

SOCIAL CAPITAL, MIGRATION, AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES  
IN THE URBAN CHINESE CONTEXT

By

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## CHAPTER 1

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The United Nations in 1948 declared education a basic human right, but this ideal is far from being realized. Even in countries that provide public education, huge disparities in educational access and attainment exist. One source of this disparity has been in the possession and utility of social capital. Fairly consistently, parents' social capital has been found to positively predict educational attainment for children. However, social capital theory has been applied most often to the developed world; results have been mixed for using social capital to predict educational attainment in developing areas.

China offers a particularly interesting context for the study of education and social capital due to its immense size, long recorded history, rapid development, and complex policies. China's development over the past three decades is arguably unmatched, and one phenomenal effect has been a rapid migration to large cities, particularly from rural areas to cities on the southeast coast (Fan, 2001; Liang, 2001; Liang & Ma, 2004; Yang, 1999). By 2000, some estimates pegged the internal migrant population as much as 15% of the population in cities such as Beijing and Shanghai (Wang, 2008). Most of these migrants can be considered part of the floating population, known as *liudong renkou* in Mandarin, because they typically, though not universally, migrate from rural to urban areas for only part of the year (Li, 2002; Hare, 2002) and do so with fewer rights and privileges (Hu, Cook, & Salazar, 2008; Li et al., 2006).

The volume of China's internal migrants—which by some measures comprise 16.8% of its total population (National Bureau of Statistics, 2009)—and their tendency to rely on social networks for migration (Zhao, 2003)—likely have profound effects on the relationship between educational outcomes and social capital. Because navigating the educational system is complex for such migrants, social capital may mean the difference between educational opportunities and mobility, and continued poverty. This paper applies social capital theory to Chinese migrant workers and their families and seeks to understand the relationship between individual- and community-focused social capital measures and type of school enrollment, ranging from public schools to less desirable schools for migrant children. The distinction is an important one, as attending non-public schools likely leaves children with fewer post-secondary options. No study to date has examined school enrollment using social capital in the context of China's internal migration. It is my hypothesis that China's migrant workers with higher levels of social capital should be more likely to report children's enrollment in preferred schools; similarly, children of multi-child families should be more likely to be enrolled in the same type of school, thereby reflecting less child specialization, when their parents possess greater amounts of social capital.

### *Social Capital Theory*

Although James Coleman (1988) was not the first to introduce the idea of social capital, his work is particularly relevant to education. Building on Bourdieu's (1986) assertion that employing social capital—group and network relationships—and cultural capital—knowledge, awareness, and experience—could help diminish some of the

disadvantages associated with a lack of human or financial capital, Coleman (1988) outlined the ways one's human and financial capital could be extended, or suppressed, through social relations. Intrafamilial capital, for instance, refers to interactions between family members, while extrafamilial capital assesses the degree to which parents are connected to outside persons and networks. Participation in groups and increased access to information channels can multiply one's resources; norms and sanctions ensure that members within these networks can be relied upon reciprocally.

In the last two decades, social capital research has focused on the theory's operationalization in, and application to, different communities and societies. In addition to individual-focused measures, such as the family and friend support networks referenced above, greater attention has also been given to community-focused cognitions and behaviors, as evidenced by Putnam's (1993; 2000) discussion of trust and more recent discussions of sense of community, collective efficacy, neighbor support, and formally organized citizen participation (Perkins, Hughey, & Speer, 2002; Perkins & Long, 2002), as well as community satisfaction, communitarianism (Perkins, Florin, Rich, Wandersman, & Chavis, 1990), and community place attachment and identity (Perkins, Brown, & Taylor, 1996). These psychological bonds to proximal people and places are related more broadly to general life satisfaction, and to local environmental and occupational quality of life (Connerly & Marans, 1985; Prezza, Amici, Roberti, & Tedeschi, 2001).

### *Social Capital and Education*

The positive effects of social capital on education have been demonstrated for a variety of outcomes. Lew (2007) found for Korean American immigrants that parental and student community connections were associated with enrollment at better-quality schools. Others have found beneficial effects of social capital on grades and test scores (for instance, Glickman & Scally, 2008; Ream & Palardy, 2008), and still others have found positive effects of social capital on high school graduation (Coleman, 1988; Glickman & Scally, 2008; Sandefur, Meier, & Campbell, 2006) and college enrollment rates (Sandefur et al., 2006).

Social capital perspectives predict that individual- and family-focused measures of social capital are related to educational outcomes. Coleman (1988) hypothesized that increased family size may dilute available capital and have negative impacts on educational outcomes, a finding that has been substantiated in Mexico (Mier, Rocha, and Romero, 2003), the United States (Teachman, Paasch, & Carver, 1997), and Asia (Buchmann & Hannum, 2001). The dilution of capital may result in child specialization, or maintaining different expectations for different children, as parents must determine where to most beneficially allocate their capital. For example, Buchmann and Hannum (2001) note that in Taiwan, Kenya, and Ghana, early-born children receive less education than later-born siblings, though early-born males may be preferred in China (Bauer, Feng, Riley, & Xiaohua, 1992; Connelly & Zheng, 2003).

Others, however, have challenged this assertion. Liddell, Barrett, and Henzi (2003) found negative effects for family size but not for birth order for subsistence farmers in South Africa. In some cultures, the presence of additional siblings may even



be adaptive (Sandefur et al., 2006). In Kenya and Botswana, for example, extended family systems may support education (Buchmann & Hannum (2001). And for the poorest of families, the suppressing effect on education of large family sizes may reflect not resource dilution, but rather recognized need for children's physical labor (Buchmann & Hannum, 2001).

Family dynamics, in addition to family size, also influence social capital and educational attainment in other ways. Two-parent households and parental expectations for their children's education have been found to be positively correlated to educational attainment in North America (Coleman, 1988; Hagan, Macmillian, & Wheaton, 1998; Sandefur et al., 2006), although in some African communities children from female-headed households do better (Buchmann & Hannum, 2001).

In addition to individual-centered measures, a positive association has been reported between community-focused social capital measures and educational outcomes. Contact with community institutions (Lew, 2007) and parental networks with parents and others in the community (Glickman & Scally, 2008; Teachman et al., 1997) have both been found to positively predict educational outcomes.

In reality, the utility of social capital depends on context: on peoples' characteristics and the purposes for which they utilize networks for educational outcomes, and this helps explain the inconsistency in relationships between educational outcomes and measures of social capital. For example, neighborhood organizational participation and support from friends may be ineffective if the people who are most involved in such organizations are the most in need of services and have no other resources (Beaudoin, 2009; Morrissey, 2006; Poortinga, 2006).

### *Interactions among Social Capital, Human Capital, and Financial Capital*

Unsurprisingly, social capital is often of most use to those who already possess larger quantities of other forms of capital. Greater social capital increases the positive effects of financial and human capital, while lower levels of social capital reduce such benefits (Teachman et al., 1997). For example, more highly educated parents often have more interaction with schools and thus more access to structures that maintain social inequalities (Schnabel, Alfeld, Eccles, Koller, & Baumert, 2002).

Social capital can be useful in minimizing some of the effects of low SES status, however. Using 1988 National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS) data, Sandefur et al. (2006) found that higher amounts of social capital decreased the achievement gaps that would be expected based on income and parental education alone. Hango (2007) found that parental involvement in their children's education reduced the impact of low financial capital for children in Britain.

Unfortunately, even when lower SES families do possess social capital, its use may be of limited value. Even high amounts of social capital may prove insufficient to overcome extreme financial and other obstacles (Nath and Sylva, 2007; Ream and Palardy, 2008; Teachman et al., 1997). Parents at lower SES levels may maintain networks that are less useful for increasing their children's educational advantage than those of higher SES parents (Büchel and Duncan, 1998; Green & Vryonides, 2005; Munn-Joseph & Gavin-Evans, 2008). Further, involvement in their children's education may be curtailed if parents do not view the educational system as an efficient and fair path to success, or if power or cultural differences prevent advantageous involvement in

school matters (Arriaza, 2004; Lew, 2007); in such circumstances, parents may invest their social capital in other areas (Pryor, 2005).

### *Migration and Social Capital*

Social capital has been and remains relevant to migration and educational outcomes. Studies of international migration have explained how and why individual and household decisions about migration are highly dependent on access to the social capital stored in household and community ties (Curran, Garip, Chung, & Tangchonlatip, 2005; Davis, Stecklov, & Winters, 2002; Hernández-León & Zuñiga, 2003; Massey & García-España, 1987; Winters, de Janvry, & Sadoulet, 2001). Networks between migrants and others in the community of origin, which arise through kinship, friendship, and shared community experiences, increase the likelihood of migration because of lowered costs and risks of movement and increased net returns to migration (Palloni, Massey, Ceballos, Espinosa, & Spittel, 2001).

Social capital requires established norms and trust for people to interact, connect and cooperate functionally with one other. Therefore, as migration often results in social and linguistic isolation in the community of destination and disrupts life, educational outcomes could be negatively affected. For example, the presence of family members in the household with temporary migration experience may negatively affect college aspirations (Kandel & Kao, 2001) and years of education completed (Townsend, Madhavan, Tollman, Garenne, & Kahn, 2002). The negative impact of migration-related risk factors, such as bad work conditions and the loss of home networks, may be reduced

or reversed by having access to a larger network of contacts in the destination, however (Kao, 2004; Kao & Rutherford, 2007).

Because migrants leave behind their home networks, they often seek to offset limited social capital with other means. Many maintain high expectations for their children relative to native residents (Fuligni, 1997; Glick & White, 2004), and the move, particularly if driven by higher income potential, may allow parents to invest more financial resources into their children's education (Coleman, 1988; Zhou, 2008).

Regardless, these generalizations are highly limited by context. Social capital may benefit some ethnic groups but not others, and groups may utilize different forms of social capital to achieve their purposes. For example, Kao and Rutherford (2007) found using NLES data that Asian immigrants benefited more from family networks than from other forms of social capital. Of course, the form of capital employed likely depends on perceived need: bonding social capital, defined by links among homogenous groups of people, may be useful for emotional support and feelings of inclusion, but bridging capital, defined by links among heterogeneous groups of people, may prove more useful to achieving specific ends (Putnam, 2000).

Further, for some ethnic groups, the move may be accompanied by an increase in social capital. Among migrants, obligations and cohesion could be greater due to shared experiences. Although information channels may be reduced between immigrants and educational systems, immigrant networks and organizations could at least partially make up for this potential deficit (Kao, 2004; Zhou, 2008). Despite initial obstacles, migrants' ties to those outside of family and friend networks are bound to expand over time, and their exposure to more distant coworkers, neighbors, and perhaps more institutional

actors may substantially increase bridging social capital, which could prove more functionally useful for parents navigating the educational system. Thus, research on social capital, the present paper included, must take account of possible differences in social capital, such as their bridging or bonding tendencies, and how it operates in different ethnic and social groups.

### *Educational Considerations for Migrant Workers in China*

China has recently undergone a series of educational reforms to address rural-urban and male-female disparities in educational attainment, perhaps the most important of which, The Law of Compulsory Education of 1986, mandated nine years of schooling (Connelly & Zheng, 2003). Such efforts have stabilized rural-urban enrollment gaps, though males still experience higher enrollment rates than females, particularly in families with multiple children (Connelly & Zheng, 2003) and at the university level (Bauer et al., 1992). Further, despite these educational reforms, the loosening but still restrictive residential registry (*hukou*) system still favors persons with urban rather than rural origins. Although migration offers the opportunity for increased financial capital, it does little to bridge the gap in available social services, as the hukou system effectively restricts temporary migrants from receiving services such as public education and pensions (Fan, 2001; Hu, Cook, & Salazar, 2008; Li, 2006; Liang & Ma, 2004).

The educational landscape for temporary migrant children is thus complicated. Though migrant children are technically allowed to enroll in public schools, they may face additional entrance exams (Wang, 2008). In addition, parents must pay endorsement fees, sometimes up to 30,000 yuan per year, on top of fees charged to all parents (Liang

& Chen, 2007; Wang, 2008); for migrants who typically earn less than 1,000 yuan per year, these fees are excessive and intended to be restrictive. Such obstacles contribute to lower enrollment rates for migrant children compared to children of urban origin (Guo, 2002; Liang & Chen, 2007).

Even if they are enrolled in schools, migrant children may be enrolled in private schools or schools for migrant children, which are generally less preferred than urban public schools (Lu, 2007). Such schools often have lower fees and may be an option for parents with limited means. Indeed, lower financial resources, number of children, and one-parent households positively predict enrollment in migrant schools. However, this lower cost comes with a price tag, as these schools often provide a lower quality of education (Yan, 2005; Yang, 1999), and children attending such schools face difficulty transitioning to public schools and attempting to qualify for college entrance.

Over time, however, migrants build financial, human, and social capital, and with increased duration of residence in cities, migrant children experience rising rates of school enrollment, even in public schools (Guo, 2002; Lu, 2007). Though temporary migrant children are less likely to be enrolled in school than permanent migrant children and nonmigrant children, this difference disappears over time (Liang & Chen, 2007).

In China, as in other contexts, the effects of family structure on educational attainment of migrant children have been mixed. Lu (2007) observed single-parent disadvantage; Guo (2002) found single-parent advantage, particularly in female-headed households; and Liang and Chen (2007) observed no differences in enrollment rates between two parent and single parent households. Lu (2007) found positive effects for having two children over one, but capital dilution thereafter. Regarding gender, Guo

(2002) observed negative effects for being female, while Liang and Chen (2007) found no significant gender differences for migrant children.

A word of caution must be expressed about these findings. Most data come from only certain provinces (Guo, 2002; Liang & Chen, 2007) or a limited number of cities (Lu, 2007). Most exclude migrants who have lived in the sampling location for less than six months (Guo, 2002; Liang & Chen, 2007), failing to capture those who have returned home and those who plan to stay in the city despite their recent arrival. Using hukou status to distinguish between temporary and permanent migrants similarly presumes a relationship between status and actual long-term intentions (Liang & Chen, 2007). Finally, these studies rely almost exclusively on extrafamilial measures or basic intrafamilial measures of social capital, such as family size. While the present study will not address all of these concerns, it does sample from seven cities across China, and it imposes no time restrictions in defining migrants. It also expands upon previous studies of social capital and education by including more community-focused measures, such as those suggested by Perkins et al (2002).

## CHAPTER 2

### HYPOTHESES

Based on available literature on social capital and education, this paper tests the following hypotheses in the context of China's rural-to-urban migration:

1. Greater levels of individual- and community-focused social capital will be associated with enrollment in (typically more desirable) public schools, whereas lower levels of social capital will be associated with enrollment in non-public schools, such as migrant schools or private schools.
2. Similarly, greater social capital will be associated with children's enrollment in the parent's school of choice, though public schools will remain the least accessible.
3. Single children will have higher enrollment rates in public schools than those in families with multiple children, due to less dilution of capital.
4. The effects of social capital will become more beneficial with increased financial capital.

Because specialization effects have been found in China and elsewhere in the developing world, I also predict that:

5. In multiple-child families, first-born children and males will have higher public school enrollment than later-born children and females.



## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODS

#### *Respondents*

Respondents for this study come from a larger study of 3,024 people registered as rural residents who were working in seven cities across China in the fall of 2006. The survey is part of the China Ministry of Education's project "The Transition of China's Rural Labor to Urban Areas." A total of 1,048 respondents reported having school age-children and also provided basic information on themselves as well as their children. Because of a significant amount of missing data, resulting primarily from nonresponse on two of the social capital measures (organizational social capital and life satisfaction), data were imputed using chained equations ( $m=20$ , within the range suggested by Royston, 2004). Analysis results obtained from the imputed and original datasets reveal few substantial differences.

Sampling involved four stages: (1) Seven cities, as primary destinations for migrant workers, across different geographic areas of China were first selected: five large cities —Guangzhou (south), Shanghai (east central), Shenyang (northeast), Tianjin (east), and Kunming (southwest); and two medium-sized cities — Yibin in Sichuan province and Weihai in Shandong province. (2) Using public information and labor statistics collected by city governments, specific administrative districts where the migrants were concentrated in each city were identified; two districts were then randomly selected. (3) From a list of companies in the districts, two to three companies were randomly selected;

and (4) migrant workers were recruited at each company, where they were interviewed by trained local graduate students. Researchers recruited additional subjects directly from restaurants, hotels, markets, and small business stores.

The survey was administered in Mandarin Chinese. For purposes of this paper, it was then translated to English by the author, and translations were checked by a native Chinese researcher. The survey questionnaire contains eleven sections, including: demographics, employment and income, employment and job training, health and health care, housing, children's education, family situation, welfare program participation, service utilization, social activities and participation, and migration plan.

### *Measures*

The principle *dependent* variable in this study is type of school enrollment. Response options included urban public school, urban private school, urban school for children of migrant workers, township-based school near the origin community, and rural school near the origin community. An additional analysis predicts enrollment in the type of school preferred by parents, and a final analysis investigates specialization effects by examining whether older children attend the same type of school as their younger siblings.

The *independent* variables are comprised of demographic variables and measures of social capital. Demographic variables include marital status, age and sex of the respondent, and age and sex of children. Income and employment status are proxies for financial capital, while human capital is controlled for using level of education and years

of urban residence, as increased urban experience could be of substantial use in navigating the educational system.

Given social capital's multi-dimensional nature, I consider several groups of predictors. *Individual-* and family-focused social capital is measured using number of children, number of relatives over the age of 65 living in the house, family support (number of siblings living in the city), friend social support (number of friends in the city), and parents' educational expectations for their children. *Community-*focused cognitions and social capital are measured by place attachment (to the city where migrants now live), trust in community, organizational social capital (help received from community organizations in the past), neighborhood social interaction (perceived level of neighborhood interaction), neighboring (received; i.e., experienced help from neighbors), neighbor support (the proportion of friends from one's neighborhood rather than from work or from one's home village or province), life and community satisfaction, and occupational and environmental quality of life. Differential utility of social capital is tested with an interaction between income and several measures of social capital.

The place attachment scale contains two binary items assessing the intentions for long-term employment and settlement ( $\rho=.67$ ), while the life satisfaction scale combines two Likert-type items assessing overall satisfaction with life and confidence in one's future ( $r=.43$ ). The occupational ( $\alpha=.56$ ,  $n=4$ ) and environmental quality of life ( $\alpha=.75$ ,  $n=7$ ) scales ask respondents to rate their current situations relative to those prior to migrating, on such things as work conditions and time for leisure. Although not particularly strong, these are considered acceptable internal consistencies, especially for very small scales (Sapag et al., 2008; Schmitt, 1996).

The social capital-related items could not be combined into one scale due to inadequate internal consistency, and factor analyses suggested they were best left as separate constructs. The advantage of not combining them into a global scale is that it allows a comparison of specific predictors in China to those used in other countries. Most were measured with Likert-type options or were count variables. Since they tended to be non-normally distributed, a series of dummy variables was created for these items; after running the multinomial regression, some dummy variables that were based on the same survey item were combined if Wald tests indicated that their coefficients were not significantly different from one another or from 0. This more technical method did not produce results substantially different from those obtained by simply treating variables as continuous, however. Thus, the simpler models are presented here.

### *Descriptive Statistics*

Table 1 presents the mean, standard deviation, and sample sizes of the dependent and independent variables for analyses 1 and 2. Sixty percent of the respondents were male, and almost all were married. A majority had completed junior high school, though a quarter had finished only elementary school; less than 20% completed senior high school or beyond. The average age was 38 years. Respondents reported a mean income of 1,152 yuan per month (median 1,000), or about \$170, and they had an average of about 7 years of experience in urban areas. More than 35% had multiple children. They also noted high trust and relatively extensive social support, with more than half having one or more siblings residing in the same city, and nearly half reporting substantial friend support (“some” or “a lot” of friends) in the city. Respondents reported less neighborhood

social interaction and organizational social capital. However, more than half of respondents reported at least a moderate level of neighboring (“often” or “sometimes” able to get help from neighbors), though few reported a high proportion of support from neighbors, indicating that family and friends from the village or work were a more common source of support.

Table 1

*Descriptive Statistics (N=1048)*

	Mean	S.D.	Min	Max
<i>Independent Variables</i>				
Oldest Child Male <sup>a</sup>	0.548	0.498	0	1
Oldest Child Age	13.030	5.171	4	24
Married/Cohabiting (prop.) <sup>b</sup>	0.971	0.168	0	1
Male (prop.) <sup>a</sup>	0.601	0.490	0	1
Education	2.861	0.892	1	7
Age	37.538	6.213	23	60
Years of Urban Residence	7.328	5.803	0.083	27
Monthly Income (per 100 yuan)	11.456	8.773	0.5	105
Employed Full Time (prop.) <sup>c</sup>	0.831	0.374	0	1
<i>Individual/Family Predictors</i>				
Elderly relatives in home	0.197	0.577	0	4
Two or more children (prop.) <sup>d</sup>	0.374	0.484	0	1
Three or more children (prop.) <sup>e</sup>	0.043	0.203	0	1
Family Support	1.490	1.637	0	7
Friend Support	3.337	1.038	1	5
<i>Community Predictors</i>				
Place Attachment	0.732	0.836	0	2
High Community Satisfaction	3.436	0.969	1	5
Environmental Quality of Life	17.378	4.215	6	30
Occupational Quality of Life	13.635	2.538	7	20
Life Satisfaction	7.453	1.530	2	10
Neighborhood Social Interaction	2.247	1.041	1	4
Organizational SC	1.542	0.841	1	4
Neighboring	2.258	1.088	1	4
Trust	3.045	0.914	1	4
Neighbor Support	0.426	0.797	0	4
<i>Dependent Variable: Type of School N (prop.)<sup>f</sup></i>				
Urban public	271 (0.259)			
Urban private	118 (0.113)			
Urban migrant	26 (0.025)			
Township home	241 (0.230)			
Rural home	376 (0.359)			

References include a. female, b. unmarried, c. non full-time employment, d. one child in the family, e. one or two children in the family, f. other

The average age for the oldest (or only) child was nearly 13 years; 55% were males, reflecting a male bias that has been documented extensively in China. Only ¼ of these children were enrolled in urban public schools. Eleven percent were enrolled in urban private schools, and a small portion in urban migrant schools. The majority, then, were enrolled in township or rural schools near the community of origin.

### *Approach to Data Analyses*

Analysis 1 uses multinomial logistic regression to predict school enrollment for the oldest children. Demographic variables are included in model 1, followed by three additional steps: individual- and family-focused social capital, community-focused social capital, and interaction effects. Analysis 2 uses logistic regression to predict whether oldest (or only) children are enrolled in the school of their parents' choice. Demographic variables are included in model 1, followed by four additional steps: individual- and family-focused social capital, community-focused social capital, parental desires for school enrollment, and interaction effects. Finally, analysis 3 examines the enrollment of the first and second children in multi-child families. A  $\chi^2$  test is used to examine enrollment differences within families. Two subsequent logistic regressions are employed, one predicting whether the children are enrolled in the same type of school, and a second predicting enrollment of the oldest child in a public school and the second child in a non-public school.

### *Statistical Limitations*

Since only 83 respondents report having three or more children in school, this paper distinguishes only between single- and multiple-child families for analyses 1 and 2. Similarly, for analysis 3, the sample size permits an examination of effects of gender and age on school enrollment between the first two children, but not for specialization beyond the second child. Finally, because of the relatively small number of children enrolled in migrant schools, related coefficients, and the suggested importance of some variables, should be interpreted with caution.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### *Analysis 1: Type of School Enrollment*

Results of the multinomial regression of school type enrollment for the oldest child are presented in Table 2. The base category is urban public school attendance; thus, coefficients indicate the odds of attending a type of school relative to an urban public school. The final model explains 13.0% of the total variance.

Forms of human, financial, and social capital are associated differentially with attendance at different types of schools. The oldest (or only) child is increasingly likely to go to public school as he or she ages, as indicated by the negative coefficients for child age across nearly all alternative school categories, though attending public school is not dependent on gender of the oldest child. Only children are also more likely to go to public school than those with at least one sibling, as the effect of having siblings is positive and generally significant across all non-urban public categories. Parental education proved relatively nonpredictive, though increased education levels may particularly decrease the odds of children attending rural schools. Income had minimal effects on enrollment, though full-time employment decreased the odds of attending urban private, township, or rural schools. Increasing urban experience decreased the odds of attending non-public schools, though coefficients were significant only for migrant and rural schools. Having elderly relatives in the home may have decreased the chances for rural school enrollment. The presence of these relatives in the urban home may mean that



no caregiver is available in the rural area to watch over children when parents have migrated to urban areas.

Table 2

*Multinomial Regression Predicting School Enrollment for Oldest Child (N=1048; Base Category = Urban Public School)*

	Urban Private				Rel. Risk
	Model 1 B	Model 2 B	Model 3 B	Model 4 B	Ratio
Oldest Child Male <sup>a</sup>	0.084	0.228	0.179	0.183	1.201
Oldest Child Age	-0.248***	-0.275***	-0.272***	-0.275***	0.760
Married/Cohabiting <sup>b</sup>	1.238	1.101	0.963	0.889	2.433
Male <sup>a</sup>	-0.171	-0.227	-0.253	-0.278	0.757
Education	-0.203	-0.196	-0.224 <sup>+</sup>	-0.240 <sup>+</sup>	0.787
Age	0.018	0.028	0.031	0.033	1.034
Years of Urban Residence	-0.008	-0.013	-0.010	-0.011	0.989
Monthly Income (per 100 yuan)	0.010	0.007	0.009	-0.036	0.965
Employed Full Time <sup>c</sup>	-0.789*	-0.775*	-0.791*	-0.801*	0.449
<i>Individual/Family Predictors</i>					
Elderly Relatives in Home		-0.272	-0.283	-0.458	0.633
Two or more Children <sup>d</sup>		0.642*	0.608*	0.630*	1.878
Family Support		0.014	0.004	-0.023	0.977
Friend Support		0.181	0.209 <sup>+</sup>	0.162	1.176
<i>Community Predictors</i>					
Place Attachment			-0.033	-0.034	0.967
Community Satisfaction			-0.182	-0.196	0.822
Environmental Quality of Life			-0.036	-0.037	0.964
Occupational Quality of Life			-0.012	-0.016	0.984
Life Satisfaction			0.123	0.132	1.141
Neighborhood Social Interaction			-0.100	-0.110	0.896
Organizational Social Capital (OSC)			0.255	0.086	1.090
Neighboring			0.062	-0.016	0.984
Trust			0.083	0.089	1.093
Neighbor Support (NS)			0.142	0.326	1.385
<i>Interactions</i>					
Monthly Income X Elderly				0.016	1.016
Monthly Income X Family Support				0.002	1.002
Monthly Income X Friend Support				0.004	1.004
Monthly Income X OSC				0.017	1.017
Monthly Income X Neighboring				0.005	1.005
Monthly Income X NS				-0.015	0.985
Intercept	1.505	0.793	0.709	1.376	

Table 2 (Continued)

	Urban Migrant				Rel. Risk
	Model 1 B	Model 2 B	Model 3 B	Model 4 B	Ratio
Oldest Child Male <sup>a</sup>	0.315	0.501	0.463	0.520	1.682
Oldest Child Age	-0.176**	-0.218***	-0.209***	-0.206**	0.814
Married/Cohabiting <sup>b</sup>	11.853*	11.799*	11.707*	14.215*	1.491x10 <sup>6</sup>
Male <sup>a</sup>	-0.509	-0.636	-0.684	-0.672	0.511
Education	0.004	0.017	-0.008	0.040	1.041
Age	0.059	0.072	0.072	0.068	1.070
Years of Urban Residence	-0.076*	-0.077*	-0.079*	-0.085*	0.919
Monthly Income (per 100 yuan)	0.020	0.017	0.018	0.052	1.053
Employed Full Time <sup>c</sup>	-0.290	-0.257	-0.238	-0.234	0.791
<i>Individual/Family Predictors</i>					
Elderly Relatives in Home		-0.378	-0.437	-0.285	0.752
Two or more Children <sup>d</sup>		0.918 <sup>+</sup>	0.898 <sup>+</sup>	0.904	2.469
Family Support		-0.157	-0.151	0.084	1.088
Friend Support		0.192	0.215	0.039	1.040
<i>Community Predictors</i>					
Place Attachment			0.143	0.137	1.147
Community Satisfaction			-0.272	-0.320	0.726
Environmental Quality of Life			-0.013	-0.013	0.987
Occupational Quality of Life			0.096	0.112	1.119
Life Satisfaction			-0.179	-0.200	0.819
Neighborhood Social Interaction			0.023	0.029	1.029
Organizational Social Capital (OSC)			-0.278	-0.040	0.961
Neighboring			0.156	0.378	1.459
Trust			0.249	0.295	1.343
Neighbor Support (NS)			-0.302	-0.068	0.934
<i>Interactions</i>					
Monthly Income X Elderly				-0.010	0.990
Monthly Income X Family Support				-0.021	0.979
Monthly Income X Friend Support				0.018	1.018
Monthly Income X OSC				-0.027	0.973
Monthly Income X Neighboring				-0.019	0.981
Monthly Income X NS				-0.022	0.978
Intercept	-13.543**	-14.197**	-13.823**	-16.923*	

Table 2 (Continued)

	Township Home				Rel. Risk
	Model 1 B	Model 2 B	Model 3 B	Model 4 B	Ratio
Oldest Child Male <sup>a</sup>	0.103	0.206	0.171	0.168	1.183
Oldest Child Age	0.061*	0.043	0.039	0.037	1.038
Married/Cohabiting <sup>b</sup>	0.053	-0.061	-0.206	-0.211	0.810
Male <sup>a</sup>	0.642***	0.595**	0.480*	0.477*	1.611
Education	-0.176 <sup>+</sup>	-0.169	-0.131	-0.137	0.872
Age	-0.045 <sup>+</sup>	-0.035	-0.033	-0.033	0.968
Years of Urban Residence	-0.012	-0.018	-0.010	-0.010	0.990
Monthly Income (per 100 yuan)	-0.020 <sup>+</sup>	-0.023 <sup>+</sup>	-0.023 <sup>+</sup>	-0.020	0.980
Employed Full Time <sup>c</sup>	-0.761**	-0.756**	-0.611*	-0.613*	0.542
<i>Individual/Family Predictors</i>					
Elderly Relatives in Home		-0.155	-0.137	-0.287	0.751
Two or more Children <sup>d</sup>		0.451*	0.407 <sup>+</sup>	0.423*	1.527
Family Support		0.030	0.024	0.054	1.055
Friend Support		0.170 <sup>+</sup>	0.238 <sup>+</sup>	0.244	1.276
<i>Community Predictors</i>					
Place Attachment			-0.404**	-0.408**	0.665
Community Satisfaction			-0.056	-0.062	0.940
Environmental Quality of Life			-0.004	-0.004	0.996
Occupational Quality of Life			-0.009	-0.008	0.992
Life Satisfaction			-0.041	-0.038	0.963
Neighborhood Social Interaction			-0.146	-0.145	0.865
Organizational Social Capital (OSC)			0.091	0.018	1.018
Neighboring			0.041	0.049	1.050
Trust			0.176	0.181	1.198
Neighbor Support (NS)			0.015	0.149	1.161
<i>Interactions</i>					
Monthly Income X Elderly				0.013	1.013
Monthly Income X Family Support				-0.003	0.997
Monthly Income X Friend Support				-0.001	0.999
Monthly Income X OSC				0.007	1.007
Monthly Income X Neighboring				-0.001	0.999
Monthly Income X NS				-0.012	0.988
Intercept	1.725	1.020	1.258	1.244	

Table 2 (Continued)

	Rural Home				Rel. Risk
	Model 1 B	Model 2 B	Model 3 B	Model 4 B	Ratio
Oldest Child Male <sup>a</sup>	0.003	0.156	0.122	0.121	1.129
Oldest Child Age	-0.083**	-0.124***	-0.127***	-0.129***	0.879
Married/Cohabiting <sup>b</sup>	-0.044	-0.172	-0.331	-0.327	0.721
Male <sup>a</sup>	0.716***	0.655***	0.510**	0.515*	1.674
Education	-0.532***	-0.525***	-0.487***	-0.501***	0.606
Age	-0.045 <sup>+</sup>	-0.033	-0.028	-0.028	0.972
Years of Urban Residence	-0.027 <sup>+</sup>	-0.027 <sup>+</sup>	-0.017	-0.017	0.983
Monthly Income (per 100 yuan)	-0.004	-0.005	-0.006	-0.012	0.988
Employed Full Time <sup>c</sup>	-0.904***	-0.860***	-0.634*	-0.636*	0.529
<i>Individual/Family Predictors</i>					
Elderly Relatives in Home		-0.265*	-0.230 <sup>+</sup>	-0.413 <sup>+</sup>	0.662
Two or more Children <sup>d</sup>		0.830***	0.787***	0.813***	2.255
Family Support		-0.081	-0.098 <sup>+</sup>	0.015	1.015
Friend Support		0.052	0.154	0.125	1.133
<i>Community Predictors</i>					
Place Attachment			-0.380***	-0.388***	0.678
Community Satisfaction			-0.084	-0.095	0.909
Environmental Quality of Life			-0.049 <sup>+</sup>	-0.049 <sup>+</sup>	0.952
Occupational Quality of Life			0.016	0.019	1.019
Life Satisfaction			0.029	0.032	1.033
Neighborhood Social Interaction			-0.161 <sup>+</sup>	-0.162 <sup>+</sup>	0.850
Organizational Social Capital (OSC)			0.012	-0.067	0.935
Neighboring			0.054	0.016	1.016
Trust			0.076	0.083	1.087
Neighbor Support (NS)			-0.183	-0.050	0.951
<i>Interactions</i>					
Monthly Income X Elderly				0.016	1.016
Monthly Income X Family Support				-0.010	0.990
Monthly Income X Friend Support				0.002	1.002
Monthly Income X OSC				0.008	1.008
Monthly Income X Neighboring				0.003	1.003
Monthly Income X NS				-0.012	0.988
Intercept	5.248***	5.047***	5.572***	5.667***	
Wald $\chi^2$ (45; 65; 115; 145)	2876.8***	2053.0***	2084.5***	2007.9***	
R <sup>2</sup>	.087	.098	.124	.130	

Note: \*\*\* p<0.001, \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05, <sup>+</sup>p<0.1

References include a. female, b. unmarried, c. non full-time employment, d. one child in the family

Community-focused cognitions and measures of social capital also held predictive power, though they generally tended toward non-significance. Migrants with higher place attachment to the urban area were less likely to enroll their oldest children in rural or township schools, and environmental quality of life may have provided additional incentives for urban public enrollment over rural enrollment. Thus, parents who were content with their urban environments appeared more likely to have their children enrolled in public schools. Neighborhood social interaction decreased the odds of rural school enrollment, suggesting that, similar to place attachment, suitable urban conditions may prompt greater efforts for urban school enrollment. Alternatively, parents may have been more content with urban areas if they had their children with them, and having children present may have increased interaction in the neighborhood. Still, because neighborhood interaction is gauged generally and is not specific to the presence of children, reasonable evidence exists for the former interpretation. Other community-focused cognitions and behaviors, as well as interactions, were largely inconsequential predictors.

These results give partial support to hypothesis 1, that greater levels of individual- and community-focused social capital are associated with increased odds of public school enrollment. Place attachment had the most widespread positive effects; together with coefficients for neighborhood social interaction and environmental quality of life, these may indicate that contentment with urban life leads to a greater investment in urban public education rather than in rural or township schools.

Increasing financial and human capital also tended to increase public school enrollment, though these effects were not universal. Hypothesis 3, that single children

would be more likely to be enrolled in public schools than children from multi-children families, was also supported, indicating that dilution effects may be operating.

Hypothesis 4, that the benefits of social capital would differ depending on financial capital, was unsupported.

### *Analysis 2: Enrollment in Preferred School Type*

Table 3 displays enrollment status versus parental enrollment desires for their children. The wide range of actual school enrollment is especially interesting given the overall preference for urban public schools. Though 69% of parents prefer urban public schools, only 25% of first (or only) children are enrolled in such schools. Nevertheless, nearly a quarter of parents prefer schools closer to their communities of origin, and small numbers prefer urban private or migrant schools.

Some middle- to high-income migrant parents may choose to send their children to nicer private migrant schools because of the social stigma associated with being a migrant, and a preference for rural schools may reflect realization that structural barriers could potentially limit school choice—such as the urban bias in middle and high school exit exams or financial barriers imposed by many urban public schools (Kipnis, 2001). Nevertheless, as is shown in Table 4, those who prefer rural schools are able to access them, as the barriers to urban public education are simply less present in the rural locale.

Analysis 2 examines whether social capital is useful for matching this preference with actual enrollment. Table 4 presents a logistic regression, the final model of which explains 22.2% of the total variance, which predicts enrollment in the preferred school type. Duration of urban residence positively predicts child enrollment in the preferred

type of school, suggesting that greater time in urban areas gives parents more experience navigating through the process of school enrollment. The negative effect of having multiple children suggests resource dilution. Neighborhood interaction and place attachment were also positively predictive, suggesting that parents are more likely to match their overwhelming preference for urban public schools in communities that provide sufficient interaction and in which they intend to remain. Neighbor support, on the other hand, was strongly maladaptive, which may indicate that migrants rely on neighbors only when absolutely necessary, as this help may be of limited use and may constitute a last resort (Beaudoin, 2009; Morrissey, 2006; Poortinga, 2006). Since neighborhood social interaction had a positive effect, it appears that it is less the nature of the neighborhoods themselves in which migrants live, and more the overreliance on the people who live in such neighborhoods, which may prove detrimental to achieving enrollment preferences, particularly if it indicates a lack of bridging social capital.

Table 3

*Parent Preferred School Type versus Oldest Child Enrollment (N=955)*

Parents' Preferred School	School Enrollment for Oldest Child						Total	%
	Urban Public	Urban Private	Urban Migrant	Township	Rural	Other		
Urban Public	<b>199</b>	87	18	147	201	8	660	69.1
Urban Private	5	<b>9</b>	0	3	5	0	22	2.3
Urban Migrant	6	4	<b>4</b>	4	9	0	27	2.8
Rural/Township	19	12	2	<b>58</b>	<b>118</b>	5	214	22.4
Quit School	2	1	2	6	6	1	18	1.9
Other	5	1	0	2	6	0	14	1.5
Total	236	114	26	220	345	14	955	
%	24.7	11.9	2.7	23.0	36.1	1.5		100

Table 4

*Logistic Regression Predicting whether School Enrollment for the Oldest Child Matches Parental Desires (N=955)*

	Model 1 B	Model 2 B	Model 3 B	Model 4 B	Model 5 B	Odds Ratio
Oldest Child Male <sup>a</sup>	0.068	-0.005	0.010	-0.036	-0.034	0.967
Oldest Child Age	0.034 <sup>+</sup>	0.055*	0.057*	0.073**	0.075**	1.078
Married/Cohabiting <sup>b</sup>	0.615	0.697	0.786	0.213	0.146	1.157
Male <sup>a</sup>	-0.276	-0.271 <sup>+</sup>	-0.247	-0.465**	-0.453*	0.636
Education	0.013	0.000	-0.039	0.115	0.122	1.130
Age	-0.008	-0.014	-0.015	0.005	0.004	1.004
Years of Urban Residence	0.035**	0.036**	0.034**	0.037*	0.038**	1.039
Monthly Income (per 100 yuan)	-0.001	-0.001	-0.003	0.006	0.017	1.017
Employed Full Time <sup>c</sup>	0.256	0.221	0.183	0.147	0.154	1.166
<i>Individual/Family Predictors</i>						
Elderly Relatives in Home		0.033	0.027	0.069	0.160	1.174
Two or more Children <sup>d</sup>		-0.406*	-0.384*	-0.605**	-0.611***	0.543
Family Support		-0.008	0.006	0.009	-0.024	0.976
Friend Support		0.030	-0.036	-0.140	-0.043	0.958
<i>Community Predictors</i>						
Place Attachment			0.038	0.226*	0.236*	1.266
Community Satisfaction			0.052	0.054	0.075	1.078
Environmental Quality of Life			0.020	0.028	0.028	1.028
Occupational Quality of Life			0.023	0.000	-0.004	0.996
Life Satisfaction			0.022	0.017	0.015	1.015
Neighborhood Social Interaction			0.161*	0.258**	0.262**	1.300
Organizational Social Cap. (SC)			-0.017	-0.023	-0.067	0.935
Neighboring			0.011	0.023	0.037	1.038
Trust			0.005	-0.073	-0.086	0.918
Neighbor Support			-0.250**	-0.318**	-0.548**	0.578
<i>Parental School-Type Preferences</i>						
Urban Private <sup>e</sup>				0.460	0.506	1.659
Urban Migrant <sup>e</sup>				-0.783	-0.768	0.464
Rural/Township <sup>e</sup>				2.801***	2.827***	16.895
<i>Interactions</i>						
Income X Elderly					-0.009	0.991
Income X Family Support					0.003	1.003
Income X Friend Support					-0.008	0.992
Income X Organizational SC					0.004	1.004
Income X Neighboring					-0.001	0.999
Income X Neighbor Support					0.020 <sup>+</sup>	1.020
Intercept	-1.461*	-1.452 <sup>+</sup>	-2.488**	-3.325**	-3.406**	
Wald $\chi^2$ (9; 13; 23; 26; 32)	19.01*	25.61*	45.77**	186.34***	195.68***	
R <sup>2</sup>	.016	.021	.037	.218	.222	

Note: \*\*\* p<0.001, \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05, <sup>+</sup>p<0.1

References include a. female, b. unmarried, c. non full-time employment, d. one child in the family, e. urban public school preference



Together, these findings give fairly strong support to hypothesis 2, that social capital aids enrollment in the school type of choice, though again, this is dependent upon the type of social capital employed. Also congruent with hypothesis 2, public schools appear to remain the least accessible. As model 3 reveals, parents with township/rural preferences had close to 20 times the odds of achieving their preferences than did those with preferences for public schools.

### *Analysis 3: Child Specialization Effects*

A final analysis investigates child preference/specialization in families with multiple children. Table 5 compares enrollment for the oldest child with enrollment for the second oldest child for families with at least two children. This gives some support to the hypothesis that older children are given preferential treatment, as a greater percentage of older children were enrolled in the preferred public schools than second children. Twenty-five second-born children were enrolled in non-public schools when their older siblings were enrolled in public schools, though the reverse was true for only 11 children. Meanwhile, when older children were enrolled in township schools, younger siblings may have been more likely to be enrolled in rural schools. A  $\chi^2$  goodness of fit test is significant at the 0.01 level, suggesting that some specialization effects are indeed present.

Results of two logistic regressions, which explain up to 35% of the total variance, provide further evidence for such effects. Table 6 presents the results of a logistic regression predicting the enrollment of oldest and second oldest children in the same type of school. Students are most likely to be enrolled in the same schools when both children

are male. Since other birth order/gender combinations were not statistically different from the reference group (male-female ordering), this indicates that males may be given preferential treatment in schooling decisions, though this pattern was only marginally significant. Students were more likely to be enrolled in different kinds of schools if their age differential was large and if their parents were older. In addition, greater income increased the likelihood of enrollment in the same type of school, which, with the negative directionality for additional children, again suggests that resource dilution effects may operate. Overall, enrollment patterns among children in multi-child families appear to be affected most directly by human and financial capital, and less so by social factors, as few individual- or community focused measures of social capital proved significant.

Table 5

*Cross Tabulation of Oldest Child Enrollment versus 2<sup>nd</sup> Oldest Child Enrollment*

2 <sup>nd</sup> Oldest Child School Enrollment	Oldest Child School Enrollment						Total	%
	Urban Public	Urban Private	Urban Migrant	Township Home	Rural Home	Other		
Urban Public	<b>59</b>	4	0	3	4	0	70	18.2
Urban Private	6	<b>23</b>	0	3	6	0	38	9.9
Urban Migrant	0	0	<b>7</b>	3	2	0	12	3.1
Township Home	13	0	2	<b>77</b>	4	3	99	25.7
Rural Home	6	2	0	23	<b>127</b>	2	160	41.6
Other	0	0	0	1	3	<b>2</b>	6	1.6
Total	<b>84</b>	29	9	110	146	7	385	
%	21.8	7.5	2.3	28.6	37.9	1.8		100

$\chi^2(5)$  Goodness of fit = 17.22, p<0.01

Table 6

*Logistic Regression Predicting whether Oldest Children in Multiple-Child Families are Enrolled in the Same Type of School as 2<sup>nd</sup> Oldest Children (N=385)*

	Model 1 B	Model 2 B	Model 3 B	Model 4 B	Odds Ratio
First Male, Second Male <sup>a</sup>	0.827 <sup>+</sup>	0.764	0.874 <sup>+</sup>	0.822	2.275
First Female, Second Male <sup>a</sup>	0.241	0.159	0.242	0.206	1.229
First Female, Second Female <sup>a</sup>	0.246	0.342	0.462	0.417	1.517
Age Differential between children	-0.232***	-0.261***	-0.260***	-0.265***	0.767
Married/Cohabiting <sup>b</sup>	-0.310	-0.696	-0.848	-0.833	0.435
Male <sup>c</sup>	-0.125	-0.173	-0.130	-0.153	0.858
Education	-0.185	-0.230	-0.249	-0.283	0.754
Age	-0.083**	-0.072*	-0.074*	-0.073*	0.930
Years of Urban Residence	-0.004	-0.021	-0.020	-0.022	0.978
Monthly Income (per 100 yuan)	0.063*	0.056 <sup>+</sup>	0.054 <sup>+</sup>	-0.033	0.968
Employed Full Time <sup>d</sup>	-0.412	-0.433	-0.384	-0.387	0.679
<i>Individual/Family Predictors</i>					
Elderly Relatives in Home		0.027	0.034	-0.080	0.923
Three or more Children <sup>e</sup>		-0.940 <sup>+</sup>	-0.883 <sup>+</sup>	-0.913 <sup>+</sup>	0.401
Family Support		0.119	0.131	0.263	1.301
Friend Support		0.297*	0.190	-0.007	0.993
<i>Community Predictors</i>					
Place Attachment			-0.017	-0.006	0.994
Community Satisfaction			0.172	0.163	1.177
Environmental Quality of Life			0.016	0.016	1.016
Occupational Quality of Life			0.023	0.022	1.022
Life Satisfaction			-0.031	-0.039	0.962
Neighborhood Social Interaction			0.139	0.147	1.158
Organizational Social Capital (SC)			-0.095	0.047	1.048
Neighboring			0.140	-0.144	0.866
Trust			0.201	0.199	1.220
Neighbor Support			-0.169	-0.216	0.806
<i>Interactions</i>					
Monthly Income X Elderly				0.015	1.015
Monthly Income X Family Support				-0.012	0.988
Monthly Income X Friend Support				0.020	1.020
Monthly Income X Organizational SC				-0.015	0.985
Monthly Income X Neighboring				0.031	1.031
Monthly Income X Neighbor Support				0.005	1.005
Intercept	6.201***	5.596*	4.196 <sup>+</sup>	5.232*	
Wald $\chi^2$ (11; 15; 25; 31)	32.45**	44.18***	53.91***	63.32***	
R <sup>2</sup>	.108	.134	.164	.173	

Note: \*\*\* p<0.001, \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05, <sup>+</sup>p<0.1

References include a. First Male, Second Female, b. unmarried, c. female, d. non full-time employment, e. one or two children in the family

Table 7 depicts the gender ordering distribution in the 84 multiple-children families that reported urban public school enrollment for the oldest child; 25 of the second children in such families were enrolled in other types of school. Table 8 presents the results of a logistic regression predicting enrollment in an urban public school for the oldest child and enrollment in a different type of school for the second oldest child. In contrast to the effect of gender ordering on specialization observed in Table 5, gender did not appear to be a significant factor in this particular enrollment sub-pattern, though the small sample size may obscure such effects. The directionality of coefficients suggests that differential investment may occur most often when both children are female; indeed, this gender ordering was more strongly correlated with this school enrollment pattern ( $r=.29$ ) than were any of the other gender orderings.

Table 7

*Cross Tabulation of Gender Orderings for Multiple-Children Families when the Oldest Child is Enrolled in an Urban Public School and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Oldest Child is Enrolled in a Different Type of School*

	Oldest Male, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Oldest Male	Oldest Male, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Oldest Female	Oldest Female, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Oldest Male	Oldest Female, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Oldest Female	Total
Oldest in Urban Public, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Oldest in Urban Public	12	19	18	10	49
Oldest in Urban Public, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Oldest not in Urban Public	4	4	6	11	25
Total	16	23	24	21	84

$\chi^2(3)$  Goodness of fit = 5.1,  $p>0.10$

Interestingly, male adult respondents were more likely to report enrollment in different types of schools for their children than were female respondents. Since most

migrants are males, female respondents may be accompanying males, and their residence in the same location may limit the degree to which enrollment in different types of schools is possible. To elucidate, younger children's enrollment in rural or township schools is limited if both parents are living in the urban context. In addition, greater income decreased the odds of differential enrollment. Given greater resources, parents are more able to enroll both students in preferred schools.

Table 8

*Logistic Regression Predicting when the Oldest Child is Enrolled in an Urban Public School and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Oldest Child is Enrolled in a Different Type of School (N=84)*

	B	Robust SE	Odds Ratio
First Male, Second Male <sup>a</sup>	-0.014	0.961	0.986
First Female, Second Male <sup>a</sup>	0.210	0.871	1.234
First Female, Second Female <sup>a</sup>	1.231	0.909	3.425
Age Differential between children	0.271*	0.139	1.311
Male <sup>b</sup>	1.809*	0.744	6.104
Education	0.643	0.446	1.902
Age	0.080	0.061	1.083
Income (per 100 yuan)	-0.118*	0.059	0.889
Intercept	-7.409*	2.951	
Wald $\chi^2(8) = 17.59^*$			
$R^2 = .353$			

Note: \* p<0.05

References include a. a. First Male, Second Female, b. female

These findings give moderate support to hypothesis 5 and give further support to hypothesis 3. The fewest specialization effects are observed when the first two children are both male, and older children appear to have a greater likelihood of enrollment in urban public schools. Further, fewer specialization effects are observed with higher income, suggesting that capital dilution may be operating in families with multiple children but with fewer resources.

### *Study Limitations and Strengths*

The generalizability of the relationships observed here is unknown. The sample should not be considered nationally representative, even though a stratified sampling process was used in seven cities from different regions of China and from a total of 30 different sites. In this nonrandom convenience sample located through businesses, the utility of social capital may have been affected by factors associated with the businesses chosen. Intentions in seeking out organizational support may have varied by business, for instance. Few parents reported that their children were not enrolled in school, which may reflect a response bias and expectations of “good citizenship.” Nonetheless, the migrant population has been the subject of considerable interest to the government and of prior research in China, due to the social tensions inherent in and created by such a process; in this sense, suspicion of surveyors and perceived pressure to bias responses may not be as substantial as could normally be expected with this typically marginalized population.

In addition, the study is cross sectional, which prevents causal explanations of the relationships between school enrollment and forms of capital observed here. Further, although the survey measures and wordings have face validity and have largely been validated in previous research, items measuring social capital failed to hold together in a single scale, raising doubts about the construct validity of the measures, at least with this sample of Chinese migrants. Finally, most of these measures are based on perceptions of neighborhood qualities; more objective measures might produce different results (Perkins et al., 1996; Ziersch, Baum, MacDougall, & Putland, 2005).

In addition, the survey included children who are enrolled in both urban and rural schools. Since the survey did not assess conditions at the rural level, we are left with only part of the picture for why students may or may not be enrolled in *urban* public schools. Enrollment in rural schools may even be optimal in some circumstances, such as when opportunities are limited in the urban environment and when grandparents, parents, or others are able to care for children in the community of origin, and thus not reflective of lesser means, financially or socially. In addition, parents' widespread preference for urban public schools is assumed to apply to their children collectively, though in reality, this may not reflect preferences for the oldest child or all children equally.

The greatest strength of this study is likely the opportunity it affords to assess differential utility of social capital and support in an important but difficult to reach population in the world's most populous country, and to compare it to both general and migrant populations in other parts of the world. In China, millions of migrants may be most in need of assistance but lack the proximal informal support systems most residents use and take for granted (Xu & Chow, 2006). Greater use of social capital may be vital to aspirations for themselves and their children, and thus any insights prompted by the present data are valuable.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

The volume of internal migrants in China speaks to widespread aspirations of a better life for migrants as well as their children. These aspirations are clearly articulated in the ways in which parents seek to provide educational opportunities for their children and their preference to go through recognized routes to increase their children's odds of success in life. Migrant parents clearly utilize social capital to gain access to the most preferred educational institutions, urban public schools, supporting hypotheses 1 and 2. Contentment with urban life, as measured by place attachment, is associated with greater odds of enrollment in urban public schools, and the generally positive effect for neighborhood social interaction may further indicate that neighborhood quality promotes enrollment in preferred schools. Of course, it may also be the case that the presence of children in the urban space, and enrolled in public schools, may promote urban place attachment and neighborhood interaction.

Nonetheless, parents are tasked with fulfilling desires with only limited resources. Supporting hypothesis 3 of capital dilution, children in multi-child families are less likely to attend urban public schools or other schools preferred by their parents. When capital is limited, parents may invest in children differently. Results from analysis 3 indicate that specialization is least likely when both children are male and when higher amounts of financial resources are available. In addition to evidence that when the oldest and second oldest children are enrolled in different schools, the oldest child may be enrolled in more



preferred schools, these findings support hypothesis 5 regarding specialization effects, which were expected to favor older and male children.

This paper presents compelling arguments for reexamining the conceptualizations and operationalizations of social capital with respect to social context. Providing some support for my hypotheses, some measures of individual- and community-focused social capital proved positive predictors of enrollment in schools of the highest quality, though some connections, such as those in the neighborhood, may prove less useful. What can first be seen as inconclusive results regarding the effects of social capital on education can be reinterpreted through the complex Chinese social lens. In a country in which extensive informal networks can be most advantageous, and with a short and limited history of civic participation, traditional Western notions of social capital, such as those based on trust or organizational involvement, may be less helpful or even inappropriate (Perkins, Xu, & Chow, in press). Efforts to improve educational outcomes for migrant families through organizations and neighborhood activity may prove initially ineffective.

Findings in this study also argue for greater social support structures offered by the government. China's central government is increasingly aware of the massive scale of internal migration within the country, as it has been the source of profound social changes and tensions across society. As it stands, migration typically represents not a means to accumulate financial resources for selfish reasons, but rather as a way to support oneself and one's family, including improving educational opportunities for children. Because urban public schools are widely preferred by parents, officials should seek to expand access to them. Reducing financial barriers should accomplish this quite effectively, as income and employment factored significantly into nearly every analysis

presented here. In addition, reducing rural-urban disparities and biases in the educational system may help to smooth current parental preferences and help ease some of the pressure associated with mass migration to large urban areas. Finally, encouraging migrant workers' collective activities and promoting a welcome and supportive environment in urban communities may help migrant workers mobilize resources, increase capacities, and improve access to educational resources. China's rapid economic growth has brought many improvements in living conditions and quality of life; equally sharing these benefits and transforming them into positive human development outcomes are essential to balancing the country's economic and social needs.

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