaselessly.

"Mom, it is time to bed." Zhao said.

"I...I want to go home...go home..." Mrs. Qiu was flustered.

"Where is your home?"

"Umm...I'm from Taitouhe."

"This is where your mom came from. Aren't you from Yuanjia?"

"Oh...Fine. I'm from Yuanjia then."

She bowed her head, just like a little girl who felt guilty and sorry for not being able to answer teacher's questions correctly.

This year, the old lady, Mrs. Qiu, reached 90 years old. She was confirmed diagnosis as Alzheimer's disease (AD) four years ago. It is her retired better-off son called Zhao who is taking care of her in Jinan.

China has the largest number of AD patients in the world. Facing the burdens of memory loss and the brain degenerating of AD patients, Mrs. Qiu's and Mr. Guo's families in Shandong have been struggling unspeakably for years. The professional and touchable help are distant for them to reach now.

A hardwood bed, a shaking desk and an old chair were all furniture in Mr. Guo's room. The quilts were in a mess in the corner. The foul smell of sweat pervaded the room. Mr. Guo sat on the bed, and just kept smiling without a word. His body was covered with swelling red mosquito bites.

No one was clear how long Mr. Guo had suffered from AD.

Mr. Guo was a man of few words before AD. He was a poor farmer, but he was still optimistic. He enjoyed cleaning his white porcelain cups carefully and rowing them on the table in the living room. Ten years ago, after a gathering in the village, Mr. Guo walked straight southward to go home, but his home was in the north of the gathering place. In the recent three years, Mr. Guo's condition has deteriorated fiercely. He began to get lost, had no sense of hunger, became short-tempered, and had incontinence.

Mr. Guo has two sons and one daughter. Because of his disease, his two

daughters-in-law and his daughter had to resign to take care of him. Jing is one of his daughters-in-law.

The document published by China Region Development & Reform Institute in 2016 shows that there were more than 8 million AD patients in China. It means that there are 8 million families fighting with both physical and mental pains now, just like Mr. Guo's and Mrs. Qiu's families.

2. The unbearable burden

Mrs. Qiu's biological clock was completely disrupted. Twenty o'clock was the time for her to get up and start strolling around.

She would tear up a roll of bathroom tissue and spread it all over the floor piece by piece. Then she would sit on the floor and wave her arms and legs to gather the pieces together. The movement is like she was paddling. The only thing Zhao could do was put the things back in the next morning day after day. Finally, they decided to lock her in her bedroom at night.

A medical essay called *Progress in studies of the reciprocal interaction between sleep disorders and Alzheimer's disease* shows that 44% of AD patients are associated with sleep disorders, which will break the rhythm of sleep. They would not sleep night after night. Some patients would talk in one direction, catch things in the air, and may have incontinence at night.

Falling asleep meant the end of troubles for Zhao, but not for Jing, because another hard night fighting with enuresis came to her.

Jing threw the pants into a basin and poured hot water. "Again." She sighed.

At first, Jing tried using diapers, but it was too limited for an adult's urinary volume. Almost every day, Jing had to fight against Mr. Guo and his wet pants. "He does not allow me to take off his pants. If I still insist on doing the things he is unwilling to do, he will use whatever he can reach to hit me." Jing rolled up her sleeves, and the bruises were exposed in air.

The lack of sleeping, the hard communication, and the violence. These huge burdens

bring caregivers both anxiety and boredom.

In many QQ group for AD's families, there are negative comments, such as "I feel hopeless" and "I feel like a puppet."

According to *Modern Preventive Medicine, 2009*, the rate of depression and anxiety in those who nursed AD patients were significantly higher than normal people.



Jing (left) was shouting to Mr. Mr. Guo (middle) in the impatient tone. Mr. Guo's daughter (right) could do nothing but acquiescence. Photographed by Xichen Li, at Mr. Mr. Guo's home in Changqing, Jinan, July 18,2017.

3. The shortage

“Actually, families’ stress is reasonable. They lack touchable professional helps. For one side, our medical system is defective. For the other side, AD patients’ families hold wrong perspectives.” A neurologist from Jinan No.3 Hospital called Guohua Li said.

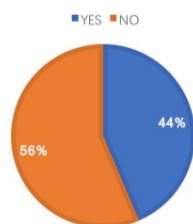
Nowadays, AD patients’ families get professional help mainly depending on hospitals, and community services are still relatively unpopular. An online survey of 360 people mostly from Shandong, showed that 79.8 percent communities have no propaganda and guidance in any way, for example, AD screening, lectures, related nursing directions or any posters. However, hospitals hold a considerable disadvantage: people have to spend lots of time and money.

Mrs. Qiu’s families finally gave up treating. “In most cases, examination or consulting will take 2 or even 5 hours in the hospital, which proves helplessness to the cure of this disease. And plus, the medicine is really expensive- we need to pay at least 1000

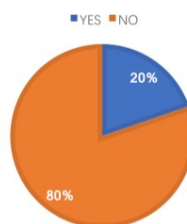
RMB for a month.” Zhao said.

According to the 2017 temporary management methods of subsidy given by Public Health Service, the chronic disease’s patients can have 50 RMB subsidy per month. Compared with the large amounts of money spent on the treatment of AD, the 50 RMB hardly helps.

DO YOU THINK AD IS A NORMAL AGING PHENOMENON?



DOES YOUR COMMUNITY HAVE A PUBLIC AWARENESS OF AD?



The online survey carried out by Shandong Experimental High School including 360 effective answers.

According to *China Newsweek*, the public awareness of AD is 96.16 percent, but it does not mean people have correct understanding. The online survey carried out by Shandong Experimental High School showed that 43.4 percent of them thought AD is a normal aging process.

For another, the traditional shame-based idea may also play a role.

Today, although China does not have a specific system for AD, it is promoting the medicinal insurance and the subsistence security systems.

Facing to Chinese policies of the subsidy, although Jing had a financial burden, she chose to keep silent. She was worried about discrimination. "I would rather be poor than let the whole world know I have a crazy father-in-law." She said.

In China, AD has a disrespectful name- "chidai," which means an idiot. Additionally, in the traditional Chinese culture, people firmly believe that "family's shame should not go public." This opinion makes some people decline getting help from the outside world.

"Although we are facing many problems, I have to say that quitting asking for help is an unwise decision. Because different stages have different characteristics, families need professionals to give proper suggestions in order that they can know how to face patient's strange behaviors under the different situations and how to avoid complications, which make it more stressed for the patients and their families. We need more touchable access to active acceptance of outside help, and we also need people to know AD's knowledge to decrease discrimination. I think community service system is a good idea." Doctor Li said.

In Australia, it has community service projects balances community learning preferences with proven strategies using multiple approaches as professional knowledge popularization such as skill training, distributing brochures, and they also share resource for free.

When the sun rose up, Zhao opened the door and helped Mrs. Qiu seat on her armchair again as every morning. Mrs. Qiu was bathing in the sunlight. She bowed her head. The dim shadow was on the wall.

"Another day begins." Zhao said.

Investigative Reporting-The Second Prize

Traffic-cheating of the Chinese Old People

A Sorrow of the Improper Treatment towards the Elderly without Family

Nanjing Foreign Language School, Heyou Pan
Nanjing Foreign Language School, Tianchun Ni
Nanjing Foreign Language School, Mengqiao Cai

南京外国语学校，潘何悠
南京外国语学校，倪天纯
南京外国语学校，蔡孟桥

The accident happened to Ye

Mingshu Ye stood on the side of the road. His bicycle lied on the road-as well as an old lady. People started to gather around them, chattering with each other.

This route, starting from his school to his home, usually took the 16-year-old half an hour. It's not the most convenient path but the most enjoyable one, with challenging curves on Mount Zijin. But this time, it took him days and the curves became the start of his nightmare.

Ye is an ordinary high school student of Nanjing Xuanwu High School, China. His classmates describe him as somewhat 'socially challenged'. As his class monitor Feiyi Yun said, "Ye seldom takes part in school activities, but no one can deny that he is a hard-working student. Ye's family has trouble in finance, maybe this is one of the reasons why he rejects communicating with other students." And his head teacher thought of him as a 'friendly but extremely introverted' student.

"When he went home on January 13th", Ye recollected, "an old lady suddenly fell over in front of my bicycle" He memorized it happened on the curve of Mount Zijin.

"I couldn't brake and stroke on her. Ye described and then explained

that "I am sure it was the lady who lay down first, there was no one nearby to witness, nor was there any surveillance camera. "People started to gather around and the lady cried for help, insisting that Ye stroke her down. Ye tried to take her to the hospital for further diagnosis, but she refused to move. Ye also said: " The old lady promised to leave immediately only if I pay her 3000 RMB. " However, Ye chose to call the police.

One hour later, the police arrived, as well as his parents. Without any witness, Ye had no advantage in this case. He faced the problem of either pay the 3000 RMB and privately end this event, or, solve it on the court. Mr Sun, the police in charge of this accident told us that: "I know there are a lot of people who do traffic-cheating, but I cannot let Ye go without any proof that he is innocent."

It was difficult for his family to pay the 3000, but it was even harder for them to hire a lawyer. Ye's mother said after she worked a day from the food market: " Ye's father and I earn only about 7000RMB a month, we

don't have enough money to own a lawyer." And she also mentioned about Ye: "He is a lovely boy, I can't imagine that he stroke an old lady intentionally"

After the mediation of the police, Ye's family finally compensated the lady with 300 yuan and paid all the money she needed for medical diagnosis-1500 yuan.

The Situation

Ye is not the first nor the most tragic victim of traffic racketeering, the action of cheating money from drivers by deliberately tumbling down in places with no witness. In November 20, 2006, Peng Yu, a citizen in Nanjing, took an old lady who stepped off at the bus station to hospital, but was framed up as the one who swept her off. This case struck all netizens in China and the litigation took 2 years to come with an end. Peng Yu was adjudicated to pay 40,000 yuan. This was the first known case of racketeering of China.

problems in China. With the rise of people's alertness comes the detachment in various urgent accidents. In October 13th, 2011, a two-year-old girl, Wang Yue, was struck down by a car. 18 people passed by in 7 minutes, but nobody dare to help. When the ambulance finally arrived, it was already too late to save her life.

Countless cases ensued. According to our survey, among the claimed-racketeering cases appeared in China each year, 62% percent of them was led by old people beyond 60 years old.

This social phenomenon is becoming one of the most serious moral

Similar accidents happening again and again keep questioning people. Why is this? Why are the elderly people, who used to be regarded as the symbol of experience, becoming a group of villains who cheat with the protection of law?

The Interview of Mrs. Liu

After many postponement, we finally made a contact to Mrs. Liu, the lady "struck down" by Mingshu Ye. As promised, her name would not appear on our report.

The first several interviews were proceeded through phone calls. But Liu finally decided to meet us because "the electricity fee was expensive".

Liu rejected to tell anything about her personal life at first, and simply described her intention as "to earn some extra money". We kept asking and promised to pay her more when the interview is over. Liu thus reluctantly agreed to say more.

She led us to her home. It was difficult to call this place "home". Shabby furniture scattered everywhere-most of them were acquired from waste yards. According to Liu, her children left without words after graduation, and her pension was not even enough for monthly electricity and water bill.

Five years ago, her husband died from cancer, and the condition became worse. They cost every piece of their savings, and the pension became less with the loss of her companion. It was at that time when she had the idea of getting money through racketeering.

Sadly, Liu's experience is not the only, and Ye would not be the last victim.

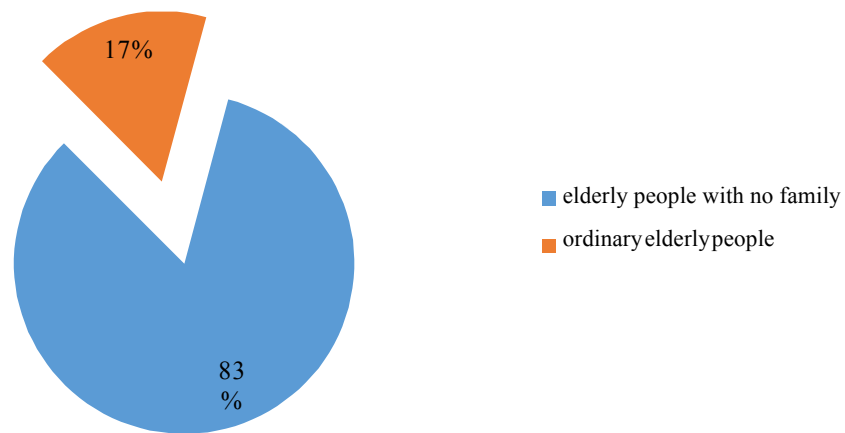
Liu's income is not fixed. "Sometimes I can get a lot if the driver is unwilling to waste much time on me, but sometimes I would not get much if they insisted to check in the hospital. " She said about the income from traffic-treating.

There was even once when she cheated a Lamborghini driver who had friends in the police office. She was adjudicated to compensate the repair money.

"I cannot even memorize my children, my normal pension is under 800 yuan." Liu told us about her short of money.

Liu admitted that she is not the only solitary old people who do racketeering in her community. This community, aimed by the government to provide the elderly people with cheaper house rent, became the last shelter of many olds. While we ask Liu's neighbour Mrs Feng, she said "it's very common to do the traffic-treating. " Their children left them here to live by themselves. As a result, many of them had to do a living. Without much working abilities, they chose the easiest way to earn-to cheat.

Swindle Probability of elderly person



In China there are thousands of traffic racketeering happening every year. Above 80% are caused by people of over 60 years old and 83% of these people are with no family.

While the government still cannot give a perfect solution to the finance problem of elderly people with no family, the possibility of traffic racketeering will still be high.

Investigative Reporting-The Second Prize

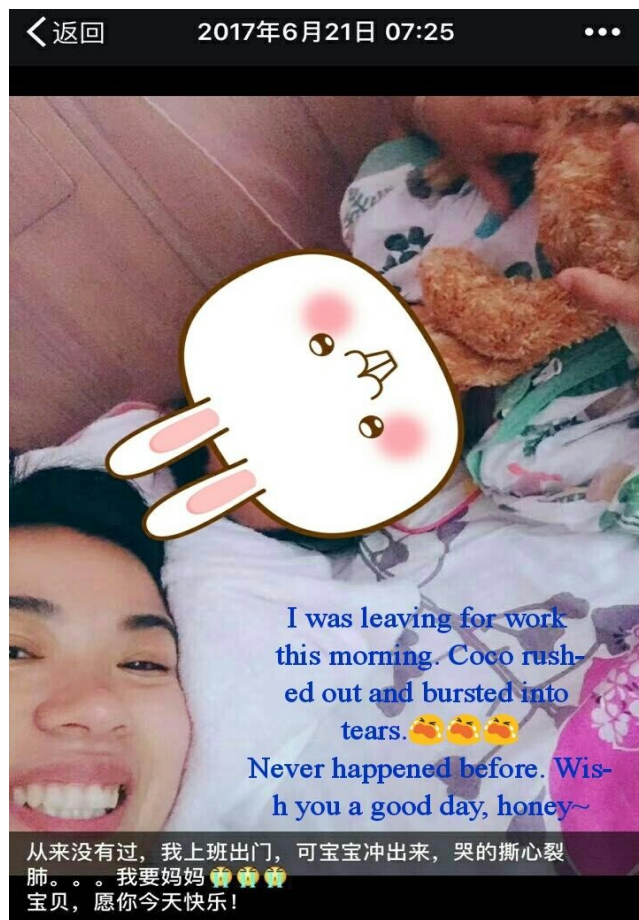
Which to Quit? Another Angle or the Only Job?

**Women Find Themselves Discriminated at
Workplace after the Two-child Policy**

Nanjing Foreign Language School, Zhenzhi Cao / Longqing Chen
Nanjing Foreign Language School, Weijia Song / Tianhui Xu

南京外国语学校，曹展之 / 陈泷清
南京外国语学校，宋惟嘉 / 徐天绘

A slightest glimpse



“Pamela” Jin (pseudo name) plays with her 2-year-old daughter “Coco” at her home on the morning of June 21, 2017. The little girl cries at her mom’s leaving home. Pamela decides to stay for a while before going to work.

However, she recently resigned from the Chunxi Investment Company that she dedicated most of her efforts to in the past four years.

Pamela has been seeking legal aid at Nanjing Women’s Federation since she quitted her job in late June.

“Forced, actually,” said the woman when asked about the reason why she had it quitted.

“Inequity is really driving me crazy.”

She ascribed the inequity to the discrimination on women employees who have plans to give birth to babies.

“After two-child policy was carried out, it got even worse.”

Any women at their fertile age, with one child or without, were suspected by their bosses to have greater possibility to get pregnant than ever.

The People’s Congress officially passed the legislation that allows all couples to have two children in October 2015. It is known as the two-child policy, which is carried out to mitigate aging problem. The problem gets more severe than ever, as the percentage of people whose age is above 60 years old has reached 13.26% according to the latest

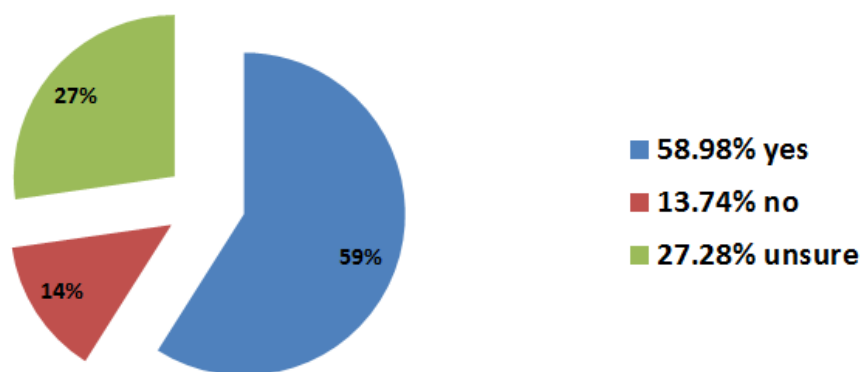
census held in 2010.

However, there were heated discussions by Internet users and deputies to the People's Congress pointing out that the policy is doing harm to women at workplace.

An online survey was conducted by Team 4 to collect people's experience and opinions on the following two issues: gender discrimination at their workplace, whether and how the two-child policy is related to gender discrimination.

The data of this survey responded by 997 people indicates that 58.98% of them think that the full two-child policy has a negative effect on the career of women at fertile age.

Do you think that the full two-child policy is negatively affecting the career of women at their fertile age?



Source: www.sojump.com

When asked whether she plans to have a second child right after the policy was announced, Pamela nodded.

“I thought it would be great to have another baby. Coco loves the idea, too. But some of my colleagues were complaining about the critics from their supervisors when they mentioned a little bit about the baby plan. They got grumpy. ”

“It seemed that we just couldn't afford to have another baby under current working environment. It will be a big challenge for my job at my company,” added she.

50.55% of the surveyed people considered the written claims prohibiting women from pregnancy as gender discrimination. However, Pamela mentioned that there were no written regulations like this. They are actually against the law.

If companies fail to treat male and female workers equally or infringe any of the women's legal rights-dismiss female workers for the excuses of their marriage, pregnancy, maternity leave or nursing for instance, the labor administrative department in charge shall issue a warning, command a correction or impose a fine as the administrative disciplinary.

*Article III, Chapter VIII of
The Assurance Law of Women's Rights and Interest of PRC*

As shown above, the law is too weak to punish all the illicit acts. There are totally 22,579,475 registered companies according to China's National Bureau of Statistics by the end of June 2015 that requires supervision. A giant blank area is left behind by simply mention "a warning, a correction or a fine".

Underlying discriminations can remain unknown to the public, even not against the law.

Pamela mentioned her unpleasant experience when she was pregnant with her first kid.

"For nearly two years, I was the only one in my department without any promotion no matter how hard I worked. I literally missed every opportunity according to my boss. Less performed female colleagues who promised the boss that they won't plan for a baby in recent years, were promoted to senior positions. Male coworkers get promotions regardless whether they have children or not."

Pamela is not alone. According to the survey, 28% of the female respondents experienced gender discrimination at workplace, another 70% responded that their positions were lowered or even eliminated during pregnancy, only 30% responded that their job opportunities remained uninfluenced or became better after the pregnancy.

"My family wants to have another baby. I talked to my supervisor about my plans for I thought that she would understand for she is also a working mom. But clearly it did not turn out as I expected."

According to Pamela, if she chose to continue with her job, her employer would pay the minimum salary during her maternity leave. But her position can't be guaranteed to rise upon ever after returning from the leave.

Pamela is stressed out this time.

In the end, the hard-working woman with four-year superior performance quitted her job in late June.

“The minimum salary wouldn’t help provide another child with a better living condition. Since one of the parents will spend most of the time looking after the babies, quitting my job is the best option,” according to Pamela.

A deeper observation

Pamela’s experience isn’t unique according to Ying Ding, the functionary of the Departments for Women’s Rights and Interest in Nanjing Women’s Federation.

The department deals with complaints of gender discrimination at workplace by providing relatively inexpensive legal aids. It has the most comprehensive documents recording such kind of issues.

When asked whether and how the two-child policy affects female employees, she answered with worry, “Even before the two-child policy, women, especially expecting moms, are treated with discriminating practices.”

She said that the federation hotline receives complaints specifically on employment discrimination related to two-child policy almost every day.

“For example, there is a woman working as a waitress in a restaurant, when her manager found out that she is expecting another baby, the manager told her that she was „too tired to work as a waitress“, and promised to assign her another position.”

“But there is no suitable position for a heavily pregnant woman in the restaurant.”

As the investigation went deeper, the journalists decided to interview employers to find out their concerns.

Zhan Li is a manager of a private-operated media company in Nanjing.

“There is only one out of the eleven employers is female who remains single and is unwilling to have a baby in the future,”said Zhan. Those young women who plan to have babies are never taken into consideration while we employ staffs.”

When questioned whether she is aware of the fact that the situation above reflects gender discrimination, Zhan told us her own concerns.

We never want to encourage gender discrimination. Our company doesn’t want miss some talented staffs among the female applicants in this way as well. Additionally, as a female myself, I am really willing to offer the young girls with the same working opportunities,” said Zhan.

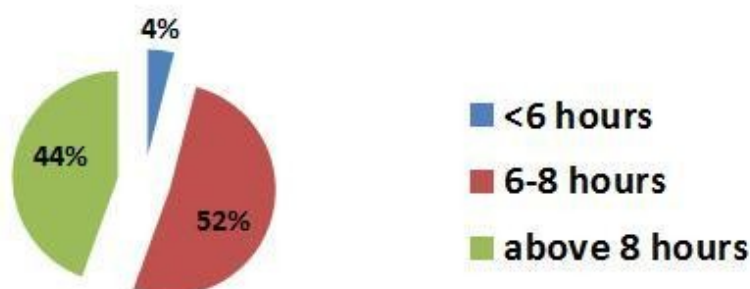
But as the manager, the benefit of the company should always come first. We employers are afraid of losing productivity from working moms.

So, what is the connection between having a baby and productivity?

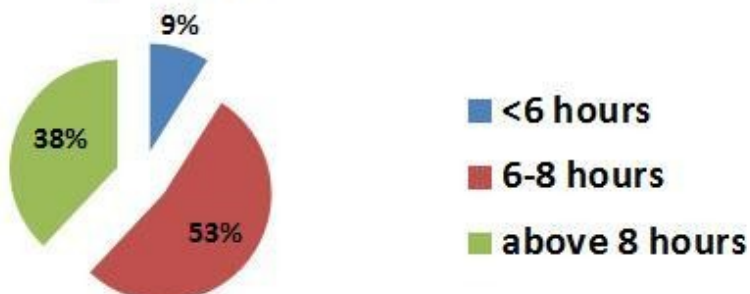
According to the survey, after giving birth to the first child, only 38% of the surveyed two-child mother could afford to spend above 8 hours working, 53% of them from six to eight hours, and 9% of them below six hours, comparing with 45%, 51%, and 4% before pregnancy.

How much time do you spent on working?

Before pregnancy



After giving birth to the first child



Source: www.sojump.com

As a mother myself, I know so well about how much time will be taken from a woman's career when she is raising a child," said Zhan.

Taking myself as an example, I was not able to go on a long business trip during at least first 5 years I had my baby, at least not willing to. It was really hard for me to leave the baby at home and go on a business trip. I kept worrying about her all the time, ended up lower the efficiency for work," she explained.

A faithful outlook

The several cases we studied and the investigation results are hardly flattering to the public for the severe problems it reveals seem difficult to be solved. But there might be some approaches worth a shot.

Prolonging the maternity leave is nowadays an adapted solution, but it is definitely not an effective way to help women gain equal treatment during job hunting for the companies might even get more preserved when recruiting female applicants, and therefore worsen the situation.

Along with the two-child policy, Ms. Ding suggested that there should be more specific policies and regulations guaranteeing women's rights. Because the process of obtaining evidence is long and the cost of litigation afterwards is rather high, the regulations should focus more on rights safeguarding in advance. For instance, laws should prohibit companies from asking the applicants about their fertility plans.

The other possible solution is to establish a more comprehensive social security system, providing opportunity for women to go back to the work and face competitions equally with others. Here, Ms. Ding introduced a concept to us that people should get paid for house chores.

Coco is happy right now to have her mother home and is ready to welcome her baby sister.

Youth Investigative Reporting

General Section

2016-2017

Investigative Reporting-The First Prize

Vanishing Treasure

Modernization Wipes out Handmade Laces,
Techniques Die out

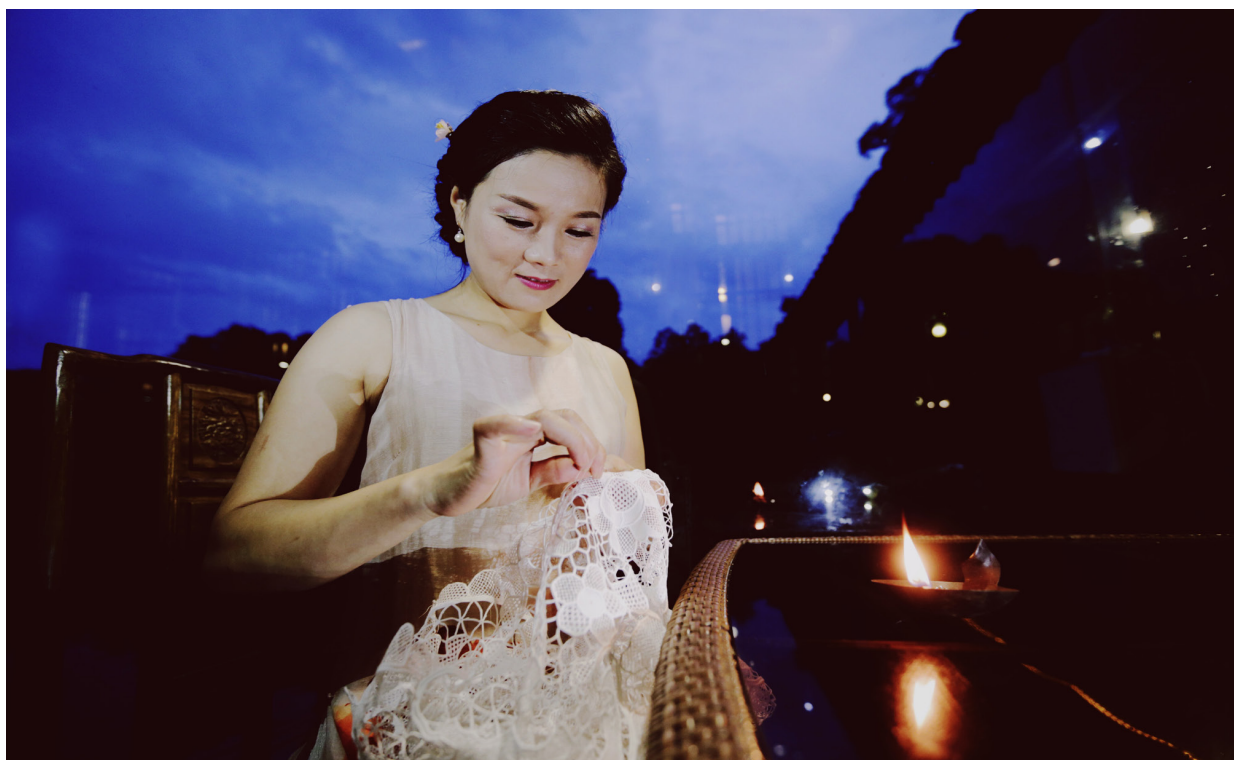
The Affiliated High School to Hangzhou Normal University
Lingyi Hang / Jiamin Sun

杭州师范大学附属中学，杭凌逸 / 孙嘉敏

CULTURE & ARTS

Vanishing Treasure

-----HANDMADE LACES-----



PHOTO/JIEPENG JIN

T027

杭州师范大学附属中学
杭凌屹 Gavin
孙嘉敏 Shirly
The Successors

**Modernization wipes out
handmade laces,
techniques die out**



Lihua Wang, the inheritor of Xiaoshan Laces, is preparing needles and fabrics for knitting laces. Behind her is a young apprentice. PHOTO/GAVIN

Hidden in the darkness, a woman is embroidering a piece of art. She always keeps her head down as if a single stitch would go wrong. It is Xiaoshan Laces that the woman is meticulously making. A beam of light shines through the willow window above her head, reflecting the gorgeousness and delicateness of that handkerchief-like lace. Her hands, white yet wrinkled, literally never stop sewing. With the modernization, some techniques are on the verge of dying out. The story is about one of them.

The prosperity of Xiaoshan Laces

In the year of 1919, Italian missionaries brought this lace-making technique to Xiaoshan, China, because there were a lot of clever women who were good at knitting. The large labor force was also taken into consideration at that time. Having existed for almost a century, people have witnessed the boom of Xiaoshan Laces, and such lace-making skill has become a localized and traditional technique among rural women in Xiaoshan nowadays. In their heyday, that is, the late 1970s, there were more than 200,000 people knitting them to make a living. According to China Industrial Records, over 30 factories for making laces

in which 20,000 women worked were opening and operating on a regular basis during the period of the Republic of China. Therefore, the production scale of laces in Xiaoshan was expanding at a staggering rate, becoming a brand new and profitable industry. Until now, handmade laces have developed into way more patterns than they used to.

II
In late 1970s, there were more than 200,000 people knitting them to make a living.

The history of Xiaoshan laces is still vivid in its locals' mind. Lihua, who was still a kid at that time, is one of them. Now, she is one of the few inheritors of Xiaoshan Handmade Laces, Zhejiang's intangible cultural heritage. In the interview, she still feels excited when mentioning this memorable history. She says nostalgically, "In my early memory, I had always nestled up to my parents helping them thread needles, and being influenced by what I constantly saw and heard. I had this keen interest of knitting Xiaoshan Laces. After furthering my study in academy of fine arts in, I became an apprentice to a master of arts and crafts Xixiang Zhao, which officially turned me into a inheritor of Xiaoshan Laces."

”

These handmade laces are largely replaced by mechanization productions that are less time-consuming and require relatively low cost in seek of more profits.

”

The rise of Embroidery machines

The prosperity of Xiaoshan Laces, which more than 200,000 workers knitting together, does not exist anymore. On the other hand, a new upsurge in using machines to embroider gradually replaces the role of manual lace-making techniques. After basking in the sunshine, laces, unfortunately, have to undergo a period of rain and storm. Should people choose a complete industrialized way, or should they continue to knit laces despite a decreasing number of successors? Using delicate details and various pattern is one of the hallmarks of handmade laces. They are commonly applied to home textiles, curtains, cushions, coasters, clothes, and other kinds of decorations. However, with the development of technology, mechanization productions that are less time-consuming and require relatively low cost in seek of more profits become preferable.

Lihua, still remains confident and proud of handmade laces. Granted, this trend do occur with the modernization, but Xiaoshan Laces have irreplaceable characteristics. Then,

she shows a lot of laces that she has made to us, and we are truly impressed and amazed, especially by the stark contrast between machine-made and handmade laces. Manual laces are of pure beauty as if they were engraved in a marvellous piece of ivory- subtle and refined.

Compared to the industrialized laces, she says, “even laymen can clearly distinguish that machine-made laces are too plane, that is, lack aesthetic perception of layers.” She adds, “during the process of knitting, workers usually use threads of different thickness and more than 30 types of stitches, so manual laces are well-controlled and of three dimensional appeal. In addition, a palm-size lace will take about 10 days to complete, which contains a designer’s both inspiration and affection. From the perspective of arts, “Xiaoshan Laces are warm and have a sense of spirituality to me.” She says softly.

Authentic handmade Laces with Bowers on it. It usually takes 10 days to complete.PHOTO/GAVIN



Difficulties of inheriting Xiaoshan Laces

From 200,000 people engaging in knitting Xiaoshan Laces to only fewer than 200 people that can actually master the lace-making skills, Xiaoshan Laces are on the verge of dying out. These few craftsmen remained like Lihua Wang and her master Xixiang Zhao are exerting themselves to save Xiaoshan Laces and pass this technique on.

Xixiang is almost 80 years old, but he still provides sources of how to knit Xiaoshan Laces for future generations. For example, he spent half a year recording all the stitches and fabrication process into one single project, extra heavy thousand-string counterpane with borders on each side, which won a gold medal on the West Lake Exposition in the year of 2000.

After performing a great feat, Xixiang and his apprentice Lihua realized, the key to inheriting Xiaoshan Laces is to find the right inheritors instead of simply creating projects or books. But the problem is: who will be the next successor after Lihua? “The main way to inherit this technique now is through teaching step by step,” she says in the interview, “I am recruiting apprentices, but the problem is that most of them are like butterflies; they are not able to concentrate for a long time. The essence of making good laces is to buckle down and work on the subtlest detail.

“The key to inheriting Xiaoshan Laces is to find the right inheritors.”



The museum where Lihua and other masters work. Each of them has a studio. PHOTO/GAVIN

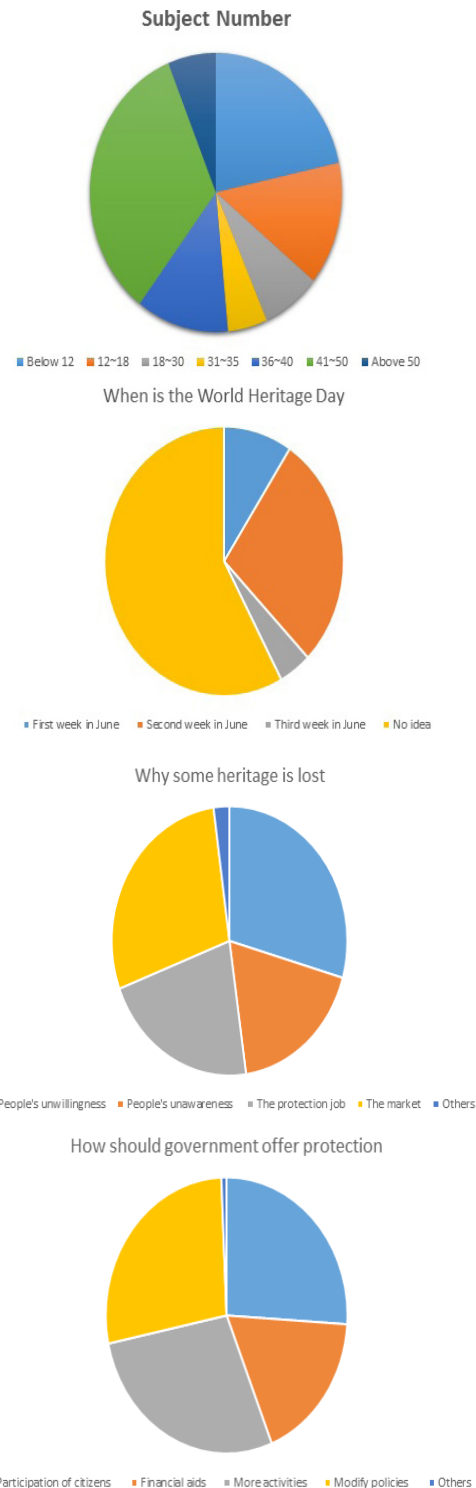
“If you can’t find the inner peace, I’m sorry but you had better not waste your time on learning how to knit Xiaoshan Laces.” She says with a rarely serious tone.

Lihua also organizes some activities from time to time: teach students in middle schools and high schools, elaborate the fabrication process of Xiaoshan Laces to senior citizens in communities. There is only one goal of her acts: encourage more people to inherit this technique. At the end of the interview, she calls on more people who are interested in knitting Xiaoshan Laces to join her, and save this vanishing cultural heritage.

Seeing the BIG PICTURE

After finding out the status quo of one specific intangible cultural heritage, we conduct questionnaires about the big picture of intangible cultural heritage online. Until July 24th, there have been 454 people participating in the survey and have given their own advice. Over 76% of people have no idea what the date of World Heritage Day is, and 17% of people do not even know anything about intangible cultural heritage. Speaking of the biggest challenge for inheriting intangible cultural heritage, 70% of people attribute to the general public's unawareness of protection. Therefore, teaching lessons about intangible cultural heritage in schools and communities, as Lihua proposes, is absolutely right.

Similarly, the problem of inheritors that Lihua brought up is reflected on the result as well. 80% of people think that youngsters' unwillingness or lack of interests directly causes the disappearances of some techniques. Some suggest that using the VR technology offers people more visual experience; some propose that making the past serve the present can be useful because innovations have to be made to extend the ancient culture; others advise that the government should assist intangible cultural heritage by offering financial support, while a few point out that using the internet and other means of communication can imperceptibly influence and thus allowing people to realize the importance of inheriting intangible cultural heritage like Xiaoshan Laces.



Investigative Reporting-The First Prize

“Did You like Post?”

The Psychology in WeChat Moments

Shandong Experimental High School, Yujia Gao / Ran Wei
Shandong Experimental High School, Haoyang Xie / Wei Xu

山东省实验中学，高雨佳 / 尉然 / 谢昊洋 / 徐伟



“DID YOU LIKE MY POST?”

The Psychology in WeChat Moments

TEAM 06

高雨佳 尉然 谢昊洋 徐伟

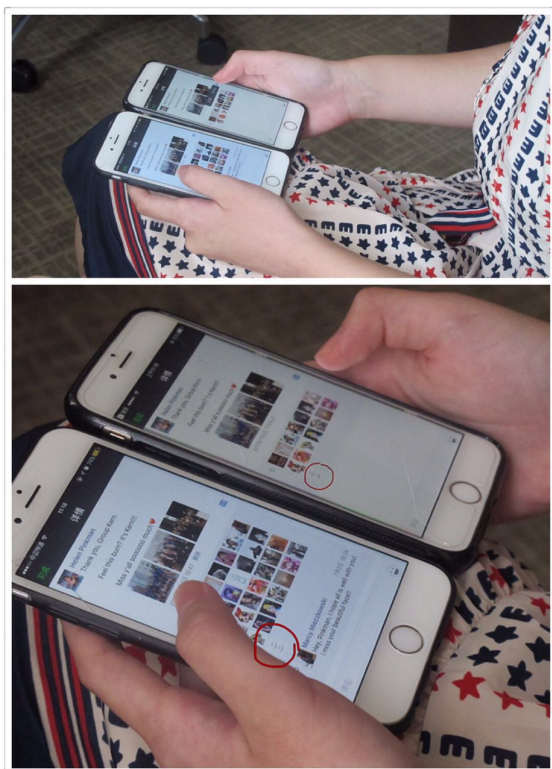
YUJIA GAO/RAN WEI/HAOYANG XIE/WEI XU

山东省实验中学

SHANDONG EXPERIMENTAL HIGH SCHOOL

“I gain great satisfaction and attention when people like my posts,” said Dingzhen.

Have you wondered why WeChat sets up “like” function in WeChat Moments? Have you ever met people who care a lot about likes when they post moments? Have you thought about why people care about likes so much? We have been researching on this issue. We interviewed a number of people regarding their attitudes toward likes, during which we discovered two extreme cases. Let us hear Dingzhen’s story first.



Dingzhen is using WeChat Moments on other’s phone to like her own posts. We witnessed this scene in person during the interview in July. (Photo by Wei Xu)

Dingzhen Luo, a 44-year-old woman in Jinan, has distinctive habits when posting WeChat Moments. She typically wants people to like her posts eagerly, more specifically, she is obsessed with being “liked” by others on WeChat Moments. As the picture shown above, Dingzhen is using someone else’s cell phone to like a certain moment of hers.

Dingzhen extremely values likes when sharing her life details, including attending important events, uploading beautiful pictures, and celebrating holidays. In her definition, likes are the symbol of attention and appreciation from others. She wants others to approve her accomplishment and share her emotions. When Dingzhen gets

large number of likes from other people, she gains great satisfaction because she feels appreciated. “I also check the identities of people who “liked” my moments,” Dingzhen said. In this case, if some acquaintances of Dingzhen’s do not like her moments after viewing them, she will be upset because she considers this kind of behavior as disliking or humdrum. That is the reason why she sometimes demands her close friends to like her moments.



Bob is checking his WeChat Moments.
(Photo by Wei Xu)

On the contrary, Bob, 29 years old, who just enters university, has completely different perspectives toward likes in WeChat Moments.

“When I used WeChat at first, I was getting out of my way to add as many friends as possible because that was the only way to get more likes.” Bob started to recall his first experiences with Moments. He would post life details on a daily basis, and he checked his account whenever he had time just to see how many people “liked” his postings. At that time, Bob believed that getting lots of likes meant that his friends were paying attention to their lives. He would feel that he was worthy and valued by his peers.

Receiving only a handful of likes was hurtful for him. It had bothered Bob for a long time until he started to see the whole Moment posting as a liability for him. It became difficult to come up with content that attracts more likes. “Self-worth should not be determined by the worth assigned by others, especially on social media.” Bob

gradually realized that the life he has on social media does not necessarily equal to our real life itself. Thus, he stopped posting things for the mere sake of posting, and he stopped checking likes frequently. “It doesn’t really matter to me whether people liked my posts or not right now.” According to Bob, this action definitely eliminated his troubles and made his life easier.

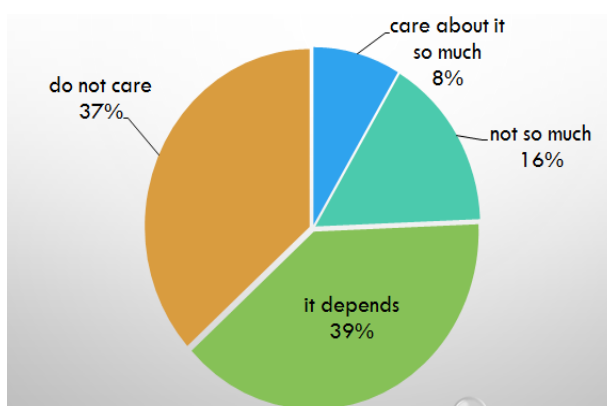
Without significant notice, WeChat Moments has diffused into people’s daily life seamlessly. In 2016, WeChat had 900 million registration accounts, and the number of monthly frequent users reached 800 million. The existence of those two extremely disparity triggered our interest, which led us to explore this phenomenon further. Our group decided to study the psychology in WeChat Moments. We designed an online survey that contains 15 questions about the people’s habits and settings in WeChat Moments including their basic information (age, the number of friends, and privacy settings), the frequency that they use WeChat Moments (times to check, send, and “thumb up” moments), the reasons about sending or liking moments, and the contents they usually send. With 523 responses we got after 24 hours, we analyzed the data. People’s psychology are shown below.

Why do people like Dingzhen want likes so eagerly? In other words, why does Dingzhen always bother her friends to force them to give her likes? Actually, this behavior is led by the sense of identity, which means they want to get the agreement of others so they can be satisfied. They will feel proud of what they have shared with others if more people give like to them because it shows that they are popular and that their ideas are accepted by great deals of people. It seems like people give lots of appreciation to her thoughts. In that case, Dingzhen can enhance her popularity among her family and friends if she can get the more likes from WeChat Moments. Another advantages of it is that it ensures her feelings have been conveyed to her friends and there might be some empathy from others to her experience in one special moment.

We also found that Dingzhen did not upload her selfies as frequent as before. By contrast, she often uploaded her precious experience of travelling, volunteering or

researching. The reason why this shift could happen is that we people now are more prone to value those meaningful moments instead of something meaningless. Our result of survey also proved that. 39.2% (the largest proportion) of people prefer to give likes to others about the major events in life such as birthday, graduation, and marriage. More and more people tend to communicate with each other about in-depth knowledge throughout instead of staying on the superficial surfaces.

Conversely, many people like Bob are caring less and less about how many likes they get from social media. According to our survey, only 8% people really care about the number of likes they get, and 37% do not care at all. People do not post moments for the sake of getting attention and approval. Instead, they use WeChat Moments to record their lives for reminiscence and share things they love to find people with common interest. WeChat Moments serves as a platform for information sharing. The main reason behind the action is that people gradually realize that the virtual lives on social media is not equivalent to our real lives. The satisfaction and worth from receiving likes only lasts temporarily. Our values should not be determined by our “WeChat friends” who we barely have contact with. People who care about you are going to in ways other than liking your posts. Conversely, people who like your post do not necessarily care about you. The value of a person should not be evaluated by a number. Being obsessed with likes will cause a number of emotions such as self-doubt, depression, distrustfulness to friends, which disappears when you stop caring so much.



This graph is collected from the survey results which shows the current situation of people's attitudes toward likes.

In summary, the current trend is fewer and fewer people really care about the number of likes they receive. Because of this, WeChat is also making alterations to satisfy the major group. Starting from the early July, WeChat has raised a brand new function on trial: When you are bothered by the notification of likes and comments related to you, you can turn off every notification for a specific post, so you will not receive any message related to this post. This function is designed for the group of people who do not care about the number of likes and comments they receive or who give those to them. For the people like Bob who wish to filter the information in their Moments or do not care about the information at all, this new function suits them really well. Although lots of people value the like function and treat it as a critical part of using WeChat, more people give up worrying about social connections brought by the like function due to all kinds of reasons like pressures from work or saving spare time. In fact, the like function does not serve as crucial bridge between the WeChat users anymore, fading out of our sight as time goes by.

Investigative Reporting-The Second Prize

Sharing Bicycles and Sharing World

Chinese's Sharing Economy

Chengdu Foreign Language School, Muxi Zhuang / Yichi Liu
Chengdu Foreign Language School, Zhujun Sun
Hefei NO.8 Senior High School, Runqi Jiang

成都外国语学校，庄慕溪 / 刘奕池 / 孙竹筠
合肥八中，江润琦

Wanglin opens the bicycle sharing app whose electronic map tells her there are five bikes parking downstairs. Soon, five bikes arranged neatly comes into view. Wanglin scans the QR code under the seat expertly, and receives the right to use the bike. She recalls when she was in her early age, China was called ‘ the bicycle kingdom’. At that time streets were full of bicycles. However, in her memory bicycles disappeared for a period of time on the street after the development of alternative transportation, but recently with the help bicycle sharing they reappear and spread rapidly.



Popular bicycle sharing service

Bicycle sharing service entered Chinese market at the end of 2016, and developed promptly during 2017. Now it was receives more and more attention. In the Chinese College entrance examination ended lately, it even chosen as one of the composition topics. Furthermore, bicycle sharing receives a public praise. According to the feedback of our research, 71% of interviewees enjoyed this service. The salaried use it as a way of transportation bring them bake and forth their home and working places, and the elite classes mainly use it as a kind of instrument for exercising. Except one fifty-year-old male who obstructed by the age, rest of people who haven't using this service are willing to accept this service in the future. Furthermore, all of the interviewees think bicycle sharing industry as a promising industry.

Why it is popular

When asked why bicycle sharing service is promising, people's ideas can be summarized by two words, convenience and economy.



To some extent, the resources are limited and people's wants are unlimited, when limited resources meet unlimited wants scarcity appears, and rational distribution is required to satisfy people's needs and wants. The process of sharing, reuses the idle resources in the society, therefore maximize the utilization of resources. The need for the bicycle is limited. When people buy a bicycle, the time they actually spend on them is little, for most of the time they are parked in the parking lot. When Wanglin was small, every family has an old-fashioned bike. Those bikes have two wheels with a diameter of twenty-eight inches,

and were exceedingly heavy and large. After the round trip between her home and school, the bike laid quietly in her living room. The room seems to be even more narrow after occupied by a huge bike, she even remove her desk to park the bicycle. 'things are changed now' she said. Instead of buying a bicycle, she choose to use the bicycle sharing service. One-hour using only cost her one Yuan, saving a lot of money form buying a bicycle and parking it. Now she only use bike only when she needs.

On the other hand, resource distribution is a heated topic that has always been problematic. Bicycle sharing is not the only method developed to cope with this issue. But what made it stand out from the crowd? The Chinese public bicycle service contracted by the private was the predecessor of the bicycle sharing and before that a

same service was also ran by the government. Dated back to 2007, Chinese government has already concerned about the increasing traffic congestion and environment problems along with the development of economy. Therefore, in August 2007, it began to push the public bicycle service started from Beijing. The service required citizens using IC cards to rent the bikes from fixed stations, and after using it return it back to the same places. However, the result was pessimistic. The government generalized this service to more than one hundred cities in China, but there were less than ten cities who achieve breakeven. What is the problem of



the public bicycle service lead by the government? The main reason is that it was hard to make profit. Establishing each station has cost 3000 to 10000 Yuan, and the settled stations restrict the number of consumers making it difficult to obtain income. In addition, the lack of preservation technology, lack of manage standard, and government focus on political accomplishment but not making profit also speed up the failure of government public bicycle service. Later on, this service began to be contracted by the private company, in the year of 2010 Yongan company was established. Up to 2016, it has over one hundred branch offices all over China. However, it's also restricted by the immobilized station. Take Wanglin as an example, there is only one public bicycle station in the Chengdu Jinniu district, twenty-minutes walk from where she lives. Wanglin said she never used this service since it not only required her to find a parking lot herself, but also cost her forty minutes walk per day to get a bike and returns it back.

Realizing the disadvantage of station, people began to explore new way to abandon the restrict, therefore, bicycle sharing appears. The disappearance of station reduces the cost promptly. Among the main bicycle sharing brands, the most highest cost for each bike is 3000 Yuan which is soon reduced to 500 Yuan, and the lowest

cost for each bike is only 200 Yuan. Furthermore, the flexible parking places increase the potential number of consumers. All those factors make sharing bicycle a more promising industry.

What needs improvement

As a new industry, bicycle sharing has appeared only half a year, there is also many aspects need improvement. The interviewee's anxiety can be summarized as follows. First, parking places needing more arrangement to solve the disorderly parking, and eliminate the resultant safety hazard. Second, seasonable repair is needed. The APP can provide reward for the report of error. Third, computing platform should be unified. Forth, for some particular places, more bikes are required.

Seeing the bigger picture

Begin with sharing bicycle, various type of sharing economy has become a trend. According to the *2016 Chinese Economy Development Report* published by the China e-Business Research Center, Chinese sharing economy market has reached 394.5 million RMB at a growth rate of 76.4%. it has been predicted that, Chinese sharing economy will keep a growth rate of 40%, and occupy more than 10% of the total GDP of China in 2020.

The research also shows public enthusiasm to the sharing economy, 70% of interviewers give their own perspective to the type of sharing objects they want, ranging from bookstore to credit card.

Why sharing economy develops so quickly in China? Except public enthusiasm, researchers in Renmin University of China, Zhangjingwei believes that this new type of economy relies on the information era and Chinese internet economy. 'in the era of

big data, China has world's largest population of netizen, also has the support of policy. The development and popularization of e-commerce and mobile payment push new type of economy intervenes citizen's life deeply. And what is more, sharing economy has already formed the myth of business and the legend of wealth, provided a positive model for the public startup.

Investigative Reporting-The Second Prize

The Firmest Supporters behind Superstars

The Affiliated High School of SCNU, Ruxiang Yang
Alcanta International College, Danyu Chen

华南师范大学附属中学，杨儒乡
亚加达国际学校，陈丹煜



Nowadays, millions of young girls claim that they are “married” without actually having a boyfriend. Their “husbands” are all quite famous: Justin Bieber, Ryan Gosling, Alex Skarsgard, Kris Wu.....It seems like they are having satisfying romantic lives.

“He is glowing. I can’t keep my eyes off of him.”—Lily

This is said by Lily, a 19-year-old Chinese girl who is a big fan of Lu Han, a Chinese singer and actor who originally became famous because of being a member of a South-Korean boy group EXO. On September 10th, 2012, one of Lu Han’s weibo (Chinese Twitter) posts got more than 13 million comments, which broke the Guinness World Record.

Lily then showed her bedroom, where Lu Han’s posters and souvenirs are everywhere. When she talks about Lu Han, she reacts like she is talking about her lover in life with whom she is most familiar. To get enough money to go to Lu Han’s concert in Guangzhou, Lily even works 12 hours on weekends for 3 months. Even though she is just an ordinary college student, she feels special when she watches Lu Han’s photos and videos. In fact, in China, more than 10 million young people are fans of celebrities, just like Lily.



Lily, 19-year-old Chinese girl who became a fan of Lu Han 2 years ago. "I want to marry him!" Said Lily. (Photo/ Lily Chen)

What is fan? Although there's no clear definition of the word "fan," the best definition is that a fan is "a person who is enthusiastically devoted to something or somebody, such as a band, a sports team, a book or entertainer."

Before the Internet became popular, fandom culture already existed. Back in 20th century, fans admired and supported their idols by buying their tapes or posters. "I used to go to bookshop every week to buy posters and stickers of Andy Lau (刘德华). It feels like youth." said Xie Jing, aged 52.

The way to support idols has been diversified over all these years. Most fans now have their own organizations which work on taking photos and videos

of idols and post them online. They help advertising their idols on social media, organize public-benefit activities under the name of their idols, or even buy presents for staffs around idols so that they can take good care of him or her.

However, as the Internet develops more and more deeply into people's life, children now have much more chances to get exposed to entertainment world at earlier age. In China, the number of fans under 18 years old is too huge to be

counted. The experience of being fans actually helps them shape their values and understanding of themselves,

because people's idols show qualities and standards they value the most.

So why would people like to become fans? By asking a hundred people this question using a questionnaire, it's easily shown that people think being fans helps them understand themselves better. In other words, being fans helps people define themselves and find the meaning of living. As a matter of fact, young fans are now making revolutionary changes to Chinese, even global, entertainment industry.

**“I want to become a better me because my idols are so wonderful.”—
Amy**



Amy, 13 year old Chinese girl from Chongqing. She is a big fan of Karry and Roy from TFBoys. (Photo/ Danyu Chen)

“They are so talented and handsome. They are just the most perfect boys in

the world. How can people hate them?” asked Amy. TFBoys is one of the most

famous boy group in China. All members of this boy group are under 17 years old now and they have more than 15 million fans on Weibo.

Amy is now in grade 9. She mentioned that she had become more patient and optimistic after becoming a fan of her idols. Amy works really hard at school, as her mother agrees to take her to TFBoys' concert if she gets into top 10 in her class. She made it at the end, and now she is excited and busy preparing for the concert in August.

In 2016, a fan organization of Karry and Roy called "ElopingKarroy" has donated more than 500,000 RMB to China Youth Development Foundation in order to build a Hope Primary School in Chongqing, the hometown of Karry and Roy. ElopingKarroy said that they did this in memory of the 4th anniversary of the first cooperation of their idols, and they wanted to do something that is meaningful and can raise concerns of educational problems in rural areas. "They are amazing people who fight for their own goals, and they give us hope. We want that hope to

These days, more and more young fans like Amy are presented in China. Amy also added, "I don't understand what chasing stars (追星, means being fan of somebody) really means, I just know that Karry (王俊凯) and Roy (王源) are just as shining as those stars in the sky, and they bring me a lot of energy and happiness. I want to become a better me because people I admire are so wonderful."

proceed," said ElopingKarroy. This action created much of a stir on the Internet.

It's nearly indubitable that celebrities have mimicry effect on their fans literally, scientists have found that even simply getting to know someone better and become more familiar with that person can make the followers more similar to that person—an effect called mere exposure effect. Fans' thoughts and behaviors can be easily affected by celebrities.

However, as the old saying goes, everything has double sides. Some fanatical people would even imitate every single behavior of their idols. They wear the same clothes as their idols wear, doing the same make-up and hairstyle, or even imitate their tone of speaking. In some extreme cases, when their idols do things wrong, they copy and follow that blindly because their idols are believed to be "infallible." In this way, instead of becoming better people, fans lose themselves.

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“We love the same person, have the same interest, and support each other — is there any difference to a family?”—Anna

On 24th July, 2016, Anna went to see Jay Chou’s concert for the fifth time. This is her 9th year as a fan of Jay Chou, whom she has idolized since she was 7 years old. “I first started idolizing him because of his songs: they are original and creative; and also, he’s handsome! But it is not only himself that keeps me by his side — it’s also my Jay fan’s family that gives me faith and happiness. Eight years just passes so fast.”



Jay Chou’s (周杰伦) concert in Guangzhou on July 22nd, 2016. (Photo/ Anna Yang)

On her WeChat, Anna has five group chat that are all Jay fans. They have Guangzhou fan clubs, teenage fan clubs, and even global fan clubs—Jay Chou’s fan clubs that are in US, Canada and

Australia. Anna says that each fan club has regular meetings that organize activities, support Jay Chou by making souvenirs and banners, and voting for Jay Chou in different musical awards.

“Actually, I met my best friend in Guangzhou fan club,” said Anna happily, as she showed a WeChat profile of a girl of her age. “We both love Jay Chou, and we are both introverted

people. We understand each others’ feelings, and we can sing Jay’s songs together. It makes me feel warm. This is the good thing about being a fan—you find a new family.”

At the end of each interview, we’ve asked Lily, Amy, and Anna the same question: “Have you ever regretted being a fan of your idol?” The answers that we’ve got from all of them are the same: NEVER.