The International JOURNAL

of

KNOWLEDGE, CULTURE
& CHANGE MANAGEMENT

Volume 9, Number 11

Student Management in Chinese Higher Education Institutions

Xiaoli Jiang, Xiaoping Ma and Yumei Wu

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF KNOWLEDGE, CULTURE AND CHANGE
MANAGEMENT

<http://www.Management-Journal.com>

First published in 2009 in Champaign, Illinois, USA by Common Ground Publishing LLC
www.CommonGroundPublishing.com.

© 2009 (individual papers), the author(s)

© 2009 (selection and editorial matter) Common Ground

Authors are responsible for the accuracy of citations, quotations, diagrams, tables and maps.

All rights reserved. Apart from fair use for the purposes of study, research, criticism or review as permitted under the Copyright Act (Australia), no part of this work may be reproduced without written permission from the publisher. For permissions and other inquiries, please contact

[<cg-support@commongroundpublishing.com>](mailto:cg-support@commongroundpublishing.com).

ISSN: 1447-9524

Publisher Site: <http://www.Management-Journal.com>

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF KNOWLEDGE, CULTURE AND CHANGE MANAGEMENT is peer-reviewed, supported by rigorous processes of criterion-referenced article ranking and qualitative commentary, ensuring that only intellectual work of the greatest substance and highest significance is published.

Typeset in Common Ground Markup Language using CGCreator multichannel typesetting system

<http://www.commongroundpublishing.com/software/>

Student Management in Chinese Higher Education Institutions

Xiaoli Jiang, University of Ballarat, Victoria, Australia

Xiaoping Ma, Central University of Finance and Economics, China

Yumei Wu, Tianjin Medical University, China

Abstract: This study investigated six Chinese higher education institutions in relation to management of their students. The results indicate Chinese higher education institutions place a greater emphasis on controlling students in order to achieve desired outcomes according to their national ideology and cultural values. Control measures are intended to ensure good class attendance, collective teamwork and discipline. Their student management focuses on extrinsic rewards and punishments to promote desirable moral values and ethics. A very comprehensive control system is in place to achieve these goals. Students are encouraged to manage fellow students. The research also identified that prestigious universities with a higher level of entry scores place less control measures on their students compared to their counterparts with lower entry scores. Chinese higher education management believes the measures to control students are designed to combat negative elements of human beings. This study provides an understanding into the reasons why current higher education management practices exist in China and offers some explanations from historical, political and social culture perspectives. The study will assist Western educators to better understand the challenges facing Chinese students studying abroad.

Keywords: Chinese Higher Education, Student Management

Introduction

E DUCATION HAS ALWAYS been a major focus in Chinese culture and peoples' lives. In 2006, China had 1,867 government funded regular higher education institutions including vocational tertiary education and adult higher education institutions.

There were also 994 non-state/private higher education institutions. (The Ministry of Education, China, 2007a). The total number of students in the higher education sector was approximately 26.5 million (The Ministry of Education, China, 2007b). Most of these students were living on university campuses. Student management appears to be an important element of administration, employing thousands of staff.

There has been research on marked differences between Chinese tertiary education and that of the West. It has been identified that Chinese higher education emphasises rote learning, examinations and is teacher centred. A few studies have discussed classroom student behaviour management in China. (Ding, Li, Li, & Kulm, 2008; Ho, & Leung, 2002; Ho, 2004; Jin & Cortazzi, 1998). However, there is a paucity of research documented in English on how students' daily lives are managed at Chinese higher education institutions, especially with the millions of students living on campus. Apart from the teaching staff, the role of

other university staff in the system to provide services to student, and their impact on students, is not clear.

In this era of globalisation and internationalisation of higher education, it is necessary to understand management practices from different countries, particularly those with very different cultural backgrounds. China is a country that has had enormous economic growth and is sending increasing numbers of students to study in the West. Further, many Western degree courses are delivered in China. It is important for Western higher education managers to understand what is happening in China in terms of their practices of student management.

This paper investigates current major management practices of university students in six Chinese higher education institutions. It aims to present insights into their approaches and the historical, political and social culture background underpinning the practices

Method

Interviews and document analysis.

1. Interviews

Six Chinese higher education institutions (Four universities and two vocational tertiary education colleges) were visited and 13 Chinese student managers and university graduates were interviewed regarding their perceived student management practices.

Interviews were conducted with prepared questions in the following areas: student management system, personnel, focus and approaches. Each interview was approximately 60 minutes.

The higher education institutions researched covered a diverse range of geographical regions and levels of ranking. They attract different student populations, some have very high entry marks, and some are quite low. Table 1 indicates this diversity.

Table 1, Levels of University Ranking and Entry Marks at the Chinese Higher Education Institutions Researched (Sohu Education, 2008a; 2008b; 2008c; China Education Centre, 2008; Association of Chinese Educators, 2003)

	University A	University B	University C	University D	College E	College F
Ranking levels	Ranked No 13 In China and A++	A++	B+	C+	D	D
Entry Marks	Very high	Very high	High	Medium	Low	Low

2. Document Analysis

Documents from the Chinese Ministry of Education and these six higher education institutions regarding student management were collected or downloaded from respective organisations or websites, translated and analysed.

Results

1. The Management System

There is an extensive interconnected system managing students at all tertiary institutions researched. They are very similar in structure and appear to be a standard system under Chinese government regulations. The system starts from the top level of the institution – the Department of Student – and then goes down to student self-management in the form of class captains and committee. At every level, there are organisations and people responsible for different matters from moral education, academic studies, campus dormitory living and hygiene, as well as student canteens and recreation. It is designed to cater for student needs, particularly during their transition from high school and living at home to living on university campus. The aim is to develop students into desirable people with skills and knowledge socialist China needs.

1.1. The Department of Student

Most tertiary students in China live on campus. The size of the student population on each campus is generally between 10,000 to 30,000. There is Department of Student at each institution specialised to assist and manage students. The responsibilities of the department include conducting student moral education, support the work of Fudaoyuans (tutors) and classroom teachers in managing students, management of a system in motivating students to achieve excellence, including comprehensive assessment of student results; scholarship application, student dormitory management etc.

1.2. Fudaoyuans (Tutors)

At each school of all higher education institutions researched, many Fudaoyuans are specially employed to manage students. The term “Fudaoyuan” can be translated into tutor in straight English according to the literature meaning. However, there have been different translations in China such as instructor (Mo, 2006) or political consultant (Luan, 2007). More recently professional counsellor is often used in several publications (Feng, 2007; Huang, Ning, Li, & Duan, 2006). These to some extent reflect the changes of the role. In this paper, the term ‘tutor’ will be used to identity Fudaoyuan.

One tutor normally manages one intake/grade in a school, between 120-300 students. One of tutors’ major responsibilities is to manage student welfare. This includes matters outside academic studies such as student medical insurance and taking students to hospital if they were ill or injured. Tutors are required to have their mobile phones on 24 hours a day, 7 days a week during the academic semesters. They are also heavily involved in student military training at the start of university studies. At the same time, tutors are responsible for mentoring/managing student leaders to implement management tasks and to ensure class attendance. Further, they are accountable for part of the moral education via making speeches at the beginning of students’ tertiary education and during each semester. Tutors introduce the institution regulations and the Standard of Tertiary Student Behaviours (The Ministry of Education, China, 2005a) to students and guide them to follow the rules. Importantly, tutors have the power to reward or punish students accordingly, mainly via a Comprehensive Assessment adopted by five out of the six institutions researched. In addition, recruit, assess

and develop Chinese Communist Party members in student population are also part of tutors' portfolio.

1.3 Classroom Teachers/Lecturers

Chinese higher education institutions have one intake each year. Each intake is divided into classes according to courses or just to make it become manageable units. Approximately 40 to 60 students are in one class.

At all six higher education institutions, each class is allocated a classroom teacher. The classroom teachers are normally academics and are responsible for academic studies of the students. The classroom teachers generally are required to have a meeting with the whole class once a week. The content of the meetings are normally checking if students have any academic issues. However, communicating with students re work ethic, attending class on time, taking care of personal safety and dormitory hygiene often become parts of the topic.

1.4 Student Associations

A student association exists at the university/college level of every institution researched. When it is a large university such as Universities A and B, there is also a student association at each school.

A student association has several departments, namely Departments of Studies, Culture, Public Relations, Organisation, Hygiene or Student Dormitory Management etc. The Department of Studies is responsible for student studies in various ways such as organisation of study seminars. The Department of Culture is responsible for social functions and recreation activities. For example, a quiz competition, a fashion show by students and a New Year party etc. The Department of Public Relations is responsible for fundraising money for the functions and the daily operation of the Student Association. The Department of Organisation is responsible for the development of student leaders. The Department of Hygiene or Student Dormitory Management is responsible for regular inspections and evaluations of student dormitory to maintain an acceptable standard of hygiene and tidiness.

1.5 Class Captains and Committee

As previously discussed, there are classes with 40-60 students each at the Chinese higher education institutions. In each class a class committee is elected, together with a class captain and deputy captain. The captains are responsible for leading the class activities, monitoring student behaviours, e.g. if they are attending classes or not, and if they return to the dormitory on time at night. In the committee, each member is responsible for one area, namely Studies, Culture, Living etc.

Students interested in becoming a captain or committee member need to make an application to the tutor and presentation to all students involved to articulate why they should be appointed. Students of the class elect the captain, vice captain and committee members based on candidates' presentations and their merits as reflected in their performances in the past with regard to helpfulness to others and leadership skills.

It is worth noting that each student has an official personal file which follows him/her throughout their school years. The file records his/her achievements, moral behaviours during

their schooling, the leadership positions in the classes, e.g. class captain or committee member. This forms one of the bases for the student to be pointed as one of the leaders of the class or Student Association.

The motivations for students to become student leaders are mainly to improve their management and leadership ability, good marks and good records on personal file during their university studies, ultimately benefiting their future employment.

2. Major Management Focuses

2.1 Establish and Sustain Communist Moral Values and Nationalism

Communism is the official ideology in China with a view of “everyone is equal” and “serves for people”. Even though there is a largely capitalist economic system in China, the government still likes the students to be loyal to the government, the party and the country. Nationalism is an important value to be developed. In item four of the *Principles in the Management of Students via Regulations in Higher Education Sector*, the Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China stresses:

“University students should vigorously study Marxism, Leninism, Mao Zedong thoughts, Deng Xiaoping theories and the ‘three Representations’, conform to the common dream and strong belief in following the socialist road with Chinese characteristics and realising the great resurrection of the Chinese nation under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party. The students should establish the belief of loving China and gain the spirits of unification, peace loving, diligent, bravery and constant self-strengthening...” (The Ministry of Education, China, 2005b, p1).

To develop the above values, there are several compulsory units for all university students, namely *Ethics and Introduction to Law*; *Fundamentals of Marxism*; *An Overview of Maoism, Deng’s theories and three Representations*; *The Guideline of Chinese Contemporary History*. These units ensure students gain knowledge, understanding and appreciation of Marxism, Maoism and Deng Xiaoping’s theories together with Chinese contemporary history on foreign imperialist invasions, humiliation, exploitations of China and the communist revolution. They are powerful measures to educate Chinese tertiary students in understanding the past and the importance to build a powerful China to avoid the repeat of contemporary Chinese history. As a result, nationalism is prevalent amongst Chinese tertiary students, clearly reflected during the Olympic torch relay and the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games.

2.2 Class Attendance

Class attendance is an important focus of student management to ensure academic performance at three of the higher education institutions – University D, Colleges E and F. Tutors and class committee members are responsible for monitoring and recording student attendances. In addition to lengthy day classes between 8:00 and 11:30am, 2:30 and 6:00pm, these three institutions also have early morning and evening studies for first year students. The times are between 7:20 and 7:50 in the mornings and approximately 7:30 to 9:30 in the evenings.

One of the reasons for having the early morning and evening studies is, according to student interviewees: *"Because they worry about you cannot control yourself well. So they ask you to use this time for homework... The 2nd year students still have morning studies, but no evening studies. The third and four year students have neither early morning nor evening studies. The fourth year students have few classes."*

As to how to ensure good class attendance, an interviewee described:

"There is a deputy captain especially responsible for recording class attendance and reports to the classroom teacher and the tutor. Some lecturers also check the attendance. He/she may mark the role from time to time... If people cannot attend a class he/she must apply for leave. Otherwise his or her name will be recorded. If your name is recorded, scores will be deducted from the comprehensive assessment. This is considered as a light punishment. If it is serious, parents will be called, disciplinary actions will be taken. There was a student who did not attend over 100 classes. He was asked to read his self criticism speech in front of the whole grade on a stage. This was also recorded in his file that follows him for the rest of his life, which creates more serious problems for the student's future."

Generally, if student class attendance is high, their reward normally is higher moral marks.

Universities A, B and C also have some form of checking class attendance, however are much less strict and student captains are generally not involved. For example, random inspection and roll marking during lecture time by tutors, classroom teachers or lecturers. There were also no early morning and evening studies at these three universities. Interestingly, the three tertiary institutions that focus heavily on class attendance have lower entry score requirements than the three universities that are more relaxed. The main reason for this is a belief that attending classes is fundamental to mastering knowledge and skills and to become a good student. The students who enter the lower ranking institutions are considered as less successful in academic studies at the secondary school level and perhaps lack of self-discipline. Therefore external control must be exercised to ensure the students will not waste their time and life at the institution.

2.3 Student Dormitory Disciplines and Hygiene

Almost all high school graduates entering into Chinese higher education institutions are required to live on campus. Approximately 18.5 million (70%) of the 26.5 million tertiary students are high school graduates directly entering tertiary institutions and therefore living on university campuses (The Ministry of Education, China, 2007c). For the students living on campus, strict disciplines apply.

A large number of buildings in every university/college are used for student dormitories. A student described her university dormitory as:

"In the courtyard of our school there are 3 accommodation buildings, each is 7 stories high, each story has 17 rooms, and each room accommodates 4 people. There is an office at the entrance of each building. The building is closed at 11:00pm and opened at 6:00am. So if you are late, you cannot get back in. You will have to knock on the

door. They will record your name and publish it on a blackboard at the entrance of the building the next morning. So everyone can see who returned late."

This description vividly reflects the real situation of student dormitory life in some tertiary institutions in China. According to this research, all student dormitories of the six tertiary institutions have opening and closing hours ranging between 6:00 and 6:30 in the morning and approximately 11:00 in the evening. Four out of the six institutions require students to return to dormitory before the closing time. The late returnees would be caught and disciplinary action may be taken should this be repeated. Again the two institutions which were not so strict on this rule are the two top ranking universities.

Further, at all institutions researched male and female students dormitories are in separate buildings. In general, male students are not allowed to enter female students' dormitories without a good reason.

Rules on hygiene and tidiness are a necessity over the challenges of managing so many young people living together. All students are required to clean their own bedrooms and rooms are inspected once a week. When asked what will happen if the students did a bad job on cleaning, one interviewee answered:

"Deduct marks. After a certain number of times if the cleaning of the room is still no good, they will ask you to clean public areas. I heard one room did not do well in their bedroom. The whole room were ordered to use a hose to wash the floor of the dormitory entrance. It was a punishment. Everyone's score in that room was deducted. We have personal files to record our behaviours and performances. There is a form must be filled out by the dormitory manage recording the evaluation results, very serious. Because all these will be in our file for the rest of our life, we must be very careful."

3. Major Management Approaches

3.1 Comprehensive Assessment

Five out the six tertiary institutions researched have a comprehensive assessment. The one without is the top ranking institution - University A. The comprehensive assessment includes moral marks of 30 to 45 percent and academic marks of 55 to 70 percent. The academic marks are the total or average of all academic marks student achieved during the year. However, the moral marks are more complex. There are different evaluation methods and calculation formulas at each institution. Generally, the moral marks take into account students' performance during the year in the following areas:

- class attendance,
- participation in student management work,
- community work,
- obedience to university rules and disciplines,
- cleaning performance at the student dormitory,
- participation in class or school or university arts, music, dancing and sports performances or competitions.
- wining awards and prizes.

The process of a moral evaluation is self-evaluation, classmates evaluation and tutor evaluation. Comments from the tutor are also recorded in the students' personal file. If the comments are positive, it is much easier for the student to find employment in the future.

At all institutions researched, student comprehensive assessment results and academic results are ranked and published for a short period of time for public viewing. The main reason for this is fairness. Students are allowed to raise questions re their marks if they are considered as unfair. Changes could be made after an investigation.

Fairness is considered to be important for three reasons – scholarship, future employment and a guaranteed place in master's studies which exempted from tough master's entry examinations.

3.2 Scholarships and Awards

All higher education institutions researched offer different kinds of scholarships and awards. Obtaining a scholarship is an important matter for many tertiary students if they want to gain a competitive edge for their future employment. Most scholarships and awards are decided based on the results of comprehensive assessment. There are Three Excellences Student and the Model Three Excellence Student for the students who perform well in all moral, academic and physical areas. There are also the Excellent Student Leader Award and the Excellent Study Award for students who may not be on top ranking of the comprehensive assessment but have done outstanding work as a student leader or in academic achievement. The money is generally a few hundred yuan. Quite a large number of students can obtain some kind of award.

However, for the very few government scholarships with thousands of yuan attached to assist living expenses at university, the whole class needs to discuss and vote. The first condition is level of poverty in the student's family. The recipients also need to have a good academic record. This is the scholarship that everyone in the class must agree upon.

3.3 Military Training for All First Year Students

All students from the six tertiary institutions are required to undertake military training in the first two weeks of their university life. It is a compulsory unit named "*Military Theory and Training*". Goals of the training are to develop self discipline, hard working and teamwork as well as independent living skills, such as making bed and cleaning bedroom etc. Officers from the Chinese People's Liberation Army are brought into the university to conduct the training.

One interviewee described her experiences:

"Once we entered the University the military training started on the 1 st day of the semester."... "We got up very early at 6:00 am, the whole grade getting together to listen to instructions, then did military walking, jogging, morning exercise, then had breakfast. After breakfast, there was a morning training session, just learning to stand straight for a long time, military walking, and listening to speeches. In the afternoon there was similar training. All these are just for training our strong wills, discipline and teamwork. The last day was the huicao - exercise together. All schools, departments and classes gathered together at the track and field ground. We competed for the best

synchronised walking, exercises and discipline. Therefore all the 13 days' hard work was for the 14th day's competition. They want to train students a feeling of group honour."

"We were also taught how to make the quilt into a neat square shape, like a big 'tofu block'. This was for our later life after the university – very important to make our bed well. Many people were so used to get up but not making their bed at all. We had marks and must pass the unit of Military Training."

When asked if it was a good unit to do, students answered: *"Good and not so good both ways. We needed the discipline, skills and the teamwork. But it was very hard work. Also September is summer time in southern China, very hot indeed. We were under the sun all the time for the 14 days, sweating throughout each day. Many girls could not cope."*

It would appear the military training for the freshmen is designed to be part of the overall development of tertiary students into desirable people for the country and workforce.

3.4 Providing Students with More Opportunities to Complete Studies via Supplementary Examinations, Extra Coaching and Repeating Failed Units Free of Charge

In the all six Chinese tertiary institutions researched, students normally need to do approximately 10 units each semester in their first year of study. The number of units becomes fewer when students progress each year. An academic year comprises two semesters, each with an 18 week teaching period plus two weeks of examinations. However, the failure rate is low. The Chinese universities and colleges researched have a very high graduation rate, very few dropouts except for serious illness, motivation problems or criminal offences on the part of students.

According to the Ministry of Education, China (2007b), in 2006 academic year, approximately 93% of tertiary students graduated with a degree. A slightly lower of percentage of vocational tertiary students, 89.5%, graduated with a formal award.

One of the main reasons for the high graduation rates is when students fail a unit, they are always provided with a second or third chance via supplementary examinations. Special coaching may be provided by the lecturer. If the student still cannot pass, there will be a repeated examination in later years of the studies or repeating the failed unit free of charge. All universities and colleges involved in the study have offered the above options to their students.

Discussion

Based on the interview results, it would appear student management in Chinese higher education institutions is focused on developing students into morally, academically and physically well balanced people for their country. To achieve this, many control measures have been put into place, including a complex system with specialised staff and student self-management, together with comprehensive assessments as extrinsic motivation. Moral education, military training and relevant experiences appear to be a very important part of student university life. This research suggests that communist ideology, patriotism and an obedient citizenry are the focus of the moral element of the education.

The reasons for the Chinese government's great emphasis on moral education, especially patriotism, need to be traced back to contemporary Chinese history. China was an empire stretching back two millennia, with great inventions as proud contributions to mankind. However, since 1840, China was invaded by the British, French, Japanese and many other foreign powers. Foreign domination paved the way for the eventual disintegration of imperial China. Many scholars believe China's decline was primarily due to foreign imperialism. Therefore in the twentieth century, from Chinese leaders to ordinary citizens all have shared a deep bitterness at China's humiliation. They determined to eliminate the shameful past and restore China to its rightful place as a great power (Zhao, 2000). Many Chinese are convinced that the lack of modernization and technology was the reason why China became an easy target for Western imperialism (Zhao, 2000). As a result, there has been an urgent need to realise the "Four Modernizations" in industry, agriculture, defence, science and technology, planned by the former Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai in 1964 (Baidu, 2009). Education has always been viewed as a vehicle to achieve the Four Modernisations via developing the people required.

The disintegration of the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries in the late 1980s and early 1990s raised concern about potential disorder and disunity in China. In response to the calls domestically and internationally that China needs more political freedom and democracy, the Chinese government asserted that the state had an obligation to implement effective and forceful measures to maintain domestic order and unity. They reminded the Chinese people that weakness, disunity, and disorder at home would invite foreign aggression and result in the loss of Chinese identity, as China's century-long humiliation and suffering before 1949 demonstrated. As a part of the patriotic campaign, moral education courses were added to the curriculum of high schools and universities in 1994 (Zhao, 2000). The moral education at Chinese tertiary institutions concentrates on the great achievements of the Chinese people and the Communist party. Patriotism is nurtured as demonstrated in this research.

Chinese culture has always emphasized morality. Educational institutions are charged with responsibility of student moral development and physical well-being, as well as academic growth. Moral education is an important part of the curricula. The units for moral education are not only designed to enhance students' love for the party and nation, they also teach students appropriate behaviour and good manners (Yao, 2001).

To ensure the effectiveness of moral education, this research reveals the approaches used in higher education institutions, such as comprehensive assessments and military training. These approaches are largely extrinsic motivation factors, nevertheless, very powerful tools. They are powerful mainly because of their connections with awards, scholarships, personal records and future employment. These approaches are controlling measures and can be viewed as a conforming process of the Chinese higher education under the government ideology. Nevertheless, there is also an issue of culture.

Chinese culture is highly collective (Heine, 2001). Research has revealed that people from collective societies are bound by their relationships with the community. Individuals are encouraged to put other people's and the group's interests before their own. From a societal point of view, duties and obligations are prescribed by roles (Triandis, 1995). It has been consistently reported that Chinese parents are highly restrictive and controlling, or "authoritarian" where unquestioned obedience to authority is stressed (Chao, 2001, Zhou, Eisenberg, Wang, & Reiser, 2004). Similarly, education practices are designed to make young people

conform via strong compliance training and group influence (Sinha, 1999). Shangguan (1999) points out that Chinese education emphasises external control through external standards and strict discipline. As a general practice and culture, family and education in China have imposed highly controlling measures to conform young people into interdependent selves to suit family and societal needs.

Controlling and denial of freedom of choice are considered negatives in Western culture. Self-determination theory suggests that people from all cultures share basic psychology needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness. The theory proposes that when these three needs are supported by social context and fulfilled by individuals, well-being is enhanced. Conversely, when cultural, contextual or intrapsychic forces block the fulfillment of these basic needs, well-being is diminished. (Cited in Chirkov, Ryan, Kim & Kaplan, 2003).

Interestingly, some cross-cultural research did not fully agree that the fulfillment of self-autonomy is universal as a fundamental need. In some cultures, adherence to controlling pressures yields more satisfaction than does autonomy (Miller, 1997)

It is worth noting, during the interviews of this research, a Chinese word “guan” was mentioned all the time in referring to student management. According to Chao (1994) who has conducted extensive research on “guan” and its cultural meaning from an Asian perspective, the concept *guan* literally means “to govern”. Chao considered *guan* has a positive connotation in China, because it can mean “to care for”. Parental care, concern and involvement are synonymous with firm control and governance of the young people. Control and governance, according to Chao (1994), not only have very positive connotations for the Chinese, they are also regarded as role responsibilities or requirements of teachers as well as parents. Due to different cultural systems, Chinese scoring high on authoritarian or controlling re parenting style, nevertheless, may have entirely different implications from Western individualist cultures. The concept of “controlling” or “authoritarian” are embedded in a cultural tradition for European-Americans that Chinese do not share.

According to Chao (1994), Chinese training and the control that parents and teachers exert are motivated by their intense concern for their young people to be successful, particularly in school. This may sometimes involve relentless encouragement and discipline when the young person’s own motivation is not adequate. This is clearly demonstrated by this research via the control of class attendance and the hard work in military training and long hours, including morning and evening studies for first year students.

Chao’s study offered indigenous concepts that were formulated entirely outside of North American psychology. Chao (1994) believed that the Chinese *guan* was characterised by both warmth - emotional support and affection - and a democratic type of “firm control”. This research to some extent supports Chao’s notion. It would appear there are elements of warmth, emotional and practical support for students via the work of tutors, classroom teachers and the university’s rule on supplementary examinations. One of the tutors further stated this position:

“We are a socialist country. Most students are from a single child family and lack ability in self-management. They are used to being controlled by others from a very young age. Students work very hard to pass the university entry examination. At university they could lose focus due to immaturity and also they are far away from home. The university needs to take responsibility to help them. If they did not pass all the units they would lose their lifetime opportunity for employment. Not like Australia, there are

many other opportunities. There is no going back in China. Therefore we cannot afford to let them waste their own opportunity because of lack of discipline and life experiences."

The rules re student dormitory discipline, hygiene and military training are part of training, *guan*, of young students to better themselves. According to another tutor: "*The measures to control students are designed to nurture positive side of students and to combat negative elements of human beings.*" It is also evident that *guan* is exercised according to perceived student ability. The higher ranking universities exercised much less *guan* than the lower ranking ones, trusting students' self-control ability.

Given the historical, social and cultural background of the current university student management, it is understandable that Chinese practices differ greatly from that of the West. For Western scholars the insight of this paper may be an astonishing revelation of excessive control. However, to the Chinese, the government, the parents, the teachers and perhaps the students themselves, there are many positive aspects from their cultural perspective. Said (1995) had long suggested that scholars should avoid utilising the view of one culture to judge another culture's practice. It is important for this study to reveal the differences and the implications of these differences. When hundreds of thousands of Chinese students travel to Western countries to receive their further education, staff of Western universities should have a fundamental knowledge on how Chinese students were managed in China. The strengths and weaknesses of the students developed under this management and potential problems at Western universities after experiencing such a very different management system need to be fully appreciated by staff in order to adjust their management and teaching to accommodate cultural differences.

Based on the findings of this study, Western universities with a large number of Chinese students should consider employing a transition mentor who understands both Chinese language and culture. This would help students to live well with their newly found freedom and experience some necessary *guan* in their transition. Further, research regarding student opinions and perceptions on the differences of management approaches between universities in the West and China is recommended.

References

- Association of Chinese Educators (2003). 2003中国大学综合实力及各学科实力一览. Retrieved on 9th Dec. 2008 from <http://www.chinaedunet.com/news/news/20037/types50/4162013.asp>
- Baidu (2009). Four Modernisations. *Baidu Encyclopaedia*. Retrieved on 28 January 2009 from <http://baike.baidu.com/view/237872.htm>
- Chao, R. K. (1994). Beyond parental control and authoritarian parenting style: Understanding Chinese parenting through the cultural notion of training. *Child Development*, 65, 1111–1119.
- Chao, R. K. (2001). Extending research on the consequences of parenting style for the Chinese Americans and European Americans. *Child Development*, 72(6). 1832–1843.
- China Education Centre, (2008) *University in China*. Retrieved on 9th Dec. 2008 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.chinaeducenter.com/en/university.php>
- Chirkov, V., Ryan, R. M., Kim, Y. & Kaplan, U. (2003) Differentiating autonomy from individualism and independence: A self-determination theory perspective on internalization of cultural orientations and well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 84(1) 97–110.
- Ding, M. Li, Y. Li, X. & Kulm, G. (2008). Chinese teachers' perceptions of students' classroom misbehaviour. *Educational Psychology*, 28(3), 305–324.

- Feng, G. (2007). On the professional training and career development of counsellors. *Studies of Ideological Education*, 11.
- Heine, S. J. (2001) Self as a cultural product: An examination of East Asian and North American selves. *Journal of Personality*, 69(6) 881-906.
- Ho, C., & Leung, J. (2002). Disruptive classroom behaviors of secondary and primary school students. *Educational Research Journal*, 17, 219-233.
- Ho, I. T. (2004). A comparison of Australian and Chinese teachers' attributions for student problem behaviours. *Educational Psychology*, 24, 375-391.
- Huang, X. J., Ning, B., Li, X. H. & Duan, Y. B. (2006). The historical transition and new role of counselors in higher education institutions. *Journal of Ideological & Theoretical Education*, 11.
- Jin, L. & Cortazzi, M. (1998). Dimensions of dialogue: large classes in China. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 29, 739-761.
- Luan, G.M. (2007). On the Specialty Attribute, Professional Orientation and Developing Trend of the Political Consultants in Chinese Universities. *Journal of Shanxi Institution of Education*, 23(4), 26-30.
- Miller, J. G. (1997) Cultural conceptions of duty: Implications for motivation and morality. In D. Munro, J. F. Schumaker, & A.C. Carr (Eds.), *Motivation and culture* (pp. 178-192). New York: Routledge.
- Mo, H. S. (2006) On the Problem of Professionalization and Work Role of Instructors in Colleges and Universities. *Journal of Linyi Teacher's University*. 28 (4), 10-16.
- Said, E. W. (1995). *Orientalism*. London: Penguin.
- Shangguan, Z. (1999). *Talking about Chinese: 100 ways of describing Chinese*. Beijing: Chinese Youth Publishing House.
- Sinha, D. (1999). Cross-cultural psychology: The Asian scenario. In J. Pandey, D. Sinha, & D. P.S. Bhawuk (Eds.), *Asian contributions to cross-cultural psychology*. (pp. 20-41). New Delhi: Sage.
- Sohu Education (2008a) 2008 China first class universities' list 中国一流大学名单新鲜出炉. Retrieved on 9th Dec. 2008 from <http://learning.sohu.com/20080107/n254507087.shtml>
- Sohu Education (2008b) 2008中国大学经济学本科A++级专业学校名单 Retrieved on 9th Dec. 2008 from <http://learning.sohu.com/20080107/n254508159.shtml>
- Sohu Education (2008c) 2008中国大学排行榜：天津市大学前6名 Retrieved on 9th Dec. 2008 from <http://learning.sohu.com/20080116/n254699645.shtml>
- The Ministry of Education, China, (2005a) *Standard of Tertiary Student Behaviour*, In *Management of Students via Regulations in Higher Education Sector*. Beijing: Ministry of Education, P. R. China. Retrieved on 10th January, 2009 from <http://www.moe.edu.cn/edoas/website18/level3.jsp?tablename=1234&infoid=17727>
- The Ministry of Education, China, (2005b) *Management of Students via Regulations in Higher Education Sector*. Beijing: Ministry of Education, P. R. China. Retrieved on 10th January, 2009 from <http://www.moe.edu.cn/edoas/website18/level3.jsp?tablename=1234&infoid=17727>
- The Ministry of Education, China, (2007a), *Number of Schools by Level & Type*. Ministry of Education, P. R. China. Retrieved on 10th January, 2009 from <http://www.moe.gov.cn/edoas/website18/level3.jsp?tablename=2225&infoid=33357>
- The Ministry of Education, China, (2007b), *Data on Students in Regular Higher Education Institutions*. Ministry of Education, P. R. China. Retrieved on 10th January, 2009 from <http://www.moe.gov.cn/edoas/website18/12/info33512.htm>
- The Ministry of Education, China, (2007c) *Changes in Higher Educations Enrolment*, . Beijing: Ministry of Education, P. R. China. Retrieved on 18 December, 2008 from <http://www.moe.gov.cn/edoas/website18/12/info33512.htm>
- Triandis, H. C. (1995). *Individualism and collectivism* Boulder, Colorado: Westview.
- Yao, Y. (2001). American and Chinese schools: A comparative analysis. *Education*, 113(2), 232-235.

- Zhao, S. (2000). Chinese Nationalism and Its International Orientations. *Political Science Quarterly*, 115(1), 1-33.
- Zhou, Q., Eisenberg, N., Wang, Y. & Reiser, M. (2004). Chinese children's effortful control and dispositional anger/frustration: Relations to parenting styles and children's social functioning. *Developmental Psychology*. 40(3), 352-366.

About the Authors

Dr. Xiaoli Jiang

Dr. Xiaoli Jiang has diverse research interests in the areas of global migration and culture change, cross-culture self-esteem, self-esteem and well-being of Asian migrants, and children's self-esteem.

Xiaoping Ma

Central University of Finance and Economics, China

Yumei Wu

Tianjin Medical University, China

EDITORS

Mary Kalantzis, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, USA.

Bill Cope, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, USA.

EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD

Verna Allee, Verna Allee Associates, Martinez, USA.

Zainal Ariffin, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia.

Robert Brooks, Monash University, Melbourne, Australia.

Bruce Cronin, University of Greenwich, London, UK.

Rod Dinnutt, William Bethway and Associates, Melbourne, Australia.

Judith Ellis, Enterprise Knowledge, Melbourne, Australia.

Andrea Fried, Technology University Chemnitz, Chemnitz, Germany.

David Gurteen, Gurteen Knowledge, Fleet, UK.

David Hakken, University of Indiana, Bloomington, USA.

Sabine Hoffmann, American University of the Middle East, Kuwait.

Stavros Ioannides, Pantion University, Athens, Athens, Greece.

Margaret Jackson, RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia.

Paul James, RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia.

Leslie Johnson, University of Greenwich, London, UK.

Eleni Karantzola, University of the Aegean, Rhodes, Greece.

Gerasimos Kouzelis, University of Athens, Athens, Greece.

Krishan Kumar, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, USA.

Martyn Laycock, University of Greenwich; managingtransitions.net, London, UK.

David Lyon, Queens University, Ontario, Canada.

Bill Martin, RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia.

Pumela Msweli-Mbanga, University of Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa.

Alexandra Roth, Northeastern University, Boston, USA.

Claudia Schmitz, Cenandu Learning Agency, Cologne, Germany.

Kirpal Singh, Singapore Management University, Singapore.

Dave Snowden, Cynefin Centre for Organisational Complexity, UK.

Voicu Sucal, Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, Napoca, Romania.

Chryssi Vitsilakis-Soroniatis, University of the Aegean, Rhodes, Greece.

JoAnn Wiggins, Walla Walla University, Walla Walla, USA.

Alan Zaremba, Northeastern University, Boston, USA.

THE UNIVERSITY PRESS JOURNALS

Creates a space for dialogue on innovative theories and practices in the arts, and their inter-relationships with society.

ISSN: 1833-1866

<http://www.Arts-Journal.com>

Examines the meaning and purpose of 'design' while also speaking in grounded ways about the task of design and the use of designed artefacts and processes.

ISSN: 1833-1874

<http://www.Design-Journal.com>

Maps and interprets new trends and patterns in globalisation.

ISSN 1835-4432

<http://www.GlobalStudiesJournal.com>

Sets out to foster inquiry, invite dialogue and build a body of knowledge on the nature and future of learning.

ISSN: 1447-9540

<http://www.Learning-Journal.com>

Addresses the key question: How can the institution of the museum become more inclusive?

ISSN 1835-2014

<http://www.Museum-Journal.com>

Draws from the various fields and perspectives through which we can address fundamental questions of sustainability.

ISSN: 1832-2077

<http://www.Sustainability-Journal.com>

Investigates the affordances for learning in the digital media, in school and throughout everyday life.

ISSN 1835-2030

<http://www.ULJournal.com>

Explores the past, present and future of books, publishing, libraries, information, literacy and learning in the information society.

ISSN: 1447-9567

<http://www.Book-Journal.com>

Provides a forum for discussion and builds a body of knowledge on the forms and dynamics of difference and diversity.

ISSN: 1447-9583

<http://www.Diversity-Journal.com>

Discusses the role of the humanities in contemplating the future and the human, in an era otherwise dominated by scientific, technical and economic rationalisms.

ISSN: 1447-9559

<http://www.Humanities-Journal.com>

Creates a space for discussion of the nature and future of organisations, in all their forms and manifestations.

ISSN: 1447-9575

<http://www.Management-Journal.com>

Discusses disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches to knowledge creation within and across the various social sciences and between the social, natural and applied sciences.

ISSN: 1833-1882

<http://www.Socialsciences-Journal.com>

Focuses on a range of critically important themes in the various fields that address the complex and subtle relationships between technology, knowledge and society.

ISSN: 1832-3669

<http://www.Technology-Journal.com>

Explores the meaning and purpose of the academy in times of striking social transformation.

ISSN 1835-2030

<http://www.Universities-Journal.com>

FOR SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT

subscriptions@commonground.com.au