

Public Abstract

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Title:CHINAS MIGRANT CHILDREN: LACK OF CULTURAL CAPITAL AND HUKOU POLICY

This study documented sojourn experiences of Chinese rural-urban migrant children and their parents living in the host city of Chengdu, China. Participants in this study were 10 migrant parents, 10 local urban parents, 5 local urban children, and 5 migrant children. Qualitative analysis of conducting comparison multiple case studies, document analysis, and coding interview transcripts were applied using the cultural capital theory to identify differences and similarities of life of migrant children and their urban peers in Chengdu.

Results indicate that there was huge difference between life of migrant children and that of urban children, thus, leading an unequal childhood between these two groups. Although the Chinese central government has issued a number of proactive policies of helping migrant children attend local urban public school since 2003, the negative effect of Hukou policy still impacts migrant families sojourn life in Chengdu, in particular, there exists an entrenched urban-rural divide in Chengdu between local urban residents and rural-urban migrant families.

This study yielded a new perspective of improving migrant children schooling and life experiences in urban China. Implications are offered for improving quality of life of migrant families in the host city and a change of local urban residents attitude towards migrant workers is called upon to fully integrate migrant families into urban community.