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Qualitative Study on Chinese Workforce Well-Being in Lisbon

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Consultancy*

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Resumo

Pouco se sabe sobre o bem-estar no trabalho dos trabalhadores chineses que trabalham na comunidade empresarial chinesa em Lisboa, Portugal, enquanto o número de imigrações chinesas está a crescer e a aumentar durante a década. Este artigo se concentra em estudar o bem-estar no trabalho, o estresse relacionado ao trabalho e as estratégias de enfrentamento aos estressores desse grupo específico de pessoas. Uma entrevista cara a cara em profundidade foi usada para examinar o grupo, quatorze entrevistas foram realizadas com trabalhadores chineses. As entrevistas foram analisadas para identificar temas comuns relacionados ao bem-estar no trabalho e ao estresse relacionado ao trabalho. No geral, seis principais fatores de impacto no estresse relacionado ao trabalho foram codificados: questões operacionais dos empregadores ou questões financeiras, relacionamento interpessoal, suporte social no trabalho, conflito família-trabalho, processo de adaptação e condições de trabalho. Lidando com os estressores mencionados acima, os participantes utilizaram estratégias focadas no problema e estratégias focadas na emoção, incluindo auto-ajuste e auto-esclarecimento, busca de ajuda e mudança de local de trabalho, para reduzir o nível de estresse. Dado o tamanho da amostra, várias limitações precisam ser consideradas e podem gerar vieses. Este estudo complementa a pesquisa e estudo atual sobre trabalhadores chineses que trabalham em países de acolhimento estrangeiros, especialmente em Lisboa, Portugal.

Palavras-chave: Bem-estar do trabalhador chinês; O stress relacionado com o trabalho; Estratégia de enfrentamento; Lisboa

Sistema de Classificação JEL: I120 Health Behavior; Dissertação Y4

Abstract

Little is known about work well-being of Chinese workers working in the Chinese business community in Lisbon, Portugal while the number of the Chinese immigrations is developing and raising during the decade. This article focuses on studying the work well-being, work-related stress, and coping strategies towards the stressors of this specific group of people. An in-depth face-to-face interview were used to examine the group, fourteen interviews were conducted with Chinese workers. Interviews were analyzed to identify common themes relating to the work well-being and work-related stress. Overall, six main factors impact on work-related stress were coding out: operation issues of employers or financial issues, interpersonal relationship, social support at work, family-to-work conflict, adaption process, and working conditions. Coping with the above-mentioned stressors, the participants utilized both problem-focused strategies and emotion-focused strategies, including self-adjustment and self-enlightening, seeking assistance, and changing workplace, to reduce stress level. Given the size of the sample, several limitations need to be considered may generate biases. This study adds to the current research and study regarding Chinese workers working in foreign host countries, especially in Lisbon, Portugal

Keywords: Chinese worker; Well-being; Work-related stress; Coping strategy; Lisbon

JEL Classification System: I120 Health Behavior; Y4 Dissertation

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

International migration has increased over the decades and become a significant stream of the global workforce. In European Union (EU), statistical data on migration show that the proportion of migrant workers accounting for the labour force has been increasing, and this is likely to be a growing tendency in the future. In 2010, there were 32.5 million foreigners in the EU-27 (6.5% of the total population), of whom 20.2 million were non-EU countries' citizens (EU-OSHA, 2013). Because most migrants are relatively young, they contribute to be part of the EU-27 labour force. By 2060, close to one-third of the EU-27 workforces will be foreign descent (EU-OSHA report, 2013-2014). The proportion of foreigner workers in the workforce is growing. More research is needed on this group of workers and the jobs they occupy.

According to the report from EU-OSHA (2013), immigrant workers often struggle with the language, which may result in the misunderstanding of safety instructions and communication with their colleagues and bosses. Besides, most of the foreigners are employed in the unskilled and flexible jobs in the services sector, which cause some negative consequences such as lower wages and higher occupational insecurity, more risk of accidents in the workplace and a greater prevalence of unhealthy working conditions (EU-OSHA, 2008). These situations can lead to physical and mental problems at work. Additionally, cultural background influences people's perception of living, and behavior regarding, health and safety risks.

In a word, because of the working conditions differences, cultural diversity and other factors, foreign workers will have physical and psychological work-related problems in host countries. The well-being of foreign workforce working in a foreign workplace environment should be noticed while there is a limitation in the research field of workplace well-being of foreign workers.

From an international point of view, Portugal is a source country for international migration flows. According to the immigration report from SERVIÇO DE ESTRANGEIROS

E FRONTEIRAS (SEF, short for Foreigners and Borders Service), Chinese immigration has a significant increase in 2014 with the population of 21,402 while 2013 with the population of 18,637, becoming the only growing resident foreign population (6.8%). Since 2010, the Chinese immigration continued a steady growth (+7% in 2011,+4% in 2012,+7% in 2013 and +15% in 2014). And Chinese population has become the main fifth foreign population in Portugal. With their geographical distribution, there is a tendency to concentrate in the three main districts—Lisbon, Porto and Faro. Meanwhile, the majority of Chinese population settles in Lisbon. More and more Chinese workforce is working in Lisbon, not only employed but also self-employed. 76% of the Chinese residents with more than 15 years has their main source of income from their work. Most of the Chinese population employed in the seller store, retail trade and wholesale economic activities (72%). Furthermore, Chinese enterprises invest more their business in Portugal.

As the Chinese group becomes a significant part of the Portugal workforce market, it is an urgent need to understand their work-related well-being in the host country. Enabling this group of workers to participate productively and healthy in the labour market will render economic growth of Portugal.

Foreign workers, like other people, could suffer work stress, maybe more. Low-paid job, unsafe workplace, or poor working conditions could cause work-related stress. There are more migrant workers than local workers report industrial accidents and injuries in the construction and public works industries in many western European countries (Carballo and Nerukar,2001), as well as the long working hours. Besides, the acculturative stress caused by the process of adapting to a new socio-cultural environment can lead to foreigner workers' workplace stress (Lueck and Wilson,2010). Cultural values are a significant cause of work stress and therefore the individual well-being (Ip,2009) Furthermore, personal circumstances are important factors which are neglected in the research on migrant stress. A strong social network, family support, language skills and issues around security of residency all impact on a migrant's ability to cope with stress and integrate into a new cultural environment (Soylu, 2007).

Although many researchers have studied on the workplace well-being and work-related

stress of people, as well as mental health studies, most of them have more focused on workers from homogeneous contexts (Soylu,2007) and few related studies have been conducted with foreign workers. Little known about how workplace stress differs across culturally diverse populations, especially Chinese worker in a diverse workplace environment. And little has studied on the causes and consequences of stress among foreign workers and how they cope with stress. This study addresses this gap by studying Chinese workers in Lisbon.

With the research in these workers, we believe that it will be useful to enhance equality, inclusion and assimilation into the host country, meanwhile is helpful for Chinese workforce better and faster integration into a new workplace environment.

Outline of this study

Chapter 2 covers the *Literature Review* about a detailed overview of literatures related to workplace well-being and work-related stress, explaining their concepts and definitions as well as their causes and outcomes. Meanwhile, the second chapter develops expected factors that will impact on Chinese workforce well-being and work-related stress. Chapter 3 presents *Methodology* for this study, providing the details of the intended procedures about data collection and analysis for this study. Chapter 4 states *Results*, discussing findings from the interviews conducted. Chapter 5 presents *Discussion and Conclusion* of this study, stating interpretations of our discussions about comparison between findings and literatures, presenting practical implications and limitations of this study, as well as future research opportunities.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

This chapter will state definitions of well-being and work-related stress, review the theoretical and empirical literatures on well-being and stress, discuss the situation of foreign workers, especially Chinese workers, and conclude factors generating stress of Chinese workers in foreign environment, which are intended to guide the following interview schedule and research direction.

2.1 Well-Being and Work-Life

Well-Being

In the Oxford dictionary, wellbeing is defined as “the state of being or doing well in life; happy, healthy, or prosperous condition; moral or physical welfare (of a person or community)”. The definition of wellbeing implies more. Well-being is a term found in a broad range of research field and literatures such as psychology, public health, philosophy, economics and general social science. Therefore, there is not a consistent single definition of well-being among the current literatures. But a general agreement is proposed that well-being includes positive emotions, the absence of negative emotions, life satisfaction, positive functioning and feeling physical healthy (Andrews,F.M& Withey,S.B.1976; Ryff, C.D&Keyes,C. 1995; Diener, E. 2005;).

Following Kiefer’s (2008) review of the concept of well-being, with regards to an individual’s physical, psychological, social, and environmental status with mutual interaction with each aspect, well-being can be defined. And each aspect has different extent of significance and influence on him/her according to each individual. As such, the individual well-being could be determinate and affected by multiple aspects. In order to define well-being specifically, there is still some controversies among researchers about the approaches. But the main distinctions could be highlighted through research: 1) Objective measures versus Subjective measures. 2) Hedonic well-being versus Eudaimonic well-being. (Fiona,MA. 2005)

Objective and Subjective measures of well-being

For measuring the well-being, researchers have designed plenty of measures which could be generally categorized into objective or subjective measures. Objective measures are formed from survey data correlated with hylic and social circumstances that could take as indicators fostering or detracting well-being. Normally these data are collected by the government periodically. For example, in the U.K, the Audit Commission's Quality of Life indicators set includes not only the social indicators (e.g. income and employment, education, housing standards, etc.), but also the healthy indicators (e.g. life expectancy, mortality, etc.). Hence, objective measures are more focus on the overall circumstances and living conditions of people but neglect individuals' experiences, perceptions and feelings of well-being.

Whereas subjective measures are based on survey data about individuals' experiences and feelings ---- How do respondents rate their satisfaction or happiness with scales. Such data could reflect individuals' life satisfaction and feelings. Researchers raised doubts about the reliability and validity of subjective measures (Fiona,MA.2005). Do individuals rate their own feelings on scale in the same way? Do respondents comprehend the term of "well-being", "satisfaction" or "happiness" in the same way? However, as a matter of fact these issues were less significant than they were assumed. Some researchers addressed this issue and validated the reliability of surveys about life satisfaction (Veenhoven,1997.2002; Donovan&Halpern,2002; Easterlin,2003; Layard,2005). To solve and improve subjective measures of well-being, the study of subjective well-being is still growing worldwide to be as global measures.

The hedonic and eudaimonic approach of well-being

Research approaches on well-being had be grounded in two general distinctions: hedonic well-being and eudaimonic well-being. From the hedonic viewpoint, well-being focuses on happiness, including subjective happiness, the experience of pleasure or displeasure with the judgement about life. Hedonic psychologists pointed out that hedonism or happiness can be equated with well-being. (Ryan&Deci,2001). Besides, with hedonic view, psychologists have used subjective well-being (SWB) as assessment to evaluate people's pleasure/ pain based on

their life experience. Diener and Lucas (1999) concluded three components of subjective well-being: the positive mood, the absence of negative mood and life satisfaction.

On the other hand, from the eudaimonic viewpoint, scholars argued that happiness per se is distinct from well-being. The eudaimonic well-being is constructed through the actualization of human potential, meaning and purpose. Waterman (1993) stated that the well-being conception put more attention on the true self of people. He proposed that when individual's life activities happen in accordance with their own deep value, people will feel authentic and alive intensively, and the eudaimonia occurs. The label ---- Personal expressiveness (PE) was used by Waterman to conclude such circumstances which were more related to personal growth and development. Ryff and Keyes (1995) asserted that well-being is not so simply as gaining pleasure, but as endeavoring to realize one's true potential. In this view, they developed the psychological well-being (PWB) model with six dimensions assessing individual's well-being: autonomy, life purpose, mastery, personal growth, positive relatedness and self-acceptance. This model emphasizes the fulling functioning and flourishing of person and considers both emotional and physical health of people (Ryff&Singer,1998).

Interestingly, although these two distinctions define well-being with different theories, develop SWB and PWB model and ask different questions in research, some degree overlapping can be found in the two research literatures. As evidence from a lot of investigators shows, well-being is probably a multidimensional conception including both aspects of the hedonic and eudaimonic views. (Compton,1996; King&Napa, 1998; McGregor&Little,1998; Ryff&Deci,2001)

Well-being and Work-life

Work plays an important role of human life and work well-being is a crucial component of individuals' overall life well-being. People spend most of their waking hours on working life. On average, individuals will spend 90,000 hours at work over their lifetime. Andrew and Withey (1976) found that there is a strong correlation between quality of work life (QWL) and employees' overall quality of life, thus QWL can be used to predict people's overall life

satisfaction. It is safe to say that individuals' working life influence their quality of life and well-being a lot.

According to the 2013 EU-OSHA (European Agency for Safety and Health at Work) report, following the changing of work environment and work patterns by increasing migration from country to country, ageing workforce, increasing proportion of women workforce, globalization, the transformation of economic pattern (from manufacturing to service-based economies), the psychosocial risks of workforce is rising. It is necessary to keep employees healthier and promote individuals' work well-being.

To do further study on well-being of workforce, it is important to define the work well-being. However, the concept of work-related well-being has different meanings across different cultures and societal factors within organizations and countries. As the concept of well-being at work has developed over time, some researchers had a preference for only focusing on mental work-related well-being, some of them focused on both physical and mental well-being at work. But most of researchers suggested that the concept is multifaceted and take personal characteristics as consideration and link it with work. For instance, the International Labour Organization (ILO) state that:

“Workplace well-being relates to all aspects of working life, from the quality and safety of the physical environment, to how workers feel about their work, their working environment; the climate at work and work organization.”

The European Working Conditions Observatory (EWCO) includes productivity into well-being at work:

“Well-being at work means safe, healthy and productive work in a well-led organization by competent workers and work communities who see their job as meaningful and rewarding.....”

From the American perspective, the Gallup Organization in the U.S.A has identified the employees' well-being assessed through five universal and interconnected elements based on the study by Tom&Jim (2010): (1) Career well-being ---- time autonomy of employees' work

and liking what they do for their job (2) Social well-being ---- strong relationship and love support in life (3) Community well-being ---- employees' sense of engagement and involvement in the organizations (4) Physical well-being ---- keeping good health and enough energy to engage into work (5) Financial well-being ---- effective economic life management to reduce financial stress and gain feeling of financial security.

As these definitions showed, work well-being is a complex concept determined by physical, emotional and social factors. These complexities make work well-being hard to be defined and assessed, but researchers continue to develop a better understanding and attempt to achieve an agreement of this subject. As we discussed above, the term of “well-being” of individuals is multidimensional, including gaining “happiness” from hedonic viewpoint and achieving “self-actualization” from eudaimonic viewpoint, which sometimes are referred to as subjective well-being and psychological well-being (Ryan&Deci, 2001). As applied to work well-being, hedonic approach and eudaimonic approach assumed it into two distinct but related ways: gaining happiness, pleasure and enjoyment from work by the individual---- hedonic approach, or achieving purposes and meaning from work by the individual ---- eudaimonic approach (George&Jones,1996; Grant, 2008; Deci&Ryan,2008; Rothausen et al,2012). The hedonia emphasize individuals' happiness or satisfaction toward their work experience or their work itself, whereas the eudaimonia emphasize the fulfilling functioning and flourishing of individuals through working, whether gain the self-realization and fulfillment of the purpose from the work, to provide the financial resources to family or ourselves, to prove ourselves competent in the society, or to learn, grow and develop ourselves. Thus, in this present study, work well-being is an individuals' inner sense of judgement of the contributions of works to individuals' well-being via happiness and enjoyment of the work, as well as the fulfillment and meaning of the purposes of the work by the individuals.

2.2 Work-related stress and Well-being

Stress

Stress can mean as pressure or challenges depends on the level of stress and the individual's attitude to stress. According to Selye (1950), stress referred to as “eustress” and “distress”.

“Eustress” literally means “good stress” which is the positive response to stressors. It is positively related to job satisfaction, well-being and mental development as an intrinsic resource (Pinder,1984). “Distress” refers to excessive levels of stress that upset or harm the individual. Stress more often referred to “distress” in the recent academic literatures, that is a persistent and excessive stressful condition could cause negative and harmful physical and mental responses of the individual.

Furthermore, considering an extreme level of experienced stress, more and more researchers study on “burnout” recently, which refers to the negative responses of the individual to a long-term, high-level and unresolvable job stress (Freudenberger,H.J, 1974; Cooper et al,2001). Researchers’ interests in “burnout” grew and they developed conceptualizations of burnout. Maslach & Jackson (1996) stated burnout comprised three components: emotional exhaustions, depersonalization, and a lack of work-related personal accomplishment. While Shirom & Melamed (2006) argued burnout was characterized by emotional exhaustion, physical fatigue, and cognitive weariness. However, now burnout is considered involve all depressive symptoms including exhaustion, cognitive alterations, dyssomnia and so on (Bianchi,R., Schonfeld,I.S., & Laurent, E., 2015; Bianchi,R et al, 2017).

In this present study, the sense of excessive pressure will be used as the term stress. It consists of the excessive pressures and perceived imbalance between external and internal demands experienced by the individual. Stress will be arisen when the demands of some special events are appraised as about to exceed available coping resources, therefore threaten well-being while the individual feels unable to handle or make some changes that could restore balance. (Lazarus,1991). Some researchers found that stress not only could cause mental hazards such as emotional impairments, job dissatisfaction and depression (Cooper et al,2001), but also cause physical issues such as health impairment, dyssomnia, and fatigue (Hogan&Overmyer-Day,1994). Nelson & Quick (1996) found that stress negatively influence on work performance, thus generating negative outcomes including absenteeism, intentions to quit, poor work quality and reduced productivity.

Work-related stress

Work stress is defined as the response when the individual experienced an unmatched

condition between work demands and pressure and his or abilities and knowledges to cope with (Leka et al,2004). Work stress impacts on work life in distinct aspects, therefore different researchers developed different categories about sources of work stress. For example, Cooper (1988) supposed stressors with six categories: intrinsic factors of job, interpersonal relationship, organizational structure and climate, management role, career achievement and work-family interface. While Burke (1988) characterized six sources of stress at work: physical environment, organizational structure and job characteristics, interpersonal relationship, role stressors, career development and work-family conflict. We can see most of the literatures showed that interpersonal social support and relationships, work-family balance, workload, job role, autonomy are main sources of stress (Luo.L et al, 2003). These sources of stress at work have direct and indirect effect on strain which is the negative response of individual to stressors and construct negative outcome correlated to job satisfaction, physical and mental well-being. Both in the West and Chinese societies, researchers found that work stress was negatively related to employees' physical health and job satisfaction (Cooper,1981; Quick et al,1997; Yu et al., 1998; Lu,1999).

2.3 Factors generating stress of Chinese workers in foreign countries

2.3.1 Poor Work Conditions

Like the other people. Foreign workers also suffer work stress in the host country, and maybe more. A lot of literature searches showed that the poor working conditions are the most pressing issues of Chinese workers faced daily. Plenty of cases about migrant abuse of low pay, over workloads, deskilling and poor working conditions can be seen (e.g. Weishaar,2008). Carballo and Nerukar (2001) found that perhaps because of the long working hour, more migrant workers reported industrial accidents and injuries in the public construction industries than local workers in many western European Countries. As we found that the majority of business activity of Chinese workers in Lisbon is small owned business (e.g. retail stores, restaurants, traditional Chinese medicine, fruit stores), which are characterized by comparative poor working conditions, long working hours and low pay (Marcello.B ,2017). The Chinese workers in London also mainly work in small, owned business, the average pay

for Chinese men was 9 pounds per hour and 7 pounds for women which was lower than the minimum wage of 8.8 pounds in London in 2010 (EHRC,2011). Researchers found that many Chinese doctors who were working in the TCM therapy in the UK got mental ill health even depression because of long working hours, low pay, and poor working conditions (Marcello.B,2017).

2.3.2 Lack of Social Support

The lack of social support at work also can be researched as a factor effect on stress. Social support includes supports inside and outside of the workplace from colleagues, supervisors, and families. As the collectivist culture in China, Chinese people tend to more concerned with interpersonal relationships with colleagues, supervisors and customers (Oi-ling,S et al, 2005). A research on the Chinses worker working in restaurant showed that positive, supportive interactions between the individual and his or her coworkers, supervisors and customers reduce work stress and ; gain help from the others at work (Jenny.T & Annie.B,2009). Foreign workers may experience stress on separation from familiar environment with family and friends. Social network is a significant resource for handling stressful situations and help to reduce stress (Bozionelos,2006).

2.3.3 Separation from Family Networks / Work – Family Balance

In addition, unbalanced work-family relationships also could cause stress. An international study including the mainland China reported that the stressor as work-family balance were correlated with work well-being and job satisfaction (Spector & Cooper,2004). Most of the Chinese construction workers working overseas are saddled with his or whole family in Mainland China. This is a traditional thinking of Chinese people. They need to earn more money back to china to provide better support to their families (aged parents, younger siblings, school-age children and wives or husbands) for a more comfortable and better living conditions (Sui-Pheng.L, Jun-Ying.L, Shan-shan.S,2008), which could be a stressors for Chinese workers.

2.3.4 Cultural Diversity

As found by Tov & Diener (2009), subjective well-being is the personal evaluation of individual lives which is influenced by culture. Chinese workers' well-beings might be influenced because of the diverse cultural environment, while adaptation stress also could be thought of the work stressor for Chinese workers. The process of acculturation and adjusting to a new cultural environment could cause an aggravating workplace stress for Asian migrants (Lueck & Wilson, 2010). When the cultural distance is large, the adjustment increases psychological distress. As China has a collective society, Ying and Ramanie (2016) found that the professional Chinese immigrants in Australia tend to retain their traditional and natural so-called separation and integration as the attitudes that most Chinese immigrants held. It means that it is not that easy for Chinese workers to change the attitude for the new culture. Meanwhile, cultural values influenced on the individual well-being for Chinese workers working in a very different culture such as European countries. Chinese culture more concerns on collectivism, harmony and fatalism in the workplace which is contrast to western culture (Leong et al, 2014). In a word, Chinese workers not only need to deal with the work stress from daily work issues and tasks but also need to face the stress from a new environment and a new organization.

2.3.5 Language Challenge

Furthermore, a lack of language skills impacts on Chinese workers' ability to integrate into a new cultural environment initiatively and deal with some daily issues, especially in a non-English speaking country and non-Chinese speaking either. A lot of research found that limited language proficiency impacted on decision making of choosing jobs and cope with stress. (Jenny.T & Annie.B, 2009; Christian.Y et al, 2015. Ying.L, Ramanie.S and Charmine.EJ.H, 2016;)

CHAPTER 3

Method

3.1 Participants

The sample comprised 14 individuals of Chinese descent working in Lisbon, with Chinese working environment. The qualitative interview was chosen as a method to enable reach a deeper understanding and discovering participants' experience and feelings related to work well-being, working conditions, resources and demands of work per se, work stress and coping strategy. I stopped interviewing participants when recurring themes or similar information occurred, as known as saturation. (Mason,2010).

I categorized 14 participants working in Chinese workplace environment and Chinese business community. In Lisbon, small business remains a significant proportion of Chinese owned business so that the workers of Chinese descent who working in small Chinese owned business are representative. The participants were from Chinese restaurant (N=6), Sanbai Dians¹ (N=6), fruit store (N=1), TCM (Traditional Chinese Medicine) therapy (N=1). The average age of group one was 38.9 (SD=10.9, range 21 to 60). 9 participants out of the group were women and 5 were men. The participants included 5 employees, 8 employers and 1 restaurant manager (this participant invested a small amount of money into the restaurant and worked here as a manager, but he was not the owner). For the family status, 9 participants were married, and all of them has children. Only one participant has divorced and brought up 2 children by herself. Normally, high educational level and high-skilled profession are not asked as requirements of the work in Chinese small owned business. We can see in this sample, only one participant graduated from bachelor's degree (the restaurant manager). The educational level of the other participants was below bachelor's degree, even two of them didn't finish their primary school. (Details in Table 1)

¹ A jargon for retail store called by Chinese people in Portugal.

Table 1. Sample demographic characteristics of participants working in Chinese environment workplace (N=14)

Item	n	Item	n
Gender		Educational Level	
Male	5	Up to Primary School	3
Female	9	Middle School	6
		Secondary School	4
		Bachelor Degree	1
Age		Workplace	
20-29	3	Restaurant	6
30-39	1	Sanbai Dian	6
40-49	4	Fruit store	1
>50	1	TCM Therapy	1
Marital Status		Job Content	
Single	3	Employee	5
Married/Non-marital union	10	Employer	8
Divorced	1	Manager	1
Children		Seniority	
Yes	9	<=6 months	6
No	5	1-5 years	6
Numbers of Children		6-10 years	1
1	3	10-15 year	1
2	6		

3.2 Procedures and Data Analysis

As for the study, I adopted a strategy based on purposive sampling to search participants of Chinese descents who were working in the Chinese small business, such as Chinese restaurants, retail stores, Chinese supermarkets, fruit stores and so on. I visited the Chinese business community area in Martim Moniz and walked street by street in Lisbon to ask the Chinese workers if they could be my interviewees. All the interviewees participated in a semi-structured interview face-to-face, except one interview by telephone because he didn't have time for face-to-face interview. All interviews were recorded including the one by telephone.

The semi-structured interview comprised questions addressed work life well-being, stressors and strains regarding to literatures, and coping. During interviewing, I built backup

questions into the interview to probe further and give the ability to interviewees express more and clear their answers.

After the participants accepted to be interviewed, the respondents were asked how long they had been and worked in Lisbon, what their works were and where they worked in. Basic demographic information of the respondent (i.e., age, gender, educational level, marital statue and region) was collected at the beginning of the interview to relax the respondent and increase his or her willingness to participant. The work histories of respondents before they came to work in Lisbon were obtained in order to compare with their current work-life and work well-being in Lisbon. The respondents were then asked about the reasons why they decided to come and work in Lisbon to study why they decide to change their working environment and their original lifestyle.

Next, I went deeper to collect information about the individual's work-life and work well-being now in Lisbon. Firstly, the respondent was asked about his or her work content, additional key information of the job. The participants were asked to talk about their feelings, satisfaction and dissatisfaction of their work. Interviewees then were asked to describe what satisfy and dissatisfy them at the work: Could you please tell me what you do like / dislike more about your own work?.....Can you give me a specific example that you have told above? Secondly, in an attempt to probe further, the interviewee was asked about his or her feeling with specific aspects related to his or her work: Could you please tell me how you feel with your working conditions/ workplace environment/ employees and employers or colleagues and supervisors / work-family balance?

In the next stage, the interview was more concentrated on the work-related stress. Interviewees were asked if they had work-related stress with their current work/job, and when they felt stressful at their work. Then the participant was asked to describe on specific experience about his or her work-related stress. Later, in order to ascertain the factors of work-related stress, the respondent was asked what he or she thought about the main causes of the stress at work. Next, the participant was asked about how he or she cope with work-related stress: Could you please tell me what you did to deal with your stress? You can mention your reactions, thoughts or activities to decrease and release your stress. At the last of

the interview. The participant was asked if he or she could give some suggestions to promote work well-being at work for the other Chinese workers who prepared to work in Lisbon in the future.

All interviews ranged from 40 minutes to one and a half hour. After conducting all interviews, data analysis for this present study was based on a thematic analysis approach (Braun.V & Clarke.V,2006). All interviews were transcribed literally in Chinese and then translated into English. I coded the transcripts with themes and developed a coding framework. Based on the framework, I organized and wrote up the research findings.

CHAPTER 4

Research Findings

By analyzing the interviews of Group 1 with themes, a framework emerged. In this section, firstly, I examined the ways and patterns in which the participants chose their works and jobs. Secondly, I illustrated the factors that impacted on the participants' well-being in their workplace, as well as their feelings on satisfaction. Thereafter, I summarized how the participants coped with their stress at work.

4.1 Sociocultural factors impact on participants' choice of employment

Among the 14 participants, 9 of the participants decided to go aboard for earning more money. As a traditional thinking of Chinese people, they are responsible for their whole family ---- earn more money to support their family and increase the life quality of their family (Sui-Pheng.L, Jun-Ying.L, Shan-shan.S,2008). Most of the participants had elder parents, brothers or sisters, wives or husbands, and children. And they were the main financial source of the big family. One of the participants said that:

“I came here for money. Generally speaking, you almost earn nothing in the rural areas (in China). I am the oldest child in my family, I have younger brothers and sisters, and both of my little brothers were studying in the school. They studied very well.....I need to take a little bit responsibility on them, to partake some pressure for my parents. I can earn money to pay them study, so I decided to go oversea to earn more money. The first 10 years that I arrived here, all the money was earned for my family, I tried my best to save it and then sent it to China to pay for their school.” (employee in restaurant, single mother with 2 kids)

Besides, 9 respondents reported that working overseas was a culture in their origins, especially in Zhejiang province and Fujian Province. The proportion of participant from Zhejiang province was 50% in this study, all of them reported that people from this region tended to work overseas, so they had many relatives or friends outside of China and easier to go abroad with the help from relatives or friends.

In the sample of group 1, family sponsorship was the main way for the participants' entry

into Portugal. Unlike the people with employment sponsorship, the participants didn't have job when they arrived in Portugal. They needed to get a job in a limited time to stay here and be independent economically. However, most of the participants are low-skilled and lack of working experience overseas and core competencies. 5 participants had worked in manufacture factories in China before, 3 participants had run their small business like stores and restaurants in their hometowns, even two of the participants didn't have any work experience in China. Hence there are limited working options for Chinese workers to choose in Portugal. The analysis suggested that the employment choice of the Chinese workers was influenced by three critical factors including lower requirement of the job, Chinese workers' pattern, social network, and ethnic communities.

Lower requirement of the job. In this sample, a lack of language proficiency was considered as a barrier to employment. Most of the participants could not speak neither Portuguese nor English.

"As we started to run the store.....the language, we couldn't understand, it was the only difficulty, the others were fine. When foreign customers asked for something, we didn't know what they said." (Participant 17, an employer of a retail store)

Meanwhile, considering the demands of the job, many Chinese workers tended to search for a lower-skilled and easy job.

"(I chose this job was) Because it is easier and low-skilled. To be honest, this job is easier to get started." (Participant 13, an employee in a Chinese restaurant)

Limited Portuguese proficiency, educational background, and skill lead to a shrinking range of employment choices which let the workers of Chinese descent go for their habitual inclination to work in a Chinese working environment with Chinese employers:

"Like us, we haven't studied a lot before we arrived here, therefore.....At that time, my mum told me, but I also realize it by myself now, that there are only two options for us ---- work in restaurants or work in Sanbai Dian. Our Portuguese are poor, so we need to find a Chinese boss. If we went to work for foreign boss, they would not hire us because of our poor language abilities. In the Chinese restaurant, the people who you need to communicate more are your colleagues, actually, you don't need to talk too much with your customers."

(Participant 8, employee in restaurant, 21-year-old girl)

Chinese workers' pattern. Four of the respondents reported that there was a working pattern for most of the Chinese worker in Portugal. In Martim Moniz of Lisbon, the main Chinese business community settles here. More than half of the Chinese business men, who run small stores or supermarkets, will come here to restock goods, as well as Portuguese business men. So, there are many Chinese retail stores and Chinese restaurants in this area. At the beginning when they arrived here, the workers will try to get a job in the Chinese business community area to gain more working experience and learn basic business Portuguese. Also, most of the respondents were apt to run their own business in the future. For example, a restaurant owner stated that

“At least I am the boss, with a little bit pressure. But it is better than working as an employee. Firstly, people will say that you have your own restaurant, you will have “face (i.e. dignity; status)” because of this. Secondly, you will earn more than before,,at least your consumption capacity will not be as tight as before that you worked for other people. This is, this is an index for happiness. ” (Participant 4)

Therefore, they learned basic business experience from the elder workers in the Chinese business community and saved money in order to start their own business in the future. But their habitual inclination to own the business was still restaurants or Sanbai Dian. It sounds like a common sense in this business community, an individual work in a restaurant or Sanbai Dian as an employee first, and then run his or her own restaurant or Sanbai Dian one day. And their children as well, the younger generations who came to Lisbon with their family tend to follow their parents' pattern to run a store or restaurant when they grow up.

“[What do you want to do in your future?] Open my store.....my family members will help me to plan it if I am going to start my own business independently. Now...actually, my parents let us (with her big brother) to manage this store, this is helping us to gain experience.”(Participant 21, 26-year-old, working in her parents' store)

Social network and community. Eight of the participants in group 1 reported that they had relatives or friends who were working or running their own business in Portugal, which helped them easier to find a work in Lisbon. As the participants said, there was a Chinese

community circle which relied on tight networks of personal relationships among Chinese descents. Hence the Chinese workers were faster and easier to gain a work opportunity by referrals within this circle, which reduce their pressure about searching for a job in a limited time (valid period of visa) and adapting to a new environment. Moreover, an organization called PALMA was built by Chinese descents in 2011. This organization established the biggest public network community and information communication platform for all Chinese in Portugal which gathered Chinese together and share business information including job opportunities. *“Do you know PALMA? Aren’t we gathered together by PALMA? You can get the employment information on it..... Almost everybody (Chinese) know each other,”* said by participant 8.

4.2 General factors impact on working life well-being

In the interviews, I have asked respondents about what dissatisfied their working life and what stressors were. I found that job satisfaction of employees is higher than the job satisfaction of employers. As the employers reported, one commonly mentioned general factor is operational issues (N= 8). Low turnover of business and losing money were highly mentioned by 6 employers, especially employers of Sanbai Dian(retail store). Operational situation was so bad for participant 11 when asked at the beginning of the interview about the feeling of her business, she responded that she had to shut two stores down because she lost a plenty of money on the business, which caused financial problems and negatively impacted on her personal life. She felt tired and lost sleep during this time. Participant 7, who was the manager in a Chinese restaurant, asked me *“I am working unhappily now. Do you feel happy when you are losing money?”* as a rhetorical question when I asked him about the feeling of his work. 4 participants reported that they borrowed money from their families or friends or neighbors in hometown to go abroad and run their own business, and they had to pay back the debts they owed. This situation put pressures on them to work harder. But with the opening of more and more similar and replaceable stores, the competition between Sanbai Dian increased in this decade. Meanwhile, as participant 19 (employer of a shoe retail store), who was thinking to shut down the store currently, said that consumption capacity of people had been

reduced and a slowdown in business had occurred since the economic crisis (2010-2014) happened. Furthermore, because of this situation, in order to reduce the business cost, employers of Sanbai Dian rather work by themselves or with family members even running a big store than hiring any employees. 2 participants reported that being stolen and lost money also. Some people stole things from Sanbai Dian, even stole the telephone of the owner (participant 11). Participant 21, who was a girl worked for her family business, said that people not only stole goods but also destroyed goods in the store.

However, employees reported that they didn't feel any stressful or depressed because of financial problems. All the participants said that they were satisfied with their salaries, the lowest wage that they reported was 900 euros per month while the highest wage was 1050 euros per month working in restaurants. Besides, as both employers and employees reported, there is a common rule within Chinese business community that employers must provide accommodations and working meals for Chinese employees.

"All our Chinese descents who are working in Portugal are offered accommodations and meals. Some people have their own property in Lisbon, but...en...because whatever job you are searching for, the first criterion is that the employer must provide you place to live and food to eat. This is the minimum benefit.....you can't just gallop a horse without feeding grass. This is the basic promise for employees." (Participant 13, waitress in a restaurant)

"[Does it cost more if you hire someone?] It depends on descents of the worker, foreigners or Chinses. We all know that the payment for Chinese is 1000 euros and you need to help them to pay tax, offer accommodation and meal.....Hiring foreigners is cheaper, but its' also inconvenient. You also need to pay tax for them, but it is hard to communicate with them."(Participant17, owner of a Sanbai Dian)

4.3 Specific factors impact on working life well-being

Factors categories into 4 main themes that were highly mentioned by the participants, although they were talked about these in the context of specific incidents. The main four themes are interpersonal relationship and social support at work, adaptation issue, negative spillover from family to work and working conditions at work.

Interpersonal relationship and social support at work.

7 participants mentioned interpersonal relationship at work which included the relationship with supervisors, coworkers and customers. 6 positive and supportive relationships were collected in these interviews. As I asserted above, Chinese descents almost know each other in the Chinese business community. The tight social network gathers Chinese descents together. Several participants were working for friends or relatives or their family business. Working with a familiar person increases job satisfaction. For example, participant 9, who was a single mother with 2 children after divorced, had run her owned business in Portugal before but failed. Now she is working in a restaurant owned by her friend who she had known for a long time, and she did not think about to change her job anymore..

“I feel better working in my friend’s restaurant, and I don’t want to work in somewhere else that I know nobody, so I came here.....Everything is fine, because this is my friend’s restaurant, she gives more consideration to me.”

Participant 8 reported that she got the first job by referral from her mum to the employer who offered her the job even she could not speak Portuguese and lack of working experience. The employer taught her how to work and how to speak simple Portuguese until she could communicate with customers.

Furthermore, Chinese workers not only got support from supervisors, but also from co-workers. As participant 8, 9 and 12 reported, normally they received barely any training before starting work. They would be guided and helped by an experienced worker in the same workplace, observing the experienced workers and learning experience while working. Limitation of Portuguese proficiency was the main reason for Chinese workers to call for help or support from co-workers, especially the new arrivals.

On the other hand, interpersonal conflict among partners, co-workers, and customers also were part of the work life. Participant 7 reported his interpersonal conflict with his partner. He owned 20% of the share in the restaurant and worked as a manager taking responsibility on the restaurant operation. The return rate on investment was zero since he had invested into it which stressed him a lot. Several operational issues were noticed, especially issues about human resource management, and he wanted to improve the situation. But he was not

empowered too much by the owner who were holding the biggest share of the restaurant. For example, he tried to discuss the problem about wage arrears which weaken employees job engagement with the owner, but the owner insisted that was a way to “control” the employees to keep working here. Therefore, the respondent felt stressful that he could not do anything on improving the operation situation without support and cooperation from his partner.

Besides, although most of the respondents reported that they were going well with co-workers, and their colleagues were friendly and helpful, some special situations still existed in the workplace, such as bullying.

“My last boss was nice, but.....some people who were working in Lisbon were undertaking huge pressure, or they had been bullied when they just arrived here.”(Participant 8)

A fact told by participant 8 about her ex-colleague (a cook working in a restaurant) that he had been bullied in his first job. A couple who was working in the same restaurant disliked him and wanted to let him stay away. So, he made a lot of mistakes while working there because of the intentional obstruction from this couple. Also, the owner of the restaurant took sides on the couple and scolded him. He suffered this situation every day, now he got neurasthenia that he always been afraid of being harmed by the others, and he was sensitive when other people called his name.

Interpersonal conflict with clients was reported by two participants. Participant 8 reported that she was annoyed by demanding clients who ordered many things separately when she was busy and kept urging her to hurry up if she could not give them immediately. Participant 13 reported that she had to repress her negative emotion when clients scolded her, and apologized to the client with smile and good attitude.

“Sometimes clients release their bad emotion to us, but we are in service sector, we can’t ‘return’ the emotion back to clients, we only can accept it, I feel upset with this. I am unhappy but I have to smile to them and show my good attitude, it’s...how to say...it’s depressed. ”
(Participant 13, 28-year-old lady, waitress in a restaurant)

Adaptation

Adaptation is the process that a foreign worker modifies their behavior and ideas to adapt to their new environment. Most of the participants mentioned that they could not adapt well into the new environment at the beginning because of the changing of living style, food, working environment and the most importantly---- language proficiency (Portuguese). As participant 12 (employee in a fruit store) said:

“At first, language. You need to know the name of fruits and vegetables. You need to get familiar with them. You can do nothing without language ability, Portuguese is vital (if you want to work in here)”.

Some participants reported that it was hard to communicate with customers or co-workers who could not speak Chinese, which was an obstacle of their work, while most of the participants could not speak neither Chinese nor English.

Nevertheless, participant 7 mentioned that even he was the manager of the restaurant, but he needed to do many works including washing dishes behind the kitchen because he could not speak Portuguese or English which meant that he could not provide service to customers well. He thought he should learn Portuguese first before starting to work. Meanwhile, the changing of living environment and working environment stressed him. As a manager of the restaurant, he was always thinking and working on the business so that he did not have enough time to adjust himself better to adapt into the new environment.

“The living environment is different from before. I put all myself into the work, but the business is so bad (losing money). While I don’t have time for my own affairs including learning Portuguese.....I think I should adapt into the environment step by step firstly..... I have the weak point, this is one of the reasons why I am not myself these days. Actually, I think I should not start to work immediately when I arrive here. I should learn Portuguese, or replenish what is necessary for the new environment. I shall think about investment for business after that.(sigh)”(Participant 7)

Negative spillover from family to work

Work-to-family conflict or family-to-work conflict is one of the factors that impacts on individual’s working well-being. Especially for female participants in the group 1, caring for

children and family dissatisfaction were reported by female more than male. Being a mother, wife and worker at the same time, women take more role responsibilities for work and family. About caring for children, three female participants reported that the most important reason for them to keep on working was their children, to support their education and improve a better living environment for them. Only one male participant (employer of the restaurant) talked about the family that he could not give more company for his son because he had to work all the time.

“The works are the same, just repeat and repeat every day, that I want to quit my work (close the store). But the problem is my younger son is going to the university next year, he is still studying at school, ah.....still need to work one more year. After he goes to the university.....I want to retire from work.” (participant 19, employer of a store, 48-year-old mother with 2 sons)

“I need to take responsibility for my two children. I am not so young as you that have more options to choose, to do what you like. I don't have any options, the only option for me at this moment is to raise up my children and try my best to provide them a better living quality.” (participant 9, employee in the restaurant, 40-year-old divorced mother with 2 children)

Besides, the lack of family support and the presence of spouse caused family dissatisfaction and increased family-to-work conflict. Participant 19 reported that during the two weeks when her husband and older son back to China for her father-in-law funeral in last year, she was so stressful at work that she became sleepless and got sick. They owned two stores, so when her husband went back to China, she had to stay in Lisbon to take care of these two stores at the same time. Only her younger son stayed here to help, but he did not know how to do or how to run the business, she felt like she was working alone. And when the workload increased, no one could help her.

“I need to take care of the business in this store, and manage another store at the same time, maybe is.....just the two weeks, make me...too stressful, too much...I started to be sick until now, totally two years. Just like it broke the limitation that I could handle.....(Went to see the doctor) My doctor said that I was over stressed, too anxious, too stressed (laughed). ”

Meanwhile, participant 11 also mentioned the absence of spouse. Her husband was always working in another place out of Lisbon or in another country to earn money. She was working alone in her own Sanbai Dian as well as taking care of her little son who had a congenital disorder. Everyday, she went to restock goods in Martim Moniz with her little son in the morning, then sent her son to the kindergarten, took the things back to the store in Lumiar and opened the store. She did all the things in the store by her own, whilst her child was always sick that she needed to take him to see a doctor after working. Also, she needed to send money back to China for supporting her husband's family who did not trust her too much. Later, her husband had an affair with another woman which broke down her totally. She was too exhausted and distressed that she got depressed and physical health issue such as Obesity and duodena ulcer, which impacted on her work well-being also.

“My physical health problem influenced on my life seriously, I could barely go for work. I always wanted to sit down while I was standing and talking to you. It is hard to introduce something for customers. It is like ‘I need to take a rest’, ‘No, I need to talk to customer’, ‘I am so sorry, my body was sick that I can’t’. I come for work every morning, but I always need to take a rest and sleep for a while. Because I don’t have any energy, I was sick and weak.” (Participant 11)

Working conditions

Working conditions include working hours, working environment and safety at workplace that was reported by the participants. As a rules in the Chinese business community, only one day-off for restaurant employees while no day-off for Sanbai Dian. Normally, the working schedule about restaurant is from 11a.m to 3p.m, and 6p.m to 11p.m, including weekends; the working schedule for retail stores is from 9a.m to 8p.m in weekdays, open later and close earlier at weekends. So, the Chinese workers work over 8 hours per day, over 40 hours per week. Only two younger participants, who are 21-year-old and 26-year-old, reported that they were dissatisfied with the short-paid leave and long-working hour. But 2 participants working in restaurants as employees reported that they got used to it because they also had long-working hours in China, hence it was normal for them to work over 8 hours per day. As for

the employees and employers of Sanbai Dians, they reported that they prefer to open and stay in the store everyday rather than taking a day rest because they did not have anything else to do. For the employers, they stated that their working schedule were flexible.

Three participants mentioned the working environment about the space. Two of them were working in Chinese restaurant, complaining with sanitation problems and tiny working space in the kitchens. Participant 19 reported that she was always staying and working in the small shoe store with a lot of bright lights which made her feel stressful, became uncomfortable and got acute hypertension.

As for the safety of workplace, most of the participants said it was safe to work at their workplaces. Only participant 11 reported that she had been robbed, the robber came with gun and broke the glasses window of her store. She was so scary that she started to shorten the opening hour and go home earlier for safety purpose since that happened. The co-worker of participant 12 (employee working in the fruit store) also mentioned about robbery incident when interviewing with participant 12, she said she freaked out when it happened.

4.4 Coping strategy towards stress

Among the 14 participants, eight of them mentioned about finance issue as a stressor, especially employers, due to low return rate of business and loss of business, some of the participants had debts as well. Although people normally will seek a way to cope with the strain while they are stressful, most of my participants stated that it was not stressful enough for them to cope with the strains seriously. Only two participants, both were women, mentioned that they got depressed from work-family lives. For the question “*How do you cope with your stress? / What is the way that you cope with stress?*”, the word mentioned highly frequently was “Self-adjustment”, and they dealt with it by several ways stated in the table 3 below.

Table 3. Summary of “Self-adjustment” coping strategies and interview example statements

Coping strategies	Example statements
External attribution	“When the business is running bad, I will think...does today has a football match? Is the weather not good today? These are all reasons, right? (I) always find an “exit” for myself, cannot blame all with my restaurant...”
Self-enlightening by reading	“Read... read some books related to psychology, or what else could enlighten myself?”
Emotional disclosure	“Sometimes I feel unhappy, I will talk with my husband, communicate with family members, then I will feel happier and much better.”
Cognitive restructuring	“Think widely, don’t think about...do not compare...for example, compare my current job and the previous job, or my current situation and the previous situation, if keeping comparing it, it would not be good.”
Exercise	“I used to go to the gym, to do some exercises.”
Divert attention	“I will change the environment, to have a walk, to drink a coffee, to chat with friends, to change a place. Or don’t let myself idle, to do...to find something else to do.”

Meanwhile, 5 participants intended to seek assistance from their co-workers, friends, and even doctors to cope with the stressors.

“She (the colleague) teaches me, at least teaches me a bit Portuguese.” (Participant 12)

“My Portuguese is not that good, so I usually need a help when I do not understand what the customers are saying, to ask a help from my colleague.”(Participant 13)

“Customers here are very nice, so many years passed by, (they are) all nice (to me), and come to buy stuffs when needed. My friends, lend me money every year.....until I earn money by myself, then return to them.....They (the friends) help me more than my family when I was in the most frustrated and dressed time.”(Participant 11)

“I am taking pills now, ahahah. ...It started from last year (work alone for two weeks with the absence of her husband), is...I suddenly found that my blood pressure raise up, and

nothing else...and then I felt flustered, then (I) went to see a doctor, he said this was a kind of mental status of my own. He gave me the prescription, now the pills are to calm me down, half pill in the morning, half pill at night, to let me sleep better, that's it. ” (Participant 19)

Furthermore, two participants mentioned that changing to another workplace or be far away from the work was a way to reduce or eliminate the stress.

“If I am not happy, I would keep unhappy, then I would think about to change the workplace. Because you can go to any restaurant with your working experience here (in Lisbon), the salaries are the same, more or less the same, so it will be the same (work) and you can change the workplace randomly. And it's easy to find this kind of work now.” (Participant 8)

CHAPTER 5

Discussion

5.1 Discussion and Conclusion

To our knowledge, although many researchers are interested in studying foreign workers well-being in the host countries, or Chinese workers well-being in other foreign countries, there is a lack of study of Chinese workers working in Lisbon, or even in Portugal. This might be the first study that has focused on the Chinese immigrant workers' perceptions and feelings of work well-being in Lisbon.

In general, the findings from this study confirm what the factors impact on the Chinese workers' well-being in their workplace: Social support and family support, adaption to culture difference and integration (especially the language ability), work conditions. These results are generally consistent with the conclusions of previously research on the Chinese workers group working in the other host countries except Portugal. Further, the study shows the pattern of Chinese descents to find a job and work in Lisbon: firstly, find a job with family or friends' help; secondly, learn from the work and enrich working experience; thirdly, run own business with two options ---- restaurants or stores, even for the second generation of the immigration. This could be a specific topic to do a further study in the future.

One of the main findings suggests that social support, family support and interpersonal relationship play an important role in the workplace. Echoing Baruch and his colleagues (2002), social support associated with work-related satisfaction and productivity. From searching for a job, to working at a restaurant or a store, then run their own business, the tight social network within the Chinese community has an obvious effect on it. As a new arrival must gain a job before the visa going expired, normally he/she will be referred by friends or relatives or family members living here to get a job opportunity. More than that, Chinese workers are possible to find jobs through platforms formed by local Chinese organizations, such as Bao Ma Jie (named after the street Rua.Palma). In the workplace, the social support, including supervisor-employee relationships, co-workers, friends and family, may have significant implication for work stress (Dignam, Barrera&West,1986; Greenglass et al. 1994;

Schriesheim et al,1999). In this study, employee participants reported that their employer and co-workers assisted them by guiding how to work, teaching basic Portuguese, providing accommodations, helping them to work smoothly and start their work-life easier in a foreign country. For employer participants, they reported that family and friends provided financial supports for them to run their own business. However, this might be a burden and stressor for some of the participants as borrowing money from the family or friends, hereafter the business was not running well and losing money, it became debts for them. And this situation became a shame for them to tell their family and friends who living in China, as an issue related to their “face” which associated with “honor”, “dignity” and “self-worth” (Wang.Y&Tian.R.G. 2022), as well as a kind of comparing mentality.

Participants also mentioned about their family issues impacting on their work lives. Considering that familism stands at the core position of Chinese culture, work-life and work-family research indicates that work and family are both the most crucial domains of life for many people (Super, 1990; Hansen, 1997; Friedman&Greenhaus, 2000). Not only that, to enhance the family is one of the important meanings of job (Grzywac, Carlson, Kacmar & Wayne, 2007). Shown in the findings, providing a better living quality of the family or improve the situation of the family became one of the main reasons for Chinese descents to work abroad. Participants reported they needed to earn more money, and deliver remittances back to China for their parents, brothers or sisters, spouses and children. Sui Oheng. L and his colleagues (2008) have a similar result for Chinese construction workers working in Singapore.

Furthermore, caring children is one of the incentives for the participants to keep working, not only reported by female participants, but also male participants. Expenditures for children daily cost, health care, and the most important part ---- education and schooling were a factor to motivate them to work, which as the same as the Chinese immigrant female workers in Canada (Man.Guidac.2011). Meanwhile, support from spouses impact on work well-beings as well, especially on female participants. We can find in the study that lack of support and absence of the husbands increase work stress of the wives because they need to work along and take care the family at the same time, whilst presence of husbands decrease the stress

from workplace by having good communication and good relationship with the wives and husbands.

Another finding is that adaptation process to a new environment effect on Chinese workers' well-being in the workplace. Lack of language proficiency (Portuguese and English) is the most significant stressor in the work-life, next are the changings of working culture, living style and food. Therefore, participants reported that they felt more comfortable to work in a familiar language environment with employers and co-workers from China, so that it will be easier to communicate with and seek help and assistance if needed during working. Further, Chinese descents gathered tighter to offer help to each other with a collective society culture as a Chinese community settled down in Lisbon, even some of the participants thought that it was not so necessary to integrate into the current host country's culture and society. This is similar to Ying and Ranane's (2006) findings that professional Chinese workers in Australia have a dominant preference to retain their own culture. To cope with the language issue, participants suggested to take action directly to learn Portuguese before starting to work, and keep learning the daily-use words in the workplace.

Studies have also shown that work conditions may moderate an association between work well-being and job satisfaction. Referred to the previous published research, Chinese migrant workers suffer from poor working conditions including low pay, long working hours, over workload and injury in America, the UK, and other European Countries (Carballo and Nerukar, 2006; Weishaar, 2008; Marcello.B., 2017). However, in the current study, the findings illustrated that employees were satisfied with the salary. As here is a commons sense for Chinese employers to offer meals and accommodations to the Chinese employees in the business community, as well as helping to declare taxes and social security amount by law but with the lowest income amount so that the employees can truly receive a higher salary with a range from 900Euros to 1300Euros. Meanwhile, long working hours (more than 8 hours) is not a stressor for the Chinese workers due to easy work tasks and patterns, more than that, elder participants mentioned that they preferred to work rather than taking a rest because there was nothing else to do when off duty. While employers' working schedule were flexible.

Overall, the findings in this study shows the factors impacting on the work well-being of

Chinese workers in Lisbon, add to the current research and study regarding Chinese workers working in foreign host countries, specially in Lisbon, Portugal. This study probed various aspects of work well-being according to the finds investigated by other scholars studying on Chinese immigration workers. Although the size of the sample is small, the results captured a general picture to show the Chinese workers' work-life in Lisbon, comparing with the other groups of Chinese immigrant workers in America, the UK, Canada, and other countries, showing there are similar factors effect on this specific group of workers. To cope with the work-related stress, the study summarized several ways mentioned by participants to do mental self-adjustment and reduce stress pressure, including attributing failure/bad issues to external causes, reading psychological books, emotion disclosure (story telling), restructuring thinking, diverting attentions from work, and doing exercises. In addition, seeking assistance and changing workplace were mentioned by the participants as coping strategies. These findings are important for future work well-being interventions to Chinese immigrant workers.

5.2 Limitation of the Study and Future Study

The current study has a number of limitations that need to be considered. First of all, the paucity of investigation on work well-being in the Chinese business community in foreign countries (especially in western countries), due to lack of references and information to begin the study. Second, a small size of participants may limit the generalizability of the results. During recruiting participants, I faced major difficulties in it because of these two mainly excuses replied by people: mistrust of outsiders and difficulties on expression. Also, free to be interviewed without any rewards or gifts did not provide much of an incentive for participation. Thus, I walked streets by streets randomly to ask for a face-to-face interview. This situation led to there consequences: a) more participants from the less-busy area than busy area, such as center of Lisbon or "Chinatown"; b) more female participants then male participants; c) limitation of the range of industry sectors, did not cover all kinds of business in the Chinese business community: d) more employers than employees as participants, because most of the participants were from their own family business. As such, it is possible

to have biases in the study. For example, the workers from the busy area may respond different perspectives on work conditions regarding salary and working hours.

Considering with the limitation to the study, further studies should attempt to cover have a bigger size of the sample with wider range of industry sectors, wider range of age groups, equal gender, equal status of work positions, and equal participant numbers from different areas of Lisbon. Another possible alternative is using quantitative study by closed questionnaire.

According to the factors impact on the work well-being, the social support and family support are important for work-life. Moreover, work-family conflict impacts a lot on it, lack of family support, conflict with spouse and caring children while working lead to mental-physical problems emerged on the participants. Future studies should explore further about the familial practices employed by the Chinese workers to accommodate the issues of working and family caring, balance the work and family life in Portugal, especially for women.

Future study is also possible to explore the different immigrant generations of Chinese descent towards the work well-being. Following the pattern of the career path of the Chinese workers, the younger generations may be generally integrated into the Portuguese/ western culture, value and society with education in the Portuguese schools. For example, the younger participants in the study concerns about the working hours and pay leave while elder participants did not care about it.

In addition, a follow-up study on the participants will explore more related to the Chinese workers' work well-being. At the end of each interview, I asked the participants: "What is your suggestion to the Chinese worker who will come to Lisbon in the future?", some of the participants reported that Portugal was not an ideal place to work, or develop career path with the slow economic development, and they were inclined to go back to China even they were immigrating to Portugal or have already immigrated. Besides, some of the participants mentioned ideas for retirements even they were at the middle age, below 55 years old. To track the working situation and work-life of the participants after several years while the interviews were done in 2018-2019, may help to figure out the pattern for career path and the

most crucial factors impacting on work well-being by comparing the findings.

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Annex I – Interview Survey

Introduction

Before starting this interview, I would like to thank you for accepting doing this interview and for you time to this interview.

I am Zhiting Feng, a master student of ISCTE--Instituto Universitário de Lisboa, with the major of Human Resource Management and Organizational Consultancy.

At this moment, I am doing my dissertation. The research of my dissertation is about the well-being at work of Chinese workforce working in Lisbon. With this research, we hope we could be able to identify some helpful strategies for Chinese workforce to be better and faster integration into a new foreign workplace environment.

Your opinion is very important and there are not right or wrong answers for the questions. All the comments are confidential and we will not judge or reveal any of your answers.

在开始此次采访之前，我要为您能接受并抽出宝贵的时间参与这次参访而表示深切的感谢。

先自我介绍一下，我叫冯芷婷，是里斯本工商管理大学的一名硕士生，专业是人力资源与组织咨询。

现今我正在学业课题研究论文阶段，本次研究的主要内容是中国人在里斯本的工作情况调查，本人想了解国人在不同文化的国外环境下工作的情况及心理状况。本人希望能通过此次研究，总结出一些宝贵的经验，并找到能让国人能更快更好地融入当地工作环境的办法。

您的采访内容于我而言是很宝贵的，并且希望您能放开表达您的观点，因为我们的问题的是没有标准答案的，我们也不会对您的回答做出任何评判。所有的采访内容将只作为研究所用，是机密的，我们不会泄露出去。

再次感谢您的参与。

Part 1

1. How long have you been/worked in Lisbon?

请问您来到里斯本多久了/在这里工作多久了？

2. Could you please tell me something about you?

您能告诉我一些关于您的事情吗？

(Probe: About your background: Region background, Educational background, Marital

status.etc)

请问能否告知我们一些关于您的背景情况，如您来自中国哪里？您的受教育程度是？您的家庭情况是？

3. Could you please tell me how your life/ working life was in China before you came to Lisbon?

请您说一下在来里斯本之前的生活情况/工作情况是怎么样的？

4. What made you decide to come to Lisbon and work here?

为什么您会选择来里斯本工作呢？是什么让您改变主意决定改变现有的生活呢？

Part 2

5. What are you doing in Lisbon? / What is your job in Lisbon? And why?

请问您是在里斯本从事什么职业呢？为什么选择了这份职业呢？

6. What do you like more about your own work?

(Probe: Could you give an example?)

您对您的工作比较满意的是哪些方面呢？(能否举个例子?)

7. What do you more dislike about your own work?

(Probe: Could you give a example?)

您对您的工作比较不满意哪些方面呢？(能否举个例子?)

8. Overall, how do you feel during your work?

能总结一下，您对您的工作有什么感受吗？

- a) How do you feel working with your coworker? Especially with foreign coworkers(For the participants working in an company)

您在工作中与同事们相处如何？您对他们有什么感受呢？

- b) How do you feel with your family?

(Probe: How to balance you work-family balance?)

您与家人相处怎么样呢？您会怎么去平衡工作与家庭的关系？

9. What is your opinion about your work conditions?

(Workplace environment, Working hours, safety and rights)

您对您的工作条件有什么看法呢？（工作环境，工作时长，安全性等）

a) What is your opinion on the experience working with other people?

您对同事之间的合作有什么看法呢？

*About the question 6&7, if the participant answers more about working conditions, I will skip question 9; if the participant answers more about feelings, I will skip the question 8 (could be the probe questions).

10. When will you feel a sense of fulfillment/accomplishment and satisfaction?

(Probes: At work what gives you a sense of fulfillment and satisfaction? Could you give some examples?)

在工作中，您什么时候感到有成就感或满足感呢？

11. And about your work, what facilitates your work? / What helps you to work more efficiently or smoothly?

(Probes: What makes you feel that you can do well with your tasks r develop your abilities/competencies?)

在您的工作中，您认为有什么是能促进您的工作进程的？帮助您能更好地完成任务呢？

12. What makes you feel difficult with your work?

What makes you work more hard?

(Probe: Could you please give examples? Could you please talk more about it?)

您认为您的工作哪些方面会让您觉得很困难呢？或者让您觉得困难的部分是什么呢？

Part 3

13. Is there any characteristic of your work that makes you be stressful?

(Probe: When do you feel stressful at your work? Which times are more stressful for you? Which parts are more stressful?)

您的工作是否会有让您感到有压力的时候呢？

什么部分是让您觉得感到有压力的呢？

什么时候会感到有压力呢？

14. What are the main causes of the stress at your work?

您认为工作中的压力主要来源是什么呢？主要原因是什么呢？

15. How do you cope with stress?

(Probe: Do you have any strategies to deal with your stress/ to decrease your stress/ to release your stress?)

面对压力，您对采取什么方式去应对呢？

您有什么办法去降低压力吗？或者释放压力吗？

16. Do you have any particular initiatives in place to promote health and well-being?

If yes, can you describe these initiatives? Could you give examples?

(Probe: If you could change something at your work, what would you improve?)

请问您有什么特别的建议帮助促进健康和福利吗？

您能否详细讲一些您的建议呢？

Conclusion

Summarize some of the participant's main thoughts for clarity.

17. Is there anything else you would like to add? Or go deeper talk with that?

(Probe: Is there anything that you would have liked me to ask but I did not?)

请问您有什么想补充的吗？或者有什么是您愿意说于我听的而我并没有问及的？

18. Do you have any further suggestions for the new Chinese workforce how the well-being could be improved working in Lisbon in the future?

您对往后将要来里斯本工作的中国人有什么建议吗？