

MIGRANT LIVELIHOOD AND BUSINESS IN URBAN CHINA: THE CASE OF
HENANCUN AND RECYCLING IN BEIJING

By

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ABSTRACT

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Henancun, as one of the migrant enclaves in Beijing, emerged in the late 1980s with the development of the informal recycling business. Although rural-to-urban migrants and their recycling business play essential roles in providing the recycling service to the local residents and promoting the environmental protection, their existence is nearly invisible in the city. Focusing on the development history of *Henancun*, the structural and institutional barriers faced by both migrants and recycling businesses, and their coping strategies in Beijing, this dissertation research uses a combined qualitative and quantitative research method to examine the role of *Henancun* and the nature of the informal recycling business in recycling migrants' livelihood, and to understand the structural and institutional barriers faced by migrants and recycling as well as their coping strategies in Beijing. Based on questionnaires, interviews, observations and government documentation examinations, this study reveals that *Henancun* is both a migrant and a business enclave that emerged to cope with the socially and politically marginalized circumstances migrants have been facing in the city. Besides, the space of *Henancun*, with full-fledged services to accommodate migrants' livelihood and businesses, has gradually become a permanent "outside" space that exists in between the city and migrants' hometowns. The informal nature of the recycling business also emerged as a strategy to cope with local regulations and uncoordinated governmental policies.

This dissertation is dedicated to Guoting Kang.
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	x
CHAPTER 1	1
INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Finding Henancun.....	2
1.1.1 Finding Henancun.....	3
1.1.2 Henancun. A Migrant Enclave? A Business Enclave?	6
1.1.3 “Recycling is the Main Force of Environmental Protection.”	10
1.1.4 Henancun: Convenient Invisibility	12
1.2 Study Background.....	14
1.2.1 Introduction of Henancun	20
1.2.2 Statement of Problems	23
1.2.3 Research Questions.....	24
1.3 Study Areas.....	28
1.4 Research Framework, Methodology, and Methods	32
1.4.1 Conceptual Framework.....	32
1.4.2 Methods and Methodology	35
1.4.2.1 Research Methods.....	36
1.4.2.2 Research methodology.....	43
1.4.2.3 The role of women in my research	49
1.5 Dissertation Structure and Outline.....	52
CHAPTER 2	55
LITERATURE REVIEW	55
2.1 Internal Migration in China	56
2.2 China’s Urbanization	60
2.3 Marginality and Informal Economy	63
2.4 Enclaves and Ghettos.....	67
2.4.1 Ethnic Economy and Ethnic Enclave Economy	67
2.4.1.1 Ethnic economy and middleman minority.....	67
2.4.1.2 Ethnic enclave economy	69
2.4.2 Ethnic Enclave and Ghetto Development	70
2.5 Recycling under Solid Waste Management.....	72
2.6 Summary	74
CHAPTER 3	77
THE DEVELOPMENT AND SPATIAL TRAJECTORY OF HENANCUN.....	77
3.1 Recycling Business in Beijing	78
3.1.1 Recycling under Planned Economy	78

3.1.2 Recycling in a Transition (the late 1970s—the mid-1990s)	81
3.1.3 Developing Migrant Recycling Business in Beijing (the mid-1990s—around 2003)	85
3.1.4 Domination of Migrants in Recycling (2003-Present).....	88
3.2 Informal Recycling Business Structure in Beijing	90
3.3 Recycling as a “Migrant” and Informal Business.....	94
3.3.1 Migrants in Recycling.....	95
3.3.2 The Informality of Recycling.....	96
3.4 Informal and Unstable Recycling Space in Beijing.....	100
3.4.1 Informal Recycling Space in the Making	100
3.4.2 Unstable Recycling Space in the Contract.....	108
3.5 Outward Moving Trend of Henancun in Beijing.....	109
3.6 Conclusions and Discussions.....	115
CHAPTER 4	119
MIGRANTS’ INCOME AND EXPERIENCE IN HENANCUN, BEIJING.....	119
4.1 Migrants’ Income in Recycling	120
4.1.1 The Disposable Income in a Good Year	121
4.1.2 The Disposable Income in a Bad Year	125
4.1.2.1 Method 1: Add a small number to the zeros	125
4.1.2.2 Method 2: Two-step analysis	126
4.2 Migrants’ Experience and Their Opinions about Migration.....	130
4.3 Summaries	134
CHAPTER 5	137
INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS FOR HENANCUN AND ITS RECYCLING DWELLERS	137
5.1 Recycling Structure and an Upward Ladder to Climb.....	139
5.1.1 The Recycling Structure	140
5.1.2 A Dream to Follow in Recycling.....	144
5.2 Structural/Institutional Barriers for Migrant Recyclers in Beijing	151
5.2.1 Hukou (Household Registration System)	151
5.2.2 Housing.....	152
5.2.3 Education	158
5.2.4 Demolition and Relocation	163
5.2.5 Shourong, Stigmatization, and Discrimination.....	165
5.3 Structural/Institutional Barriers for Recyclers at Different Levels.....	171
5.3.1 The Itinerant Recyclers, Xing Shang (行商)	172
5.3.1.1 Renters in Henancun	175
5.3.1.2 Shourong policy in the 1990s	177
5.3.1.3 Unstable income.....	179
5.3.2 The Community Recyclers, Xiao Zuo Shang (小坐商).....	181
5.3.2.1 Mr. Sun’s migration journey.....	183
5.3.2.2 Mr. Sun in the recycling business	184
5.3.2.3 Daily business	187
5.3.2.4 Working in a gated community.....	190

5.3.3 The Yard Buyers, Da Zuo Shang (大坐商)	192
5.3.3.1 Stigmatization and Shourong	197
5.3.3.2 Demolition and relocation in Beijing	203
5.3.4 Recycling Companies, Sometimes Known as the Henancun Organizer	205
5.3.4.1 Land leasing, demolition, relocation	206
5.3.4.2 Regulations from different government aspects	214
5.3.4.3 Tricky taxation on recycling activities	221
CHAPTER 6	229
MIGRANTS' COPING STRATEGIES IN BEIJING	229
6.1 Revisiting the Structural Barriers	231
6.1.1 Hukou Remains a Strong Structural Barrier for Rural-to-Urban Migrants ...	231
6.1.2 Pathological View against the Recycling Business	233
6.2 Coping Strategies in Recycling	238
6.3 Migrant Recyclers' Coping Strategies in Beijing	239
6.3.1 Chain Migration to Achieve a Successful Migration	242
6.3.2 Coping with Hostile Urban Policies, Especially Shourong	247
6.3.2.1 To formalize	249
6.3.2.2 To informalize	250
6.3.3 Coping with the Lack of Social Facilities in Beijing	253
6.3.3.1 Open market and grocery stores organized by recycling companies	255
6.3.3.2 Education	259
6.3.3.2.1 Hometown schools vs. migrant schools in cities	260
6.3.3.2.2 Instability	262
6.3.3.2.3 Informality	263
6.3.3.3 Other services	265
6.3.4 Coping with Poor Housing in Beijing	266
6.3.4.1 Investment?	267
6.3.4.2 Self-construction	270
6.3.4.2.1 Bathing room and restroom	270
6.3.4.2.2 Temporary furnace	272
6.3.4.2.3 Moveable house	273
6.3.5 Coping with Unstable Income	274
6.3.5.1 Formal strategies	275
6.3.5.1.1 Specialization	275
6.3.5.1.2 Contract	277
6.3.5.2 Informal strategies	280
6.3.5.2.1 Make extra money from becoming familiar	281
6.3.5.2.2 Making extra money by working more	282
6.3.5.2.3 Making extra money from the yard	284
6.3.5.2.4 Making extra money from acting as a group	287
6.3.5.2.5 .com generation	289
6.4 Recycling Companies in Beijing	291
6.4.1 Market vs. Company	291
6.4.1.1 Recycling market	292
6.4.1.2 Recycling company	294

6.4.2 To Formalize or to Informalize.....	296
6.5 Summary	297
CHAPTER 7	300
CONCLUSIONS	300
7.1 Henancun: A Complex Recycling Enclave	302
7.2 Henancun: in between the State and Society	304
7.3 Complex Internal Structure with Complex Structural Barriers in Henancun	306
7.4 New Urban Space in the Making.....	308
7.5 Informality and Coping Strategies.....	312
7.6 Discussions	314
APPENDICES	317
APPENDIX A Detailed job for constructing the reusable materials recycling system	318
APPENDIX B Eight city-level comprehensive sorting centers.....	322
APPENDIX C Twelve district-level comprehensive sorting centers	323
APPENDIX D Out-migration destinations by Labor Department in Gushi County ..	324
APPENDIX E Interview respondents.....	326
APPENDIX F Questionnaire & Questionnaire code book.....	327
APPENDIX G Introduction to Key Chinese Terms	344
BIBLIOGRAPHY	345

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Composition of questionnaire participants	38
Table 2: Regression results for the income equation in a good year	124
Table 3: Regression results for the income equation in a bad year	126
Table 4: Logistic regression results for the binary income in a bad year	127
Table 5: Regression results for the non-zero income equation in a bad year	128
Table 6: <i>Shourong</i> experience vs. feeling being unfairly treated	130
Table 7: feeling being unfairly treated vs. satisfactory with the current job	131
Table 8: feeling being unfairly treated vs. intention to change their job	132
Table 9: feeling satisfied with their job vs. intention to change their job.....	132
Table 10: satisfactory with their job vs. intention to let their children continue the job	133
Table 11: satisfactory vs. children's jobs with business type controlled.....	134
Table 12: Housing condition for housing in <i>Henancun</i>	155
Table 13: Where have you purchased or do you intend to buy houses?	157
Table 14: Official documents about the development of recycling business	235
Table 15: Emigration destination percentage for different townships in <i>Gushi</i> County	245
Table 16: Location changes for the two schools in DXK.....	262
Table 17: Informal activities in migrant recycling yard for extra profit.....	285
Table 18: Eight city-level comprehensive sorting centers.....	322
Table 19: Twelve district-level comprehensive sorting centers	323
Table 20: Out-migration destinations in <i>Gushi</i> County.....	324
Table 21: Description of variables.....	337

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Photograph: Community recycler at the gate of a residential gated community	5
Figure 2: Photograph: <i>Gushi</i> restaurants and grocery stores in DXK and PC.....	7
Figure 3: Photograph: “Recycling is the main force of environmental protection.”	10
Figure 4: Chart: Beijing’s population growth (1970-2012) China Data Center	16
Figure 5: Chart: Recycling business structure in Beijing	22
Figure 6: Map: Migrants are not evenly distributed in Beijing, while suburb areas become important migrant settlements in Beijing.....	29
Figure 7: Map: <i>Henan</i> migrants are not evenly distributed among migrants in Beijing. <i>Henan</i> migrant enclaves are found in suburbs of Beijing. (Based on 2000 Census data, made by Jia Feng)	30
Figure 8: Map: <i>Henancun</i> sites in my dissertation fieldwork.....	30
Figure 9: Chart: Research Framework.....	35
Figure 10: Chart: Locations migrants have previously stayed in Beijing (in black circles)	37
Figure 11: Chart: Beijing City materials’ recovery system. (Source: Shi and Furedy, 1993)	80
Figure 12: Chart: Informal recycling structure in Beijing today	91
Figure 13: Pie chart: Migration origins.....	95
Figure 14: Photograph: <i>Gushi</i> and <i>Henan</i> elements outside a recycling enclave.....	96
Figure 15: Photograph: Forbidden items from recycling posted by police	100
Figure 16: Chart: <i>Shourong</i> experienced by migrants after arriving at Beijing	101
Figure 17: Chart: Where to buy groceries.....	104
Figure 18: Chart: Where to buy other supplies.....	104

Figure 19: Photography: Self-organized Services in <i>Henancun</i>	105
Figure 20: Chart: Frequency communicating with Beijing local residents in a week	107
Figure 21: Map: Questionnaire respondents' locations in 1985	111
Figure 22: Map: Questionnaire respondents' locations in 1990	111
Figure 23: Map: Questionnaire respondents' locations in 1995	112
Figure 24: Map: Questionnaire respondents' locations in 2000	112
Figure 25: Map: Questionnaire respondents' locations in 2005	113
Figure 26: Map: Questionnaire respondents' locations in 2010	113
Figure 27: Map: Questionnaire respondents' locations in 2013	114
Figure 28: Map: Questionnaire respondents' previous locations vs. current locations ..	114
Figure 29: Map: Outward movement trends in <i>Henancun</i> 's developing history (based on interviews).....	115
Figure 30: Chart: Distribution of the disposable income in a bad year	125
Figure 31: Chart: Beijing City materials' recovery system	141
Figure 32: Chart: Informal recycling structure in Beijing today	142
Figure 33: Chart: Levels of recycling jobs	146
Figure 34: Chart: Disposable income comparisons in a good year.....	148
Figure 35: Chart: Disposable income comparisons in a bad year	149
Figure 36: Photograph: Housing for recyclers in <i>Henancun</i>	154
Figure 37: Chart: Size of housing and the averaged number of residents living in their houses.....	155
Figure 38: Chart: Where migrants' oldest child attends primary school? (266 responses)	161
Figure 39: Chart: Where migrants' oldest child attends junior high school? (202 responses).....	161

Figure 40: Photograph: Forbidden items from recycling posted by police	165
Figure 41: Chart: Have you experienced <i>Shourong</i> in Beijing?	167
Figure 42: Photograph: Mr. Zhao's electric appliance recycling and rental house	169
Figure 43: Chart: First year arriving at Beijing for all itinerant recyclers	174
Figure 44: Photograph: Mr. Qian as an itinerant recycler in Beijing.....	175
Figure 45: Photograph: Mr. Sun works as a community recycler	183
Figure 46: Photograph: Mr. Li (down) and his cousin working with their truck ready to go	189
Figure 47: Photograph: Mr. Zhou's foam recycling yard	195
Figure 48: Photograph: Mr. Zhou's fingernail was broken during <i>Shourong</i>	203
Figure 49: Photograph: FYXY's paper packaging center.....	210
Figure 50: Photograph: Government Document on Recycling System Development in 2011 (See Appendix A)	215
Figure 51: Chart: Frequency communicating with Beijing residents in a week.....	241
Figure 52: Chart: How many Beijing residents to interact with per week.....	241
Figure 53: Chart: Migrant home provinces.....	242
Figure 54: Chart: The cities where <i>Henan</i> migrants are from	243
Figure 55: Chart: The counties where Xinyang migrants are from (xx represents no answer).....	243
Figure 56: Chart: Through which channel migrants come to Beijing?.....	246
Figure 57: Photograph: Afternoon market outside DXK <i>Henancun</i>	256
Figure 58: Chart: Where migrants buy groceries.....	258
Figure 59: Chart: Where migrants buy other necessities	258
Figure 60: Photograph: Zhenhua primary school at DXK area	259

Figure 61: Chart: Other services (Top left: everyday market; Top right: car services; Bottom left: hometown restaurant; Bottom right: kindergarten)	265
Figure 62: Photograph: Various housing in <i>Henancun</i> (Top left: housing section of recycling companies; Top right: housing for electric appliance recyclers; Bottom left: housing section for workers and community recyclers; Bottom right: Yard buyer's house)	267
Figure 63: Photograph: Bathing facilities and public restroom	271
Figure 64: Photograph: Temporary furnace outside a yard buyer's house	273
Figure 65: Photograph: Various self-constructed housing.....	274
Figure 66: Chart: Materials recycled by Hebei yard buyers	277
Figure 67: Chart: Yard buyers sign contract with various parties for their business.....	278
Figure 68: Chart: Disposable income comparisons in good years for yard buyers	279
Figure 69: Chart: Disposable income comparisons in bad years for yard buyers	279
Figure 70: Chart: For what reasons, migrant recyclers do not work	284
Figure 71: Photograph: Spraying water in paper recycling as an informal strategy.....	287
Figure 72: Chart: What license yard buyers use in their recycling business	294

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

“When I go to the city, I always try to avoid buses or subways, because my hands look different. They are full of in from working with trash, and the dirt in my fingernails can never be cleared.”

----a yard buyer in Henancun

“The car looks good, right? I almost never drive it these days because I don’t make as much money as before. But I have to have it, so when I need to sign a contract with some companies, I will drive over to show that I have the ability to buy their trash.”

----another yard buyer with a Buick parking in his yard

One of the reasons I am confident with carrying out my fieldwork in Beijing is because I have many friends from high school and college who could host free tours to show me around there in Beijing. While none of them is running their own business in Beijing, most of them work in the so-called “formal” sectors such as the local government, banks, financial services, law firms, and urban planning institutions. When I told them I was doing research on recycling enclaves in Beijing, they could immediately give comments on Beijing's environmental issues, the dysfunctional trash classification system, and the migrant recycler who works by the gate of their community. But interestingly, when I asked them where the community recycler took their collected recyclable materials to, none of them had any idea while what they knew was that the materials were recycled and gone. When I told them the electric-motored tricycles on the streets were for

transporting recyclable materials, they all gave me a blank look. Then I realized maybe they are not that helpful.

I first thought this situation might be because my friends were technically migrants too although their work had sponsored to transfer their “*Hukou*¹” to Beijing, so they were not familiar with Beijing. But when I find out that even the taxi drivers², with help from their company radio, have no idea about what *Henancun*³ is, I realize *Henancun* does not exist in Beijing residents’ everyday mental map. While I know that *Henancun* processes almost all of the recyclable materials and there are around 200,000 recyclers in Beijing, their invisibility becomes quite a surprise and suddenly I was stricken by the situation that *Henancun* only exists in a parallel world or as one layer of Lefebvre’s *flaky mille-feuille pastry*⁴ in the society.

1.1 Finding Henancun

In the literature, *Henancun* is a term widely used when in comparing migrant enclaves for migrants from different hometowns. In Beijing, four migrant enclaves emerged in the literature (Fan and Taubmann, 2002; Gu and Liu, 2002) including *Zhejiangcun*, *Henancun*, *Anhuicun* and *Xinjiangcun*⁵. These terms emerged along with the rising popularity of *Zhejiangcun* as one of the largest garment market in Beijing in the 1980s. However, the parallel usage of these terms has introduced misleading messages for

¹ *Hukou*, a.k.a. the household registration system is a system set up in 1951 to register China’s population according to their birthplace. A Person’s *Hukou* is either urban or rural while urban *Hukou* people could have access to social welfare and social services but rural *Hukou* holders do not. Frequently used Chinese terms are listed under Appendix G.

² Taxi drivers are thought to know every corner in Beijing, with support from their company-wide radio system.

³ *Henan* is a province in central China while *Cun* means village. Here *cun* does not have an administrative meaning, rather it means a social space as similar to an explanation of “enclave” or “cluster” in the society. *Henancun* is used in the literature to describe the residential or business enclave where *Henan* migrants live.

⁴ Lefebvre, Henri. (1992) *The Production of Space*. Wiley-Blackwell.

⁵ *Zhejiang*, *Henan*, *Anhui* and *Xinjiang* are four provinces in China.

Henancun and *Anhuicun* (this term is gradually fading away in the literature) particularly because these two enclaves are not as spatially concentrated as *Zhejiangcun*. Rather, their existence can be found everywhere in the city to provide accessible services to the local residents in every corner of the city.

Therefore, to some extent, *Henancun* is a term referring to a series of *Henan* enclaves in many locations in Beijing. But because the word emerged parallel with the singular *Zhejiangcun* in Beijing, the singular written form of *Henancun* has been widely used. Thus, in this study, with the knowledge that *Henancun(s)* are present in many different locations in Beijing, I will continue using its singular form—*Henancun*—in my study to refer to the *Henan* recycling & migrant enclaves in Beijing.

1.1.1 Finding *Henancun*

When I first attempted to look for the largest recycling enclave⁶ in Beijing in the summer of 2009 with the location recorded in the literature (Fan and Taubmann, 2002; Gu and Liu, 2002), the taxi driver told me that he never heard of such a place called *Henancun*. After I had given him the place names as *Datun Rd.* or *Wali village*, he gave me a surprised look and told me that the address is called Beijing Olympic Village instead of *Henan Village*. At the place close to *Datun Rd.* and *Wali village*, what I saw is nothing but newly built Bird Nest Stadium, the Water Cube, and well maintained parks⁷. While the taxi driver never heard anything about *Henancun* or recycling enclaves in Beijing, he told me about a *Henan* recycler who he had known in his community. He kindly took me back to his gated community and introduced me to the recycler he knew who had a recycling depot inside the gate of their community.

⁶ *Henancun*, is used to describe the recycling enclave because most recyclers are from *Henan* province.

⁷ My first attempt to find *Henancun* happened in the summer of 2009, one year after the Beijing Olympic Games

The taxi driver's home community is the typical gated community hosting several eight-story apartment buildings, which were probably built in the 80s to serve workers for a work unit (*danwei*) or state-owned companies. When the taxi driver parked his car at the gate of the community, I immediately saw on the sidewalk several half-full sacks leaning against a large trash can, which was painted light blue with a recycling company name on the side. An empty floor scale was on the edge of the sidewalk, but nobody seemed to work there. The driver pointed to the other side of the sidewalk and told me to talk to the man who was playing mahjong⁸ with other residents in the shade by a building. While he was playing mahjong with three other local residents, several local residents were watching and commenting on the side. While I joined the viewer group and stood behind them, I was quite reluctant to ask him to accept an interview because I was very nervous to request my first interview and because I could not be sure that he was the recycler I was looking for since he looked no different from other mahjong players. Then, after a couple of games, I heard someone shouting by the side of the floor scale, "trash collector!" and he gradually moved his eyesight from the mahjong table to the scale, slowly responded, "here, a minute." But, he did not move until he finished that game, then he gradually collected his cash on the table, and gave his spot to one of the people who stood behind him. Nobody said anything about him leaving the table, and they continued the game with the same laughter and comments as what they did before. The shout for a "trash collector"⁹ came from a resident in his 40s who had a kid, probably his son, by his side after he parked his car by the scale. When the recycler went over to the scale, he opened the trunk of his vehicle and pulled out a plastic bag of pop cans

⁸ Mahjong is a traditional Chinese game, which needs four people to play. People would play it with friends, and sometimes the game involves some cash gambling.

⁹ 收破烂的, the person who collect trash, is the common term to call recyclers in Beijing.

(some plastic, some metal). The recycler counted the cans and told the resident that the price went down very fast recently and they were not worth as much as before. After some explanations, he gave the resident 1.4 *yuan* (about 20 cents) for about 30 cans. The local man took over the money, handed the money immediately to his son, got in the car and left. (Figure 1)



Figure 1: Photograph: Community recycler at the gate of a residential gated community

Then, the recycler noticed and asked me while kept organizing all the materials around his scale without looking, “so, what do you want?” I explained my interview request and the project I intended to carry out for my dissertation research, but his response did not seem to have anything to do with my explanation at all, “are you a journalist?¹⁰” After I explained more about my trip from MSU to Beijing, he explained that he heard from his fellow recyclers that one journalist used a fake research excuse to publish some articles with pictures without consent and how that article put some recyclers in trouble. He agreed to take my interview after I explained my intention with an IRB required consent form and his rights in this study. This interview not only was my first interview about the

¹⁰ Interestingly, this very sentence became the most common response when I conduct my dissertation fieldwork.

topic of recycling and internal migration but also opened my access to understanding all aspects of problems around *Henancun*, including recycling, migration, demolition, urban renewal development, housing, enclaves and family strategies, faced by this group of people in Beijing.

Since he (Mr. Sun as Case 3 in Chapter 4) was from *Henan* province and worked as a recycler himself, I was quite confident that I could find *Henancun* through him. However, when I asked him about *Henancun*, he shook his head and told me that there was no such place called *Henancun* as he knew of. After I had described the place as a recycling center that was full of migrants from *Henan* province and it used to be at *Datun Rd.* and *Wali* village, where Olympic Park was now, he showed me a surprised look and asked me, “that’s called *Henancun*? I live there but I never heard that name.” He told me that almost everyone in that place was at *Datun* and *Wali* before 2003 when Beijing Olympic Games developed the place to become the location for Bird’s Nest and Water Cube. The place was not far from the community, and recyclers like him and other itinerant recyclers all lived there at night and came to recycle during the daytime. Then, he gave me very detailed directions about how to go to the place which I described as *Henancun*.

1.1.2 *Henancun*. A Migrant Enclave? A Business Enclave?

The *Henancun* is not visible from any major street in Beijing, but it is right around the corner from a major north-south road named Heiquan Rd., that serves as one of the primary linkages between the northern residential housing section and the central city. Turning east from the divided six-lane Heiquan Rd. onto the two-lane dusty Xixiaokou Rd., many recycling yards and all different kinds of *Henan* hometown-flavored restaurants start to appear to the east of the sign that shows the boundary between

Haidian and Changping districts of Beijing. After turning onto the Xixiaokou Rd., the landscape changes dramatically from a well constructed six-lane road with various newly transplanted trees on both sides and well watered bush plants as a road divider, to a noisy 2-lane street with people walking, riding bicycles, tricycles, scooters and electric motored tricycles among various trucks loaded with different recycled materials. On the south side of the street, many recycling yards are next to each other under the giant electricity towers; and on the north, various *Henan* hometown-flavored restaurants and deli shops are running their businesses (Figure 2). The look struck me hard because that is completely different from what I could imagine when I first visited the Olympic Parks, but I know that I have found my *Henancun* since almost every restaurant specializes in a dish with *Henan* to start with.



Figure 2: Photograph: *Gushi* restaurants and grocery stores in *DXK* and *PC*

As one of the migrant enclaves in Beijing, *Henancun* has not attracted much attention and not much detailed information is revealed yet. Based on various research papers and book chapters about migrant enclaves, *Henancun* is a homogeneous space for migrants from *Henan* province to dwell in Beijing. As I gradually know more about this place in my fieldwork, I learn that *Henancun* is organized by different recycling companies rather than migrants themselves. By leasing land directly from *Dongxiaokou* village committee,

these recycling companies further divide their leased land into 0.5-1 μ ¹¹ yards, which are further leased out to migrant recycling families to recycle one or two specific materials. Also, these companies also build housing sections with rows of one-story houses to house the workers and the itinerant/community recyclers, who recycle in the city during the daytime and only sleep in *Henancun* at night. Further, businesses other than recycling also emerge in this region to provide various social services for the migrant recyclers as well. Thus, rather than a mere residential enclave for *Henan* migrants, *Henancun*, regarding its overall cultural landscape, is more of a full-fledged recycling business center with fully self-institutionalized services on the fringe of Beijing.

To some extent, the term '*Henancun*' exists almost only in the literature (Fan and Taubmann, 2002; Gu and Liu, 2002) and the place is referred in this way to compare with the established "*Zhejiangcun*" on the south side of Beijing. But initially, in the 1980s, *Henan* migrants chose to live close to each other mostly because of the housing availability and the pursuing of a clustering effect for ease of transportation and commodity flow in recycling. In fact, it was not until the late 1990s when various service businesses started to emerge, and the so-called *Henancun* developed to be a self-sustainable migrant enclave. Also, while *Zhejiangcun* relied heavily on factories in *Zhejiang* province and *Zhejiang* migrants who operated and ran businesses for/with the factories, *Henancun* is not exclusively *Henan* migrants or *Henan* province related. Rather it was named so only because there are more *Henan* migrants in recycling, who preferred the clustering effect in its business model. Therefore, although I will continue using *Henancun* to refer to this place, its existence relies more on recycling than *Henan* migrants. In another word, the place will not disappear without *Henan* migrants; but it

¹¹ 1 μ =667m², which is about a space of 26m*26m, or 85ft*85ft.

will without recycling. And what I am trying to argue in the very beginning of this dissertation is that we need to focus on both "migrants" and "recycling" to fully understand *Henancun*. But in this research, I will keep using “*Henancun*” to refer to the recycling enclaves in Beijing.

Since most people in this *Henancun* worked at the *Datun Rd.* and *Wali Village* region before, which was the largest recycling center in Beijing, this place in *Dongxiaokou* village becomes the biggest recycling center in Beijing... again. In this dissertation, I will refer to this location as the *Dongxiaokou (DXK) Henancun*. As the largest recycling center in Beijing, *Dongxiaokou* has six different recycling companies whose leased lands are next to each other on the south side of the main road of *Dongxiaokou* village. Being empty around 2003 when migrants leased it, the land was directly beneath high-voltage electricity wires. All six companies divided their land into square recycling yards, which connected through North-South and East-West roads in between. Each north-south road has an opening on the north to connect to the main road as entrance to each company. The individual yard is further subleased to recycling families to recycle, sort and store one or two specific types of materials. Also, recycling companies also build residential sections next to the recycling yard section to house the itinerant and community recyclers, like Mr. Sun who directed me to this place. Some companies also run packaging businesses for certain materials as well. But the companies are the core of *Henancun* to organize recycling activities as well as recycling migrants in Beijing.

1.1.3 “Recycling is the Main Force of Environmental Protection.”



Figure 3: Photograph: “Recycling is the main force of environmental protection.”

Interestingly, on the wall at the entrance of all recycling companies are slogans written with red paint, in a similar fashion as the propaganda banners by the party, stating how important environmental protection is for urban development. While I thought the painting was organized by the local government, people in the company offices told me that they were all painted by the recycling companies to enhance their legitimate status in the city. Interestingly, almost every single one of my interview respondents has also presented similar statement during the interview about how their action reduces waste and the total trash volume for the city. However, I gradually realized that this statement was more from frustration than their pride in recycling.

After rounds and rounds of ice-breaking and familiarizing with various company managers, yard buyers and itinerant/community recyclers, they expressed their frustration that their location had been facing repetitive demolition and relocation in Beijing

although they believed what they were doing was for the environmental protection. Using Mr. Zhou's (Case 5 in Chapter 4) words, "I was invited by an NGO in Beijing to participate in a recycling conference in India last year [2011]. They called us environmental protection specialists and showed their respect to us and what we are doing in China. I was so honored there, which never happened to me before. But when I came back to Beijing, nobody cares about us at all although you see environmental protection banners everywhere in the city." Mrs. Wu (Case 6 in Chapter 4), as a board member for the *FYXY* recycling company, also indicated that the company painted all the cartoons and banners to promote environmental protection because "I need to let them [the government] know that what we are doing are protecting the environment, not anything illegal, here in the recycling company." As a Beijing government-designated recycling company in Beijing, *FYXY* company hosts tours for various environmental protection departments from different foreign countries, such as Japan, Sweden, and Germany. Mrs. Wu told us when she was talking with a Japanese environmental protection official, "he said someone like me would be awarded a medal in Japan [for doing recycling]. I don't want a medal, as long as I can have a stable space in Beijing, I am satisfied."

In Beijing, the total amount of trash (excluding kitchen waste, construction waste or recyclable materials) is 6,690,000 tons for the year of 2009, while in the same year, the total recycled materials weighed 4,400,000 tons, which is close to 40% of the total weight of residential waste (not including kitchen waste or construction waste)¹². As illustrated by China Resource Recycling Association, "trash is a mislocated 'resource,' and they

¹² Data from "Summary of Shanghai Residential Trash Sorting and Collection" 上海市生活垃圾分类收集概述. By Shanghai Institute for Design & Research on Environmental Engineering. 上海环境院.2012 huanke.com.cn/08/UserFiles/2012-8/31/2012831155710432.doc

should be carefully considered as a form of ‘urban mining.’¹³ While these ideas are well received by the government and residents, such as my classmates, why do recycling migrants and recycling companies have to “prove” what they are doing is something important and worthy? While a residential waste reduction rate of 40% by weight in 2009 by itself could well illustrate the contribution of recycling for the city, why is nearly no one in the city aware of their existence? With all these initial questions in my mind, interviews with recycling company managers/owners and the yard buyers in recycling companies have gradually helped me understand the history and social context that *Henancun* and its dwellers have been facing, bearing and dealing with in Beijing.

1.1.4 *Henancun*: Convenient Invisibility

The more I visit *Henancun* and interview its inhabitants, the more I realize that their invisibility in Beijing is not a coincidence. Rather, in the past 25-30 years, both rural-to-urban migrants and the recycling companies have been facing unfriendly social environment, stigmatized political policies and even nonnegotiable, if not brutal, demolition orders in Beijing. To make way for various projects such as infrastructure (such as ring road construction, subway development, highway construction), commodity housing projects, urban renewal projects or even global events (such as Beijing Asian Games in 1990 and Beijing Olympic Games in 2008), recycling companies and recycling migrants have been on the move, repetitively and continually, from inside the 3rd ring road in the early 1990s all the way to outside the 5th ring road in the mid-2000s. On top of the spatial instability, migrants also experienced brutal political and social policies, such

¹³ http://www.crra.org.cn/index.php?m=content&c=index&a=show1&catid=7&INAR_ID=19110

as *Shourong*¹⁴, till the early 2000s while the recycling companies faced and are still facing strict regulations from various local governments.

While *Henancun* is mostly organized by recycling companies, the willingness for migrants to choose to live inside recycling companies is related to the stigmatized and discriminatory social circumstances they were facing on the streets. Robert (1997) has described a typical situation when he compares the Chinese rural-to-urban migrants with the Mexico-to-U.S. immigrants, while the unskilled migrant labor is essential for the economy, migrants themselves are excluded from the society. While recycling migrants have faced serious threats from the *Shourong* policy in Beijing till around 2003, to some extent, an enclosed *Henancun* became a haven for them to carry on with their livelihood and businesses in Beijing. Further, while their access to social services is restricted by social and political policies and their everyday needs could be satisfied by self-institutionalized services inside *Henancun*, contacts with local urban residents or the “local” society became even unnecessary. Thus, the emergence of *Henancun* is almost the most important coping strategy migrants have taken in reacting to the unfriendly environment and seeking protection and security in Beijing.

In addition to migrants’ uncomfortable experiences in Beijing, recycling companies are facing no better circumstances in the city. After China’s market economy turn in the late 1970s, the dominant players of recycling business have gradually transferred from the state-owned recycling companies to migrant dominant recycling activities. As recycling is operated mostly through yard buyers as organized by the recycling companies, the local government takes a pathological interpretation and criticizes recycling activities for

¹⁴ *Shourong*: 收容 in Chinese, which literarily means “to take in.” I will address this policy in detail in Chapter 4 Section 4.2.5.

being “dirty, messy, backward¹⁵” in the city. Various government departments have long been criticizing recycling companies, and their operations for situations such as waste/trash is everywhere in the recycling yards, surrounding areas and along the transporting routes; yard buyers’ home is right next to the recyclable material pile in the yard which increases the potential threats from fire incidence; there are common practices such as burning rubber-covered wire, continuously running trucks and groups of random people waiting for jobs on the side of streets, and also recycling yards are always the most likely place for purchasing stolen items in the city.

As I have argued in the previous section that *Henancun* is more than a simple migrant enclave while the conveniently invisible situation is related to both its "migrant" characteristic and its "business" style. In other words, staying "invisible" on the one hand has helped migrants to avoid various unfriendly circumstances or discriminatory policies in the city, on the other hand, has helped *Henancun* and recycling companies to continue operating their recycling business in a conventionally accepted way which is viewed as "informal" or "dirty, messy and backward" from an urban management point of view. This dissertation will try to understand and scrutinize *Henancun* from two angles: the recycling migrants as well as the recycling companies.

1.2 Study Background

While keeping its economic growth at a two-digit level for nearly two decades since 1992, China sees over two hundred million of its rural-to-urban migrants facing discrimination and exclusion in its urban environment, regarding housing, job opportunities, education, or other basic entitlements. This is partially due to the *Hukou* policy, a.k.a. the household

¹⁵ Dirty, Messy and Backward (脏乱差) is a set term commonly associated with activities that do not fit the modern urban images.

registration system, which was set up in 1951 to monitor and restrict population mobility in China. *Hukou* system has registered all of China's population as either "urban" or "rural" status according to their hometown classification. After the population mobility control is lifted in the early 1980s, migrants with rural *Hukou* found that they are excluded from various urban social welfares such as education, job market, housing, and medical services. While there are only limited ways to change a *Hukou* status in China, most of these rural migrants cannot change their status to the urban *Hukou* in their migration destination. So, their movement is considered "temporary, " and they are also referred to as "floating population" in China.

In 2000, Chinese cities and towns were home to approximately 144.4 million migrants, including 73.9 million people who had moved away from their home counties (NBS 2000a). Beijing, as China's capital city and one of the country's economic centers, has become an important migration destination for rural-to-urban migration. Between 1985 and 2013, Beijing's permanent population¹⁶ has increased from 9,603,000 to 21,148,000 while its household registered population rose from 9,579,000 to 13,163,400 (China Yearly Provincial Macroeconomy Statistics, China Data Center), which means Beijing has witnessed a sharp increase of "floating population" (Beijing's permanent population under a migratory status) from 0.25% to 37.76% in a short time span of 28 years (1985-2013, see Figure 4).

¹⁶ Permanent population means people who have lived in Beijing for over six months.

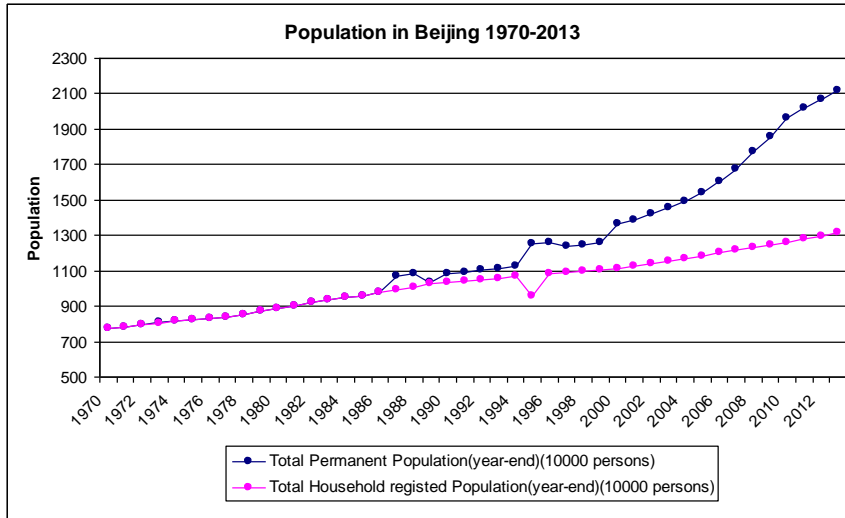


Figure 4: Chart: Beijing's population growth (1970-2012) China Data Center

During the massive Chinese internal rural-urban migration since 1978, the dichotomized household registration (*Hukou*) structure has constituted an overarching factor explaining migrants' trajectories in the urban context. Researchers have observed that the rural migrants are associated with subordinate political, economic, and social status in the urban environment (Chan, 1996; Fan, 2002; Meng, 2001; Roberts, 1997; Wang and Zuo, 1999; Shen, 2002; Wu and Li, 2005). At present, China still sees over two hundred million rural–urban migrants facing discrimination and exclusion in its urban environment, whether regarding housing, job opportunities, education, or other basic entitlement (Chan, 1996; Fan, 2002; Shen, 2002; Ding, 2001). Beijing, as China's capital city and one of the country's economic centers, has become an important migration destination for rural-urban migrants. In 2012, eight million (38.1%) of the 21 million Beijing residents are non-*Hukou* residents (CNBS, 2013), many of whom have become part of the “floating population” in China (Chan, 1996). The *Hukou* division has also led to divided job markets (Chan, 1996; Solinger, 1999; Fan, 2002). In 2006, about 168 million—mainly rural migrants—of the 283 million total urban labor were in the informal

economic sector (Hu and Zhao, 2006), which are primarily in the subordinate economic sectors, such as car washing, community security, nannies, recycling or trash transportation. Due to the relatively lower economic status, most migrants live on the fringe of Beijing seeking affordable housing such as rental housing or business dorms (Zheng *et al.* 2009). In 2008, the 867 urban villages in Beijing Metropolitan Area had played a "prominent role in the provision of housing in Beijing (Zheng *et al.* 2009:428)."

Later, various migrant enclaves started to emerge based on migrants' hometowns and their associated jobs in Beijing. Urban villages have become significant ethnic enclaves for migrants sharing the same hometown. Many of such ethnic enclaves are in Beijing such as *Zhejiangcun*, *Xinjiangcun*, *corporations*, *Fujiancun* and *Henancun* (Gu and Liu, 2002; Ma and Xiang, 1998; Xiang, 2005; Fan and Taubmann, 2002; Jeong, 2000).

Henancun, viewed as one of the ethnic enclaves in Beijing, is associated specifically with the recycling business. And they did not emerge until the late 1980s when *Henan* migrants in Beijing sought to subcontract recycling jobs from local business runners. The recycling activities had a low skill requirement and served as an important market niche for migrants, who have little education and limited skill set, to earn a living in Beijing. With migrants' hard work and the increasing labor demand during the rapid economic development in Beijing, *Henan* migrants survived and dominated the recycling business. Gradually, various recycling companies started to emerge and set up their recycling yard-buyer based enclaves, which later are referred to as *Henan* enclaves, a.k.a. *Henancun*.

Henan recycling enclaves also started to self-institutionalize with various social services and facilities. In fact, the recycling business and the *Henan* enclaves have turned *Henan* migrants' "blind" migration into a "path-specific" one and developed quite a distinct

connection between *Henan* province (*Gushi* County specifically) and recycling business in Beijing. Despite facing economically, politically and socially unfriendly and stigmatizing circumstances, *Henan* migrants have carved out space for themselves with job opportunities and supporting networks in the city.

Meanwhile, when chain migration formed between *Henan* and Beijing through the recycling business, a seemingly stable *Henancun* have still been facing serious challenges in Beijing. In most countries, formal or informal recycling activities have been treated or are encouraged to be addressed as part of the Solid Waste Management (SWM) program so to promote material recovery from waste (Wilson *et al.*, 2009; Velis *et al.*, 2012); however, China has a parallel system for SWM and recycling under two different ministries. While SWM is under Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development, Ministry of Commerce oversees the recycling companies and activities because recyclables were treated as resources instead of waste in the Maoist era. In another word, recycling has been treated as an economic activity instead of a type of service to reduce the amount of solid waste in Chinese cities. Comparing with other high-tech or international corporations that Ministry of Commerce oversees, the recycling activities and companies, do not represent the “modern” image of China’s economic development, which put these activities as a burden instead of a glory for the ministry. Furthermore, since recycling companies need a lot of open space for truck running, loading, unloading, storage and sorting, urban fringe becomes an ideal location due to their low land value and close location to the central city, where recyclables are produced. However, under the Chinese land system, when most recycling companies leased the land from the local village government, the contract already states that the contract will automatically

become invalid facing development orders from upper-level governments. Unfortunately, due to their adjacency to the city, these places also happen to be the place to produce the highest potential profit through redevelopment by the state. Therefore, the recycling enclaves have been facing serious threat of being demolished for urban renewal (with compensation) and the companies would have to find another location to continue their business. Throughout the past 25 years, *Henancun* has been constantly changing its location and these migrant-run recycling companies and enclaves have always been ready to move since every first day they arrive at a new location.

Therefore, the continuation of chain migration from the rural home to Beijing, the flourishing recycling business under China's massive economic development and the instability of *Henancun*'s spatiality have introduced a thriving but complicated situation for the migrant recyclers and their enclaves in Beijing. Throughout the years, recycling enclaves (*Henancun*) have developed quietly and peacefully while the locals are not even aware of their existence comparing with other migrant enclaves whose service is more enticing to Beijing residents' interests. However, this seemingly peaceful equilibrium is only achieved through migrants' sacrifice from different aspects: their economically disadvantaged hometowns, socially disadvantaged skill sets, politically impotent status and geographically excluded position in Beijing. While the recycling business and *Henancun*'s unstable condition start to become widely accepted in Beijing, it is time to reexamine the history and spatial trajectory of *Henancun* to fully understand what structural and institutional barriers have shaped the enclave to become the way it appears today and how migrant recyclers and recycling companies cope with the various structural and institutional barriers in Beijing.

1.2.1 Introduction of *Henancun*

“*Henancun*,” a.k.a. *Henan* migrant enclave, started around the late-1980s when *Henan* rural migrants found a market niche of recycling in Beijing that not only fit their limited skill sets but also provided sufficient income to sustain their migration in Beijing. As Beijing witnessed massive economic development in the past 25 years, the recycling business grew accordingly. However, aside from their growing economic gains, *Henancun* still stays nearly invisible in the society. Meanwhile, *Henancun* and its dwelling migrants have experienced repetitive demolition, relocation, reorganizing and reopening from the centrally located places towards the fringe of Beijing.

Today, on any street of Beijing, following almost any tricycle with loads of reusable materials on board, we would arrive at one *Henancun* location when signs appear along the road showing “*Gushi* restaurant,” “*Gushi E’kuai* (goose nuggets),” and “*Gushi*--Beijing bus lines.” They locate close to the main traffic road but are usually not visible from the road. In *Henancun*, various service stores, run mostly by rural migrant, are along the street, providing almost everything that is needed to sustain livelihood for a family, for example, grocery stores, general stores, restaurants, hotels, bathing facilities, barbershop, primary schools, middle schools and even an afternoon street market which sells groceries and clothes which are leftovers from a morning street market in the city. Behind the stores along the street are various recycling markets, which host different family yard buyers in square yards specializing in specific recyclable materials, for example, metal, plastic, foam, and paper. On the side of these recycling markets also located rental houses, which dwell mostly the recycling workers and the itinerant and community recyclers.

A typical day of *Henancun* started around dawn when itinerant recyclers start to wake up and head to the city. During the daytime, buyers in the market yards, together with his/her hired workers, start around 7:30 am to manually sort their materials into different piles and sell them when reaching a truckload to clear the yard. After a short break and when their kids come back from school around dusk, all kinds of recyclable materials start to flow in with itinerant and community recyclers' bicycles/tricycles/trucks from the city till around midnight depending on the season. In *Henancun*, itinerant and community recyclers and yard buyers work seven days a week except for heavy rainfall or snow situations (also heavy wind for paper recycling) or government's regulations on transportation for events, such as 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. *Henancun* is self-sustainable regarding everyday necessities and social services. At the same time, although invisible to the city, *Henancun* is well connected (1) to the city by the tens of thousands of itinerant and community recyclers and (2) to migrants' hometowns through multiple everyday bus lines and various services featuring their hometown styles. Within the past 25-30 years, *Henancun* and its recycling business have developed a well-organized business structure and material flow system as illustrated in Figure 5, which shows that *Henancun* functions similarly as a "black box" in connecting Beijing's recyclable material producers with factories that use the materials as their raw materials. The reason for comparing *Henancun* with a black box is first due to its invisibility to the broad society and second because of its mythical function to turn the mixed trash/wastes/recyclables into sorted/ordered raw materials again. Rather than the transparent and visible process of shipping items from factories to retailers and

distributing items through retailing, the reversed flow remains unknown as well as where it happens, how it happens, who processes it, or even why it happens the way it does. Not so surprisingly, inside this black box contains a well-organized, hierarchical recycling structure. Recyclers, including community recyclers, selective itinerant buyers, yard buyers, packaging companies and even used markets, make possible the recycling process in Beijing. *Henancun* at various locations in Beijing is where these recycling activities happen every day and night, and they serve as the home for most migrants who work in the recycling business.

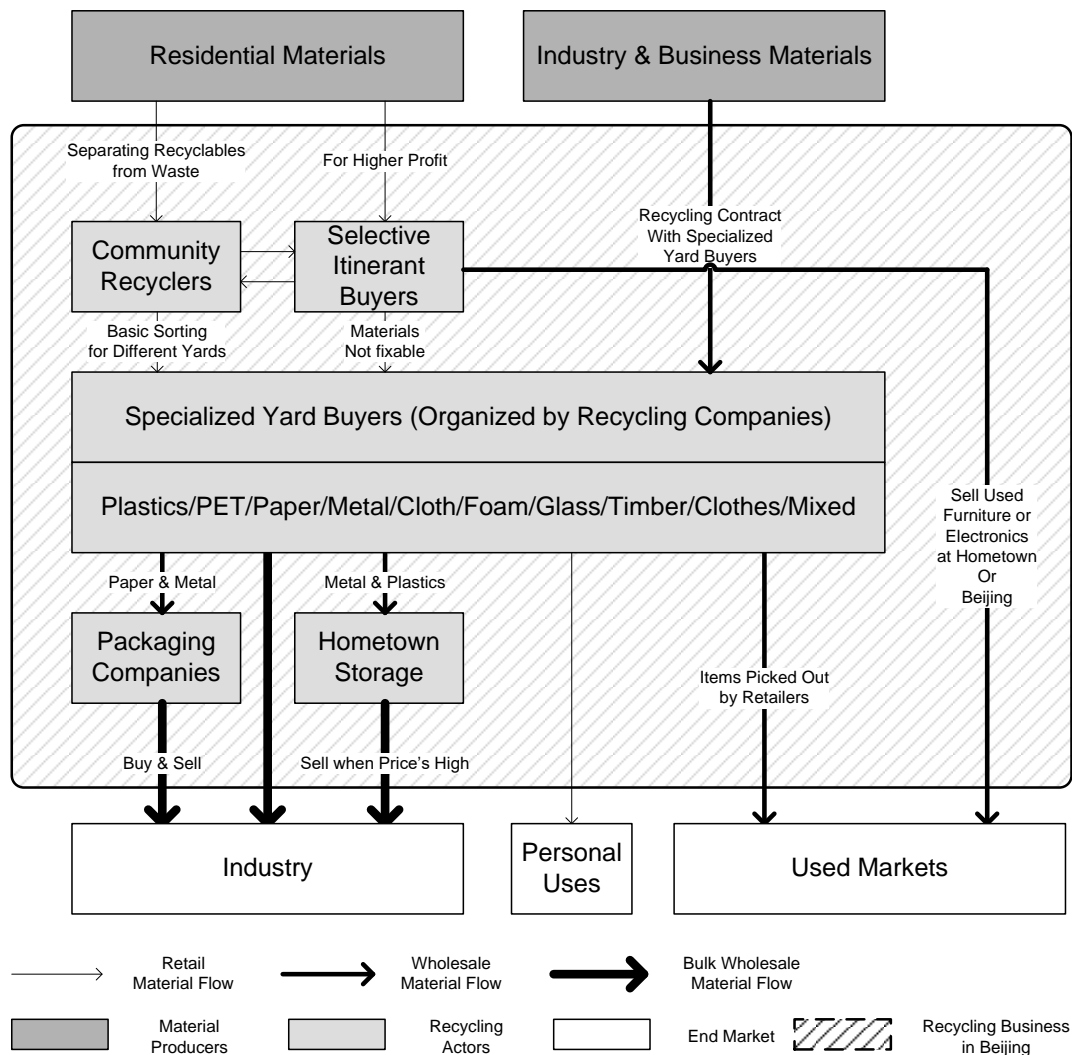


Figure 5: Chart: Recycling business structure in Beijing

1.2.2 Statement of Problems

Recorded as one of the migrant enclaves in Beijing that have existed since the late 1980s, the history and developing process, inner structure, the structural/institutional barriers and the coping strategies taken by migrants and recycling companies of *Henancun* has not been well studied. Based on my exploratory fieldwork in *Henancun*, this dissertation research is trying to understand the role of *Henancun* by embedding *Henancun* within a broader social, economic and political context of Beijing's not so friendly social circumstance, rapid economic development and changing political policies to further the understanding of three problems as follows.

First, despite *Henancun*'s long existence in Beijing, researchers have been treating it indifferently as other ethnic enclaves as a residential cluster on the fringe of Beijing. However, as I have stated earlier, *Henancun* has an intriguing history in Beijing since it not only replaced the conventional state-owned recycling companies to become the dominant recycling force and thrived together with Beijing's rapid economic development, it has also been facing repetitive demolition and relocation events to give way to various urban development projects. While the demolition and relocation have become a social context for *Henancun* and its dwellers, the processes, and impacts of it are still nearly unknown to both residents and the academics. Secondly, while *Henancun* is treated indifferently among the migrant enclaves, its association with the informal recycling business has added additional weight to the burden, it is bearing in the city. Specifically, what economic, social and/or political forces *Henancun* is facing in Beijing as structural or institutional barriers are still yet to be studied. policy, *Henancun* and its dwellers face much more complex social, political and economic barriers than the

overarching constraint from the *Hukou* policy in the city. Last but not least, while the literature has well recorded that rural migrants are living and working in a subordinate condition in Chinese cities, there are not as many studies on migrants' strategies in coping with the circumstances where they are living. In fact, while migrants from different hometowns or with different background are facing entirely different structural and institutional barriers, the coping strategies of *Henancun* dwellers are quite unique. Specifically, for *Henancun* and migrant recyclers, their coping strategies, including the formal and informal ways, with the structural and institutional barriers are not well documented or examined.

Therefore, based on the statements of these three yet-to-be-studied problems, this dissertation will answer the following research questions to understand the developing history of *Henancun*, the economic, social and political context that shapes the development of *Henancun*, and the strategies migrants and recycling companies take to cope with these circumstances in Beijing.

1.2.3 Research Questions

This dissertation uses *Henancun* in Beijing, China as a case study to examine what kind of physical and sociopolitical spaces *Henan* migrants have carved out for themselves in the city of Beijing and the role of *Henancun* and the nature of the informal recycling business in recycling migrants' livelihood. And, how does this reflect, on the one hand, the importance of recycling as a business in the city and, on the other hand, both the economic clout that some *Henan* migrants have gained and the continued social marginalization and political marginalization of *Henan* migrants overall? This

dissertation focuses on the following three sub-questions to investigate the above-mentioned research questions.

Question 1: *What are Henancun's historical development and spatial trajectories? How does migrants' experience in Beijing affect their business and income?*

Question 2: *What are the structural constraints faced by Henancun and its dwellers?*

Question 3: *What are the coping strategies of Henancun and its dwellers in coping with its marginalized and stigmatized status?*

The first question of my dissertation will examine *Henancun's* developing history and spatial trajectory in Beijing through the following five aspects. First, this research studies the recycling business in Beijing to understand how it has served as a market niche and opportunity for *Henan* migrants. Secondly, this study examines the development of the recycling business structure. Third, this research investigates the dual identity of *Henanun* of its association with "migrants" and "informal business." Fourth, I examine the informal and unstable status of *Henancun's* business space in Beijing. Finally, I investigate *Henancun's* development history and spatial trajectory in the past 25 years in Beijing. In the literature, *Henancun* has not attracted much attention and various researchers have been referring to *Henancun* simply as one of the migrant enclaves in Beijing (Gu and Liu, 2002; Ma and Xiang, 1998; Xiang, 2005; Fan and Taubmann, 2002). Also, the structure of the recycling business in Beijing recorded in different research projects (Furedy, 1993; Shi and Furedy, 1993) needs to be updated since migrants have taken over the recycling business in Beijing. Further, while the literature has recorded the static distribution pattern of various migrant enclaves in Beijing, the mobile spatial trajectory associated with *Henancun* is also largely missing. Thus, the first research

question sets a stage for opening more discussions in the following chapters to explain the role that *Henancun* play in migrants' experiences of their migrant livelihood and business in Beijing.

While the first question focuses on a descriptive history of *Henancun*, the second research question examines the structural and institutional barriers faced by *Henancun*, in terms of both the recycling migrants and recycling companies in *Henancun*. I first explore the sources of structural barriers faced by *Henancun* and an inherent upward mobile ladder in the recycling business. Then I investigate the structural barriers that are associated with *Henancun* dwellers' migrant identity and recycling business' status in Beijing. In the Chinese migration and urbanization study literature, various researchers have studied *Hukou*'s overarching effect in shaping migrants' livelihood in Beijing (Chan, 1994a, 1994b, 1996; Fan, 2001, 2002; Garcia, 2004; Ma and Fan, 1994; Meng, 2001; Shen, 2002) in terms of the *Hukou* restriction on migrants' access to various social welfare and facilities in the city. However, while *Hukou* has gradually transferred from a socio-political policy to control migration to a social and political context that defines various social, political and economic accessibilities for migrants, an overarching *Hukou* effect has gradually dissipated. Rather, the *Hukou* related social, political and economic constraints have become the key factors in migrants' livelihood and businesses. Also, internal migration studies also tend to focus mostly on the "migrant" identity miss the importance of their job type or job style as a factor in determining migrants' livelihood. This dissertation tries to understand the sources of structural barriers through these two different angles to challenge the conventional view on *Henancun* simply as a

consolidated migrant enclave rather than a complex space influenced by both migrants' temporary identity and recycling's informality in the city.

Further, the third research question follows the previous one to tackle the question of how migrants and recycling companies cope with the structural barriers they are facing in Beijing. Since most Chinese migrant studies are based on questionnaires or secondary survey data, coping strategies are usually not the main topic in these studies. But various coping strategies are discussed in these studies for activities such as building social networks, buying houses in hometowns, sending money back to their families, return migration and/or temporary stay in their migration (Shen, 2002; Wang *et al.* 2009; Xiang, 2005; Zhang *et al.* 2003b; Zheng *et al.* 2009). In various countries, economic activities in slum conditions have been witnessed to be closely associated with the informal sector, which accommodates those excluded from the mainstream economy (Bourgois 2002; Lewis, 1961; Murphy, 2015; Shen 2002; Venkatesh 2006, 2008). These informal, either legal or illegal, activities have extensively supported and sustained migrants' livelihood, and these informal activities typically connect to the formal sectors as well, such as in the cases of electricity service and car wash (Neuwirth 2005). Moreover, institutionalization within the slums, such as ethnic stores and churches, helps to sustain slums and slum dwellers (Massey 1985), whereas social networks enable them to engage informal economic activities (Lomnitz 1977; Neuwirth 2005). While recycling business in Beijing has been viewed as informal for both its migrant status and recycling companies' awkward position, this research will answer this third research question through two angles: the migrants in *Henancun* and the recycling companies who organize and operate *Henancun*. Detailed coping strategies from each party show the adoption of both formal

and informal strategies they take to survive in the harsh social circumstances based on the previously shown structural barriers.

Through these three sub questions, this dissertation examines the history and spatial trajectory of the “invisible” *Henancun* and the interaction between the structural barriers and migrants’ and recycling companies’ coping strategies in Beijing. This research not only tends to build a thorough understanding of *Henancun*’s struggle with its spatiality in Beijing but also challenges the conventional migrant studies’ focus on migrants’ *Hukou* based subordinate status in Beijing by understanding the emergence and developing processes of *Henancun* through the interaction between structural barriers and *Henancun*’s coping strategies.

1.3 Study Areas

Beijing, as China’s capital city, is home to 7.045 million rural migrants¹⁷ (with an average yearly increase of 447 thousand from 2000 to 2010) in 2010 (BMBS 2010).

Many rural migrants either choose to or are forced to stay in their hometown-based migrant enclaves and use contract work and informal sector to support their migration in Beijing (Ma and Xiang 1998). The People’s Daily (09/09/2005) noted that “according to Beijing’s Municipal Committee of City Planning and Management, Beijing now [in 2005] has 346 ‘villages inside cities,’ with ‘villagers’ exceeding 1.5 million, including 990,000 from outside Beijing.” Further, the latter part of the article states that due to the plan, “Beijing will demolish 171 such villages by 2008 to greet the Beijing Olympic Games. By 2010, 232 will be cleared.” Facing various city-level projects such as Asian Games, Beijing Olympic Games, the ring road construction, commodity housing development,

¹⁷ Rural migrants here mean migrants whose household registration is their hometown and their status in Beijing is considered temporary.

subway construction and various urban renewal projects, these urban villages, serving as important migrant enclave locations, are usually demolished, redeveloped, or at least covered up by building a concrete wall to hide their “inappropriate” appearance in modern Beijing. However, while enclaves and villages were demolished, migrants cannot be removed in the same way. *Henan* migrants have been suffering from various demolition cases in Beijing. While *Henancun* is mostly located on the fringe of Beijing to serve their yard-buyer based recycling market model, their space is very enticing to various urban development projects due to *Henancun*’s low construction density, “informal” business status and their association with potential safety risks and stealing activities in the city.

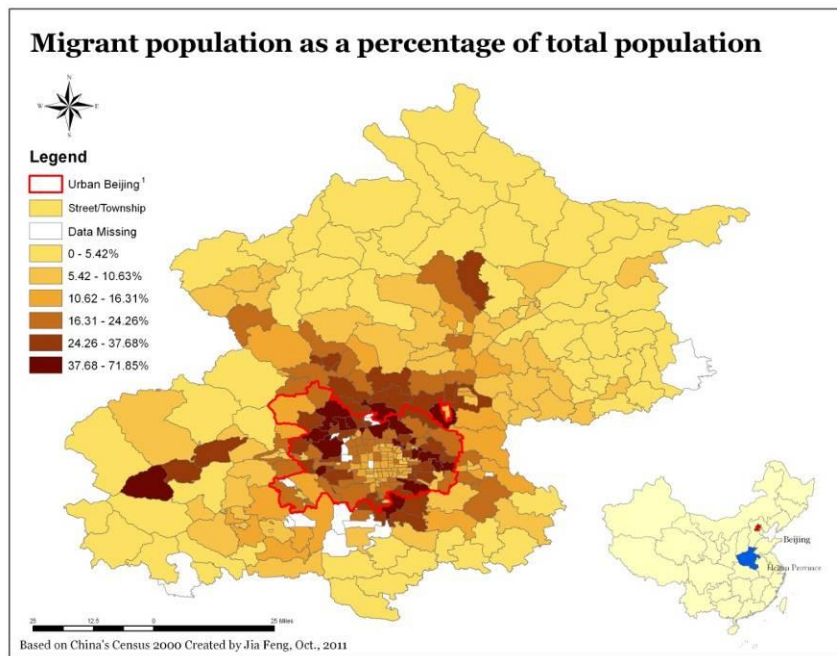


Figure 6: Map: Migrants are not evenly distributed in Beijing¹⁸, while suburb areas become important migrant settlements in Beijing.

¹⁸ Urban Beijing refers to the inner-city districts and inner suburban districts (*Dongcheng, Xicheng, Xuanwu, Chongwen, Chaoyang, Haidian, Fengtai, and Shijingshan*) within an administrative boundary set by the Beijing municipal government.

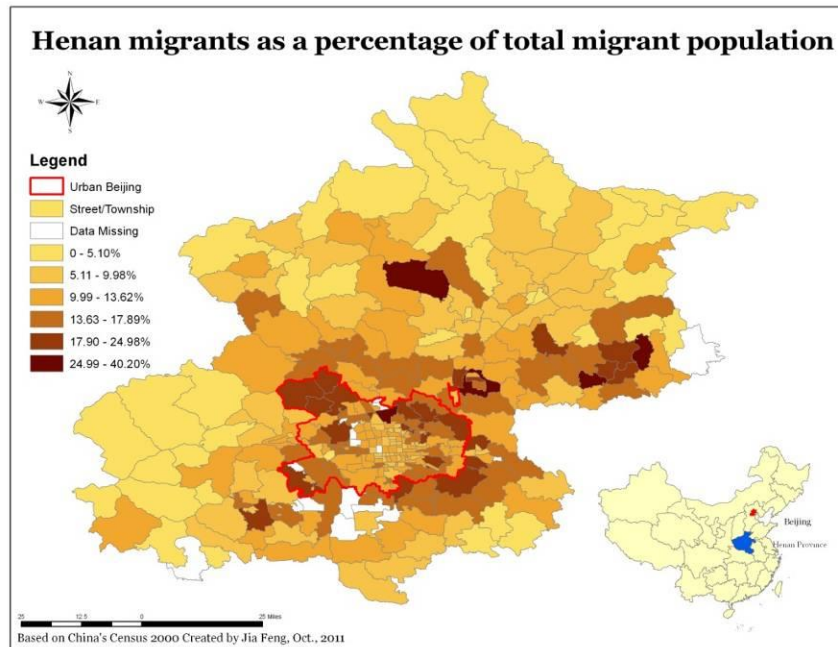


Figure 7: Map: *Henan* migrants are not evenly distributed among migrants in Beijing. *Henan* migrant enclaves are found in suburbs of Beijing. (Based on 2000 Census data, made by Jia Feng)

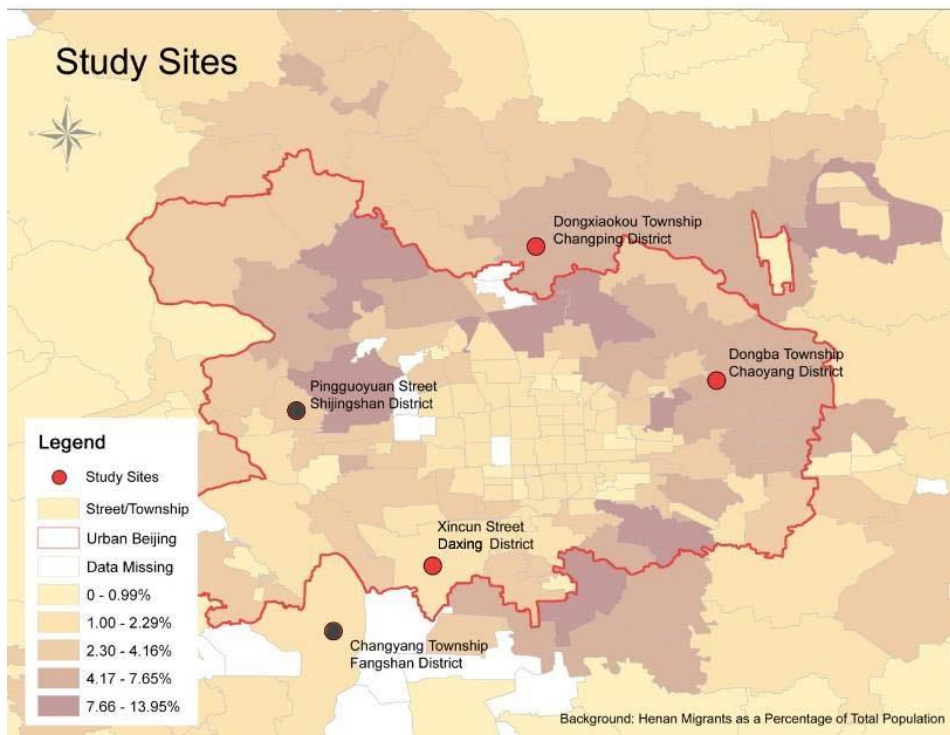


Figure 8: Map: *Henancun* sites in my dissertation fieldwork

The locations of *Henancun* are referred by government officials, recycling company owners and officials from *Gushi* County of *Henan* province. After visiting various *Henancun* of different sizes, I decided to choose three locations in this dissertation study based on their accessibility (by walk, bus and taxi), relative size (large size provides wide coverage to represent the population), popularity (more popular *Henancun* has a potentially richer history), and history (*Henancun* with a longer history makes possible of retrospective surveys and interviews). Thus, this study focuses on three existing sites of *Henancun* in *Changping*, *Chaoyang*, and *Daxing/Fengtai* districts of Beijing (Figure 8). The three existing *Henancun* sites are spatially scattered, which fulfills a wider geographical coverage of *Henancun* in Beijing and previously visited to ensure their existence for fieldwork.

All three existing *Henancun* localities are major concentrations of the recycling companies mostly run by rural-to-urban migrants. These *Henancun* communities are organized by recycling companies which generally lease land that is from 50 to 150 mu¹⁹ to host from 200 and over 1500 migrant recyclers. All three *Henan* enclaves are located close to the fifth ring road of Beijing. Although these three locations serve Beijing through their recycling business, their coverage does not overlap in general. However, because different districts in Beijing have their own regulations on the recycling business, migrant recyclers also take all of them as well as other smaller recycling centers as possible trading posts. When *Henancun* faces examinations from their district or township government, it is possible for them to completely close for a certain period of time. During this period, other *Henancun* would become migrant recyclers' temporary trading locations.

¹⁹ 1 mu=666 square meters.

The *Changping Henancun (DXK)* is home for many recycling migrants relocated from the *Datun Rd.* and *Wali Village* which was reserved for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games since 2003 and it was during the negotiation process for demolition in 2011 when I visited it. While recycling yard buyers in *DXK* focus on residential materials, the *Chaoyang Henancun (PC)* represents a slightly different type of business because it locates much farther from the central city than *DXK* and many yard buyers in *PC* have contracts with various factories, business or construction sites to secure their material inflow. I also choose *Daxing Henancun (DXFT)* because the *Daxing* district tightens up its control of recycling business due to a fire incidence in a garment market in April 2011 and they have been facing a threat from being demolished since then. But *DXFT Henancun* serves similar functions as *DXK Henancun* and recycles mostly residential materials from the city.

1.4 Research Framework, Methodology, and Methods

1.4.1 Conceptual Framework

This dissertation research takes Chinese internal migration and urbanization studies as the research context, uses *Henancun (Henan migrant enclave)* as my study focus and raises the research questions concerning what kind of physical and sociopolitical spaces *Henan* migrants have carved out for themselves in the city of Beijing, the role of *Henancun* and the nature of the informal recycling businesses in recycling migrants' livelihood and in addition, how recycling remains as an important business in the city while recycling enclaves remain socially and political marginalized. I examine three topics to answer the research questions posted here. (1) *Henancun's* developing history and spatial trajectories; (2) the structural constraints faced by *Henancun* and its dwellers; (3) coping strategies

from recycling migrants and recycling companies to deal with the structural constraints examined in the second question. Figure 9 has illustrated the theoretical framework of my dissertation research.

While I have challenged the previous understanding of *Henancun* as solely a migrant enclave through my fieldwork in Beijing, this study further examines *Henancun*'s dual identity as both migrant and recycling enclaves in Beijing. I embed this research under the framework of the migration theory (ecological theory in the U.S.), economic sociology (enclave development and ethnic economy), marginality studies (informality, stigmatization and marginality) and Chinese internal migration and urbanization processes to make sense of the history and spatial trajectory of *Henancun* in Beijing, the structural and institutional barriers in front of the recycling migrants and recycling companies and further the coping strategies migrants and recycling companies take to deal with the stigmatized and unfriendly circumstances.

While these theories intertwine with each other regarding their perspectives on understanding international immigrants in their migration destination society, the theoretical stage was embedded in a capitalist society, where “capital” has a dominant role in understanding migrant activities and proposing conceptual understandings. In the *Henancun* case, China's socio-political structure—Socialism with Chinese Characteristics—has set a different socio-political context other than a capitalist society. With China's planned economy background and high society control on internal migration before the late 1970s, structural forces, such as *Hukou* and *Hukou*-based restrictions on accessibility to various social facilities and services, have a strong influence in the society. Thus, capital's role is in a relatively weaker position in Chinese

society than in their capitalist counterpart, and in fact, China's structural forces have set boundaries on capital's capability in everyone and every company's economic, social and political activities in China. Therefore, my dissertation research is based on the previously mentioned theories, but they will be within the Chinese context. Economic power is no longer the primary indicator as to understand the recycling migrants or recycling companies' activities, rather the structural barriers and the coping strategies are embedded in China's socio-political context.

Although China's sociopolitical structure has introduced various social, political and economic challenges in the society, it is rooted deeply in China's historical and political context and has defined China's sociopolitical environment over an extended period. While this research is not interested in directly challenging or criticizing China's socio-political structure, I will treat the structural forces as a social and political context in my analyses and arguments. At the end of this dissertation research, I would like to show the complex internal structure of *Henancun* and the recycling business in Beijing, and the imbalanced state vs. society relationship that is embedded in China's top-down vs. bottom-up urbanization process through examining *Henancun's* repetitive demolition and relocation history. This research will further the discussions on the institutional barriers to show the double exploitation—migrant identity and business identity—*Henancun* and its dwellers are facing in the city as well. Also, I would like to argue for a new urban space in the making that associates with the urban fragmentation in Beijing where *Henancun* represents one important *part of the residential segregation*. Last but not least, this research is to further challenge the pathological view by the government of *Henancun's* rough condition and argues that the informal activities and informality of

recycling migrants and recycling companies are not inherent with *Henancun* while it is the exact result of the harsh government policy against informality in the city.

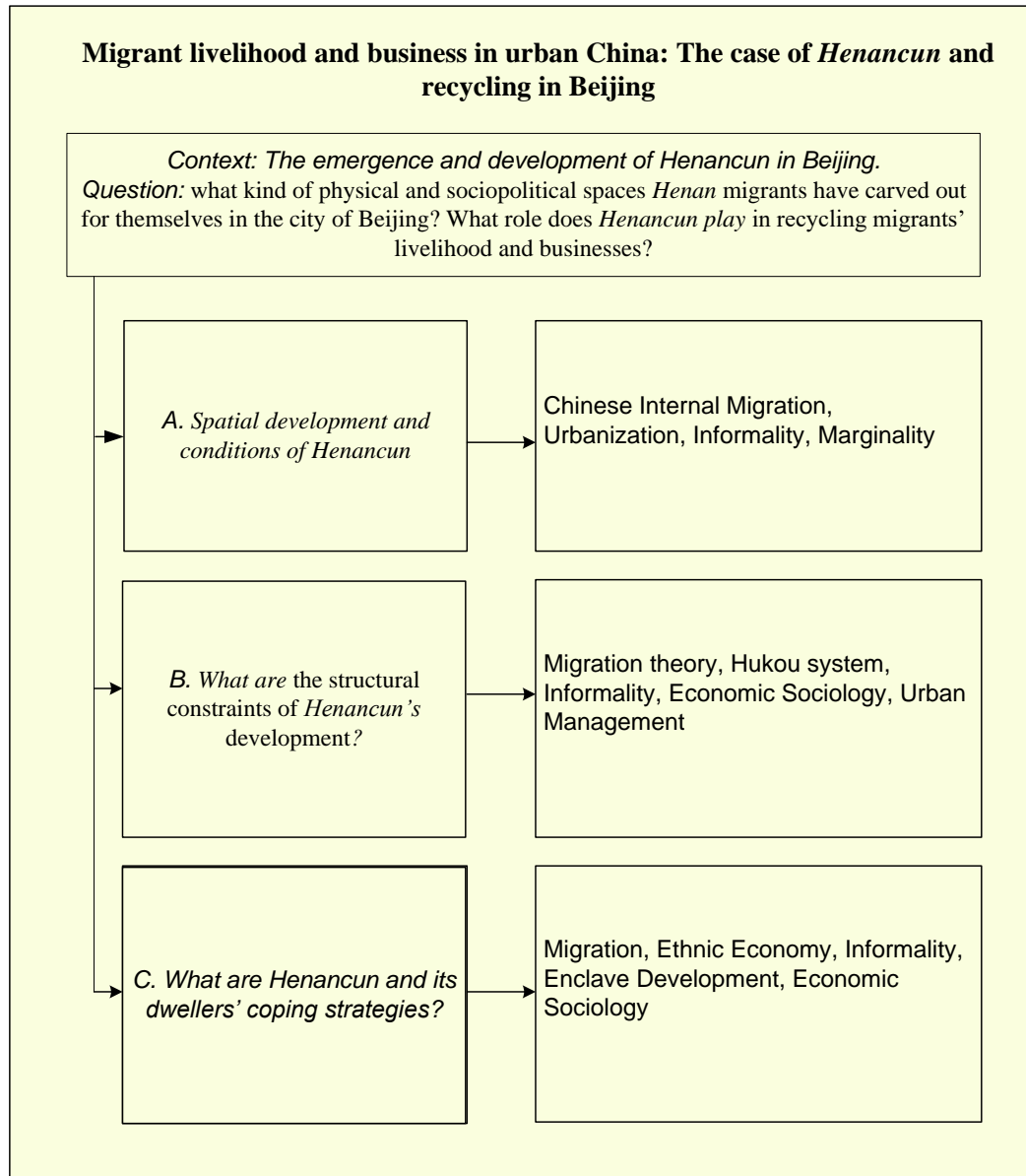


Figure 9: Chart: Research Framework

1.4.2 Methods and Methodology

Research methods in this dissertation rest on a combination of both quantitative and qualitative methods including unstructured and semi-structured interviews, questionnaires, close observations and using archive data as a secondary data source for policy

examination in Beijing. While first-hand data could provide the most direct information in research, carrying out interviews, questionnaires and observations face series of obstacles in China, with a group facing stigmatization and discrimination in the society.

1.4.2.1 Research Methods

This dissertation research on *Henancun* started in 2009 when I carried out my first visit to the *Dongxiaokou* area in North Beijing, which has been the largest recycling center to recycle and sort the residential recyclable materials in Beijing. Because of the high denial rate to my interview requests in *Henancun*, I decided to visit migrants' hometown preparing for ice breaking in my dissertation interviews. Since over 70% of the rural migrants in *Henancun* are from *Gushi* county, *Henan* province (which is also the reason for them to have the name of *Henancun*), I spent one month in summer 2010 in *Gushi* County and visited the county center as well as three key townships (*Hongbu*, *Lidian*, *Jiangji*), which were hometowns to most of the recycling migrants in Beijing. I paid another short visit to *Henancun* in Beijing in 2011 to confirm that my fieldwork sites are still intact before I carried out my dissertation fieldwork in three *Henancun* locations between August 2012 and February 2013.

In total, this research collected 304 valid questionnaires (320 in total and 15 testing ones) with help from 10 local college students in the three recycling sites in early January 2013. After visiting the three existing *Henancun* and sketching the building structure of *Henancun*, I used a proportionally stratified sampling method to determine the general sample size for each *Henancun* with a total sample of $n = 300$ (Two relatively small recycling companies in *DXFT* and *PC*; six recycling companies in *DXK*). In practice, the execution plan is based on a systematic sampling with replacement plan (SRS) to

interview every other recycling yard and every other residential house in each alley in the three recycling enclaves. On average (slightly different among yards recycling different types of materials), I have the estimation that each recycling yard has five to eight recycling persons (owners, workers or someone who come to recycle), surveying one person in every other yard ensures a sampling rate of close to 6-10% of the total population in our analysis. Because of the high denial rate in this research, a “simple random sampling with replacement (SRS) plan” was not appropriate because it might lead to a tendency of relying on a biased “friendly” sample as ten individual researchers choose interviewees based on their judgment. Thus, a structured method is suitable for carrying out the survey to ensure our sampling is representative and random. The questionnaires are taken between 8 am and 8 pm in a three-day period in January 2013. While the recycling enclaves are not accessible by bus after dark, considering the commuting time for the questionnaire takers, we only conducted the survey till 8 pm.

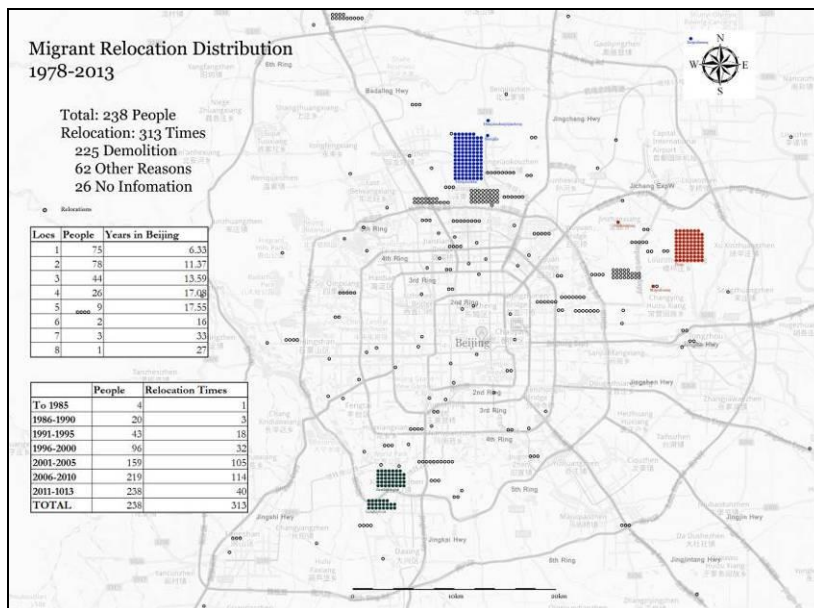


Figure 10: Chart: Locations migrants have previously stayed in Beijing (in black circles)²⁰

²⁰ See Appendix F. Q3.7

In addition to the systematic sampling scheme, the highly mobile nature of the recycling migrants also ensures that the three sites provide representative responses to the questionnaires for the recycling migrants in Beijing. Figure 10 illustrates that the 238 valid responses with detailed relocation information in the survey records have previously stayed at a total of 111 locations (6 inside second ring road; 11 between second and third ring roads; 15 between 3rd and 4th ring roads; 32 between fourth and fifth ring roads; 47 outside the fifth ring road). While the questionnaires were conducted in these three existing *Henancun* in Beijing, questionnaire participants cover a broad range of the recycling migrants that have previously stayed in various locations across Beijing. The highly mobile nature of the *Henancun* dwellers has further ensured the randomization and representation of our sample for the overall population of recycling migrants in Beijing.

Table 1: Composition of questionnaire participants

Total		304
Sex	Male	198
	Female	106
Location	PC	72
	DXFT	111
	DXK	121
Primary Job	Construction	2
	Fixing Window	1
	Iron Worker	1
	Kindergarten Teacher	1
	Recycling	294
	Sales	1
	Taxi Driver	1
	Truck Loader	3
Recyclers	Community Recyclers	4
	Market Yard Buyers	144
	Itinerant Recyclers	62
	Recycling Workers	84

Table 1: (cont'd)

Marital Status	Married	289
	Single	13
	Divorced	2
Age	<=20	2
	21-30	45
	31-40	75
	41-50	115
	51-60	50
	61-70	15
	>70	2
Years in Beijing	0-9	128
	10-19	122
	20-29	46
	30-39	7
	>40	1
Education	None	41
	Primary School	133
	Middle School	101
	High School	25
	Professional High School	2
	Professional College	2

Table 1 shows the composition of the questionnaire participants in this dissertation²¹.

Among the total of 304 respondents, there are 198 male and 106 female participants because men represent most of the recycling workforce, and unmarried women are very rare in the recycling workforce (1 in 106 women is single while 12 in 198 males are single). We also have 72 respondents from *PC*, 111 respondents from *DXFT* and 121 respondents from *DXK* which agrees with our observation that *DXK* is the largest recycling enclave among the three while *PC* is smallest. Among all the 304 questionnaire respondents, 294 indicate that their primary job is recycling, including 62 as itinerant recyclers, four as community recyclers, 144 as market yard buyers and 84

²¹ See Appendix F for detailed questions and variable codes: Sex: SEX; Location: LOCATE; Primary Job: Q1.5 PRIMEJOB; Recyclers's Type of Recycling: Q1.5.1 TYPERCY; Marital Status: Q3.3 MARRY; AGE: Q3.1 YBORN; Years in Beijing: Q1.1 FYINBJ; Education: Q3.2 EDU.

recycling workers. The composition is also compatible with our observation in that community recyclers choose to live outside *Henancun* in seeking for better living conditions because they do not need space to store their recyclable materials while the itinerant recyclers normally live inside *Henancun*. Meanwhile, the yard buyers and the recycling workers who work in different recycling yards represent most *Henancun* dwellers. Also, most of the questionnaire participants are married (289 out of 304) and the age distribution indicates that the largest age group is between 41 and 50 years old while only a few are very young adults (2 under age of 20). Generally speaking, most of the questionnaire respondents arrived at Beijing within the past 20 years, and more people came within the last decade than between 20 and 10 years ago. Education-wise, the largest group for education background, is the primary school (133 in 304) and many have a middle school education (101 in 304). For extreme cases, 41 indicated illiteracy, two attended professional high school, and two has an educational background in professional college. But none has experience in academic colleges or post graduate degrees.

In addition, I carried out more than 60 formal and informal interviews with various *Henancun* stakeholders, such as recycling company owners, recycling company managers and accountant, recycling yard buyer families, recycling yard workers, recycling yard purchasers (who came to buy individual item directly from the yard for their hobbies or businesses), downstream paper factories' representatives, used market furniture recyclers, housing section managers, supermarket managers, bathing facility receptionist, school principals, itinerant recyclers, community recyclers, Beijing residents, recycling business association representatives, government officials from Commerce

Bureau and district offices, NGO staff members and state owned recycling business managers. While the largest group of my interview respondents is the yard buyer group because they live and work in a fixed location in *Henancun*, various random interview opportunities also happen on the side of city streets, on my way to breakfast, in taking taxis and on local buses. These unstructured interviews helped enormously in constructing a contextual understanding of *Henancun* and its dwellers. Depending on interview respondents' availability and their willingness of sharing information, interviews generally last between ten minutes and four and half hours. When the answers from the interviews start to repeat themselves from different parties, I consider the interview answers are saturated. However, because many interviews are unstructured and semi-structured, it is hard to quantify the total number of interviews I have conducted in my research while my judgment on the number of "enough" interviews relies on saturation situation of the answers I gained for different research questions.

Further, I have successfully carried out three close-up observations with one paper yard buyer in *DXK*, another paper yard buyer in *PC* who signed a contract with a local major retailing supermarket and one itinerant recycler who live in *DXK* with two other failed observation attempts. While I spent two days with the paper buyer from *DXK*, one day with paper recycler from *PC* and one day with the itinerant recycler, I followed their living and business routes to experience their schedule and their everyday life in my observation. While these observations provide valuable information, it built an additional trust relationship between me and my interview respondents and helped me to learn more about some informal and sometimes "illegal" activities they would carry out in their business as coping strategies.

To understand the situation faced by recycling companies, I have luckily gained access to not only interview business owners, managers, and accountants but also access many government documents in different recycling company offices as well. But the major resource for me to investigate the political and social policies in Beijing concerning the recycling business is following recycling company's guidance to access the government documentations through various online portals. I have referenced the websites in my following chapters, and they serve as an important secondary data source in my study as well.

I use both quantitative and qualitative methods in analyzing the first-hand data from interviews, questionnaires, observations and the government documentations.

Quantitatively, in Chapter Four, I examine migrants' disposable incomes at either a good or bad year with migrants' education attainment as well as the length of their experiences in the migration using the Mincer equation (Zheng *et al.* 2009). Besides, I used contingency tables and odds ratio to reveal the relations among variables of migrants' *Shourong* experience, their feeling of being unfairly treated, their satisfactory with their current jobs, their intention to change their jobs and their willingness for their children to continue what they are working on. The quantitative analyses have illustrated that migrants' disposable income is significantly related to migrants' education attainment before their migration, but not with migrants' experience after their migration. This is different from what is shown in Zheng *et al.*'s study, and I argue that the structural and institutional barriers faced by the informal recycling business have shaped the business in a way that the job experience is not relevant in their disposable income. Meanwhile, the internal structure of the recycling business is also significantly related to migrants'

disposable income as well, which suggests that I should take the internal structure into consideration when examining the institutional barriers as well as migrants' coping strategies. Furthermore, the contingency tables and odds ratios have shown that *Shourong* policy is significantly affecting migrants' feeling of being unfairly treated in Beijing, and also migrant recyclers have a low rate of willingness to let their children continue their business, which is another indication of the informal and marginal status of the recycling business in Beijing.

In Chapter Five and Six, I use a combination of both quantitative illustration from the questionnaire and qualitative interpretation of migrants' behavior and responses to demonstrate the structural/institutional barriers as well as migrants' coping strategies. While the questionnaire has provided a reference to the overall situation of the migrant recycler population, interviews provide detailed illustrations to show how and why the structural barriers have marginalized and stigmatized migrants' livelihood and recycling business in Beijing.

1.4.2.2 Research methodology

As an emerging economic power in the world, China has changed dramatically since the 1980s. At the same time, the drama has also set a fantastic stage for researchers to observe and document the social, economic and political changes on local, state and global scales. But official data in China, such as census and other population data, are questioned for its authenticity because their coverage on temporary migrant population is not sufficient. However, contemporary researches focusing on internal migration in China tend to use large quantity surveys or secondary census data to study migrants' status in the city (Zheng *et al.*, 2009; Fan, 1996, 2001; Feng *et al.*, 2008). While these studies

provide valuable information about migrants as a group in terms of their socioeconomic status and their condition in comparison with other groups in the city, the disadvantage lies in the assumption that migrants' information are correctly collected and stored in the national census, and migrants can be treated as a homogeneous group in the questionnaires. As I have already argued that *Henancun*'s association with recycling business is very peculiar in Beijing among migrant groups, these conventional internal migration study methodologies are not suitable for this dissertation research when the recycling business information is missing in the secondary data. Studies on *chengzhongcun* or urban villages have been using questionnaires as a primary method to obtain reliable information, such as He, S.J. (2010) and Chen, G. (2012). And some also take the ethnographic route to understand the social structure and relationship in the migrant enclaves, such as Xiang (2005). Both the quantitative analysis and qualitative studies provide valuable information in understanding the social composition and internal structure of the urban socio-spatial transformation. In order to construct a quantitative analysis, ethnographic understanding is necessary for researchers to ask right contextual questions in the questionnaires. Meanwhile, preliminary results from questionnaires also further our understanding of the economic, political and social situations in a structural way that would further guide our interviews. Since we have very little knowledge about *Henancun* and its dwellers, a combined qualitative and quantitative analysis suits perfectly for this research. Thus, this research uses surveys, interviews, and observations to gain an overall understanding of *Henancun* and its dwellers by myself. However, the constantly changing cultural context, which goes hand in hand with the rapid social development, significantly affected the working environment in the field.

Understanding the spatial, economic, social and cultural context becomes even more important for scholars to study the rural migrants, who still live in the city under a temporary residential status. The loss of trust among strangers in an unfriendly society, media's stigmatizing report on migrant workers, various unpleasant experience in the cities and people's uncertain socioeconomic status have left researchers little space to maneuver for even an icebreaking attempt in fieldwork.

In the late 1980s, studies (Adler, N *et al.* 1989) have illustrated the importance of understanding China's cultural contexts which rooted deeply in a communist regime and Cultural Revolution, which praises for "holding the correct view" for everyone in the society. In addition, with the long-existing threats to be locked up in Cultural Revolution, staying anonymous and "correct" are even more serious in Chinese society at that time. With their study on Chinese entrepreneurship, Adler, N *et al.* (1989) argue that there exists a "trade-off for us, as researchers...between collecting more accurate data while losing the individual demographic characteristics, versus obtaining detailed demographic data on each individual but receiving only the most politically acceptable responses to each question (Adler, N *et al.* 1989:67)." Although the study was from more than 20 years ago, the impact of the communist regime and Cultural Revolution has long lasting effect till today's society in China. The communist regime culture, together with the *Hukou* policy, which has been an important factor in determining migrants' livelihood and legal status in Chinese cities, has greatly affected and shaped the economic, social and political contexts in today's China. Thus, background chatting, the denial reasons for interview requests and trust building all provide valuable information about the social context of *Henancun* in my research.

First, when I started my fieldwork in the field, I normally had a backpack with me and sometimes with a DSLR Nikon camera in my hand. Although I do not have any questioning eyes on me in the main city, many people in *Henancun* stare at me when I walk by, probably due to my “student” looking outfit which is not common in *Henancun*. While I walk around, I also notice that there are always background chatting from *Henancun* dwellers about my potential identity. Their voice is usually low, but their conversation is meant for me to hear with an expectation that I may confirm by looking back at their stares. Their most common answers include “he’s probably a journalist,” “he’s probably from the government to check for demolition,” “he’s here to experience something different,” or “he just wants to see what Beijing really looks like.” While I normally turned to them to explain that I was a Ph.D. student to conduct my dissertation research, they would generally pretend they did not say anything and turned around while murmuring “I don’t know what you are saying, *I don’t have culture* (我没有文化²²).” With this situation happening too often, to some extent it shows the worrisome mood they have in *Henancun* about potentially stigmatized reports, demolition and their difference from the image of a commonly recognized Beijing. This situation helps me a lot with how to phrase my icebreaking talk in the field and prioritize to clarify migrants’ questions about my identity.

Second, as an outsider, the initial start in my fieldwork is very challenging that no one would talk to me in my interview attempts back in 2009. Besides, as an outsider, many questions I asked were not of their concern. Thus, I visited migrant recyclers’ hometown in *Gushi* County of *Henan* Province in 2010 to understand the social and economic

²² 我没有文化 is a term used to indicate that they don’t have a good educational background. But the literal translation is *I do not have culture*.

condition they are from. Then, I started to earn my trust among migrant recyclers in Beijing in my fieldwork in 2012 and 2013.

Third, the most common denial reasons in my interview attempts include “I am busy, find someone else,” “I don’t take interviews, some journalist cheated on us last year and posted pictures without consent,” “why are you interested in here? You are not even from *Henan*, are you?” and the most interesting response I found is that “I know XXXX (a name).” While I could understand the first several answers about their concerns on time, potential threats to their business and the validity of my identity as a researcher, I was at first very confused by the last answer. However, because this answer is not very uncommon, I have later asked my interview respondent about its meaning. They told me that they only wanted to show me their connections with local officials to show that they are protected from any fraud that it looked like I was bringing. While on the one hand, these untrusting incidences have made my research hard to carry out, but on the other hand, they perfectly illustrate the social and political contexts that shaped their feeling against someone from the outside. Therefore, I have adjusted my icebreaking phrase to tackle issues on interview time, my legitimacy and validity, my background, and even include some managers’ names of the recycling company they belong. If they are from *Gushi County, Henan* province, I would further ask them about their home township and mentioned a few township officials’ names to “hook” their interests and show off my visits to their hometown in my following answers. These tactics helped a lot with the interview requests in my fieldwork, and I also have built up close relationships with a few of my interview respondents as well.

Fourth, another difficulty is migrant recyclers' constantly changing schedule and unexpected situations. For many times when I set up an interview time with a recycling yard buyer, company manager or itinerant recycler, they did not show up and explained in a phone call that they could not take my interview anymore because they were busy with some unexpected business or family events. One case I found fascinating was my observation attempt with a wood recycler in *PC* in December 2012. The recycler looks very young and is probably in the early 20s. When I asked the wood yard recycler to take me with him on a trip to sell a truckload of timber to *Shandong* province, he told me to come to the gate of the yard at 10:45 pm and we could leave at 11 pm. The trip would take about 10 hours one way, and he also told me that I could ride with him in the truck all the way. After charging my camera batteries, preparing extra batteries for my voice recorder and writing down all my questions for the trip, I walked about 30 minutes in the dark to the recycling yard at 10:40 pm. After waiting in the cold for over 20 minutes, I called his cell phone, but nobody answered. Then a few moments later, his wife came out in her pajamas. She shouted very loudly and angrily at me at the gate of the recycling company and told me that she would never allow me to go with her husband. She called me a fraud and said that whatever I was trying to do, she will not allow. I told her that would be OK, and I was sorry that I didn't gain her permission in the first place, but I did not want to bring any trouble either. She shouted at me for over 10 minutes at the gate in cold and later forced me to leave the recycling company before she returned to their wood yard. While this situation was not expected, it brought to my attention that I should be more careful with requesting interview and observation access as well as building trust with my interview respondents in my fieldwork.

1.4.2.3 The role of women in my research

This failed observation attempt later brought to my attention the role of woman in my fieldwork and research. As I have shown earlier that *Henancun* and its dwellers are largely invisible in the city, women respondents are mostly invisible in my fieldwork. This situation is due to the several reasons associated with general cultural tradition, family strategies as well as the work distribution in migrant households.

First, in a typical Chinese rural family, the old tradition of "men work outside, women work inside"²³ still dominates the cultural context of families. During my fieldwork, few cases of interviews with women respondents are set up in a non-family setting, which means the interviews were conducted at recycling company offices, coffee shops, or when men were not present at the time of interview. Majority of my interviews which last over one hour were conducted inside or right outside migrant house (either rental houses or yard buyer houses) or community/itinerant recycling sites. If there is a man working at the place, he would automatically become my interview respondent. And interestingly, during these interviews, women were the ones who would directly speak out to question my identity and ask about my research objectives. This situation has a lot to do with the cultural context I illustrated earlier that when men represent the family business to secure or increase family's income, women reserve as a security measure to reduce the risk for the household in any cases. Secondly, rural-to-urban migration in China has also been through a process of men-only migration, to men-migration women-staying-home situation, then to the stage now as both husband and wife are in the city together. This case shows the gender difference and family strategy change in a migration situation.

²³ 男主外，女主内: This is a common Chinese saying to describe the family responsibilities.

Secondly, women are also considered more of a supporting role in making money at homes as a family strategy. While yard buyer families are working in the yard, women are the ones who need to cook, send and take children to and from schools, do grocery shopping, and help kids in their school work. For many itinerant and community recyclers, their wives are either staying at home during the daytime or working as contracted janitors in the communities these men are working around. Again, this strategy well illustrates the situation that men are the primary force in the family for money making while women play a supporting role. The division of labor resembles the conventional rural family strategy whereby men are considered manual workers who need to devote their hard labor in agriculture, while women's roles are more family centered for taking care of the children, cooking, washing, cleaning or sewing in the past. Interestingly, in a paper recycling yard that I visited many times, the eight sorting workers, who are four couples, also have different working identities. The men are working in the yard as permanent worker who needs to work seven days a week while the women are working temporarily. In other words, men are paid by the month while women are paid by the hour. This situation is because in addition to sorting work that is done by both men and women, men also need to load and unload trucks, which are believed to be almost a man-only job. Although most of jobs men and women do are the same sorting work, men's income is higher than women's in a recycling yard as a sorting worker.

Thus, under such a family strategy, when I go to *Henancun* during the daytime, both husband and wife are in the recycling yards. In such a condition, the husband is more approachable while the wife normally either directly turns down my interviewing request

or directs me to her husband for the request. The wife of the wood recycler I mentioned earlier represents an extreme situation, but it well illustrates the role of gender in a recycling yard. Meanwhile, the housing section of the *Henancun* is left nearly only with wives and old parents of the itinerant and community recyclers after about 8:00 am when all the recyclers left for the city. When I go to these housing sections, I could immediately sense the nervous atmosphere from my presence. When I tried to request an interview with one of them, I can feel the hostile tension in their voice and they normally directly told me “I don’t know what you are saying. Just leave” before they turn around and go into their house. I think this is due to my physical appearance that might pose a threat to them. But I did not get any interview done with any of the wives or parents that stay in the housing section during the day time.

So, my method design and methodology have gradually evolved along with my experience in *Henancun*. Using primary data as my main data source, I found researching within the local context extremely important. And it is extremely so when carrying out interviews, questionnaires, and observations with any socially disadvantaged group because the social, political and economic context they are facing has already introduced too much stress for them to trust anyone from outside their group. I tried to act local, speak local and stay within the limit that is defined by my identity as a researcher from outside the group to maintain an “objective” view on my research topic while used every opportunity in my fieldwork experience to construct my understanding about *Henancun*, its dwellers and the recycling companies.

1.5 Dissertation Structure and Outline

This dissertation consists of seven chapters to answer the research questions I have previously stated through four empirical chapters. Chapter One and Two are introduction and literature reviews for the dissertation. Chapter One introduces *Henancun* and their locations in Beijing, the study background of this dissertation research including the statement of problems and research questions, the study areas, research frameworks, methods and methodology and finally the structure of the dissertation. Chapter Two is the literature review that directly relates to my research framework to focus on China's internal migration, China's urbanization, marginality issues, economic sociology, enclave and ghetto studies and the informal business of recycling.

Chapter Three focuses on the structure of the recycling business and the spatial development of *Henancun* to set up our research context for the following empirical chapters. Through examining the history of the recycling business and the emergence of *Henancun* in Beijing, this chapter investigates how *Henancun* became the way it is today and the factors that have played essential roles in migrants' livelihood and business after joining the recycling business. This chapter reveals that *Henancun*, different from the conventional view of a homogeneous migrant enclave, emerged from the recycling activities and has a complex internal business structure. Also, *Henancun* has always been facing demolition and relocation events that rarely happen to other migrant enclaves in Beijing.

Chapter Four is using quantitative methods to study what factors are related to migrants' levels of income from recycling in Beijing and to investigate the relationship between migrants' experience with *Shourong* and their opinions on their feeling of being unfairly

treated, satisfactory with their recycling business. Through regression modeling and contingency table analysis, this chapter has suggested that migrants' job experience in Beijing has little to do with their income level in recycling, which is very different from other formal job opportunities that are examined in the literature (Zheng *et al.*, 2009). Also, despite migrants' feeling in Beijing, migrants in recycling have a very low rate of willingness to let their children continue with their recycling business and only the market yard buyers are more willing to let their children join the recycling business. This situation suggests that (1) recycling's informal status is playing a crucial role in the business; and (2) recycling must have been facing serious structural/institutional barriers in the society which have limited the development of the recycling business, while the institutional/structural barriers also need to be examined at different levels of the recycling business structure. This chapter serves as the leading chapter for the following two chapters on the structural/institutional barriers and migrants' coping strategies.

Chapter Five tries to understand the dual structural barriers faced by the migrant recyclers as well as the recycling companies in *Henancun*. This chapter examines various barriers that are related to migrants' rural *Hukou* status for the migrant recyclers and illustrated the barriers that are related to the recycling business from an urban management and policy point of view for the recycling companies.

Chapter Six examines the coping strategies that migrant recyclers and the recycling companies take to stabilize/secure their existence and to flourish in the business in response to all the structural barriers they are facing. This chapter has opened discussions on both formal and informal coping strategies taken by the migrant recyclers and the recycling companies in Beijing.

Chapter Seven is the conclusion chapter to summarize the dissertation. In this chapter, I have answered the research questions posted at the beginning of the dissertation and argued that (1) different from the conventional understanding, *Henancun* should no longer be viewed as a simple migrant enclave, rather the intertwined migrant identity and recycling's informality make it face complex structural barriers in the city; (2) *Henancun* has a very vulnerable position in between the state and the society and the demolition it has been facing is a result of the conflicts between the bottom-up business development and the top-down state projects throughout the years; (3) the complex nature of *Henancun* has been facing structural/institutional barriers that derive from two focuses: recyclers' migrant identity and recycling's informality in the city; (4) *Henancun* represents a new urban space in the making, that has adopted a permanent label of being "outsiders" not only to their host city of Beijing but also to migrants' hometowns in rural China; (5) the informality of recycling is due in large part to the uncoordinated, sometimes overly strict urban policies on both *Henancun*'s spatiality and the recycling companies.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The understanding and examining of *Henancun* and its dwellers rest on the following aspects. Existing literature on immigration, marginality, enclave and ghetto development and informal recycling business provides a solid foundation in illustrating a well-structured way of researching the marginalized immigrants/citizens in their destination society. Moreover, the experience from the informal recycling activities has shown how the local government treats the recycling activities from an urban management point of view. However, these social theories and policy considerations developed in a different socio-political context. Meanwhile, Chinese studies on *chengzhongcun* and migrant enclaves, I tend to argue, have focused too much on space's functionality or the institutional barriers these enclaves are facing as an indivisible whole. Also, I also think the internal migration studies emphasize too little on the compound nature of the contextual socio-political circumstances migrants have confronted by over-simplifying the rural migrants to be part of an indivisible group based on their job types, hometown, or ethnicity. However, these existing theories in international and local contexts provide invaluable resources in understanding *Henancun* and its dwellers in Beijing. By stretching and intertwining the theories through a structural agency debate under China's sociopolitical context, this research is contextualizing *Henancun* and its inhabitants' experiences under China's "internal migration" and "urban management" angles.

Thus, the literature review will focus on the following five theories or aspects to build an intertwined stage to carry out my analysis in the next chapters.

2.1 Internal Migration in China

Migration in China was highly controlled during Mao's era through a restrictive *Hukou* (household registration system) policy, which "was restored in 1951 first to monitor movement and residence of the urban population and further expanded to cover both the rural and urban populations in 1955" (Chan, 1996:135). With the help of grain rationing and job and housing allocation policies, *Hukou* system locked individuals in their registered areas and prevented rural-born residents from moving freely into cities.

According to Chan (1996), this system guaranteed non-peasant households with everyday necessities and access to social welfares such as education, social and medical services.

On the contrary, households with peasant *Hukou* did not have any of these benefits.

Potter (1983) and Chan (1996) state that since one could not choose their registration status but inherit it from their family, it is a "birth-ascribed stratification" system.

Between the late 1950s and 1970s, China's society was in a dichotomized structure, composed of rural and urban residents. During this period, rural-urban migration was nearly impossible except for incidents such as college graduation, formal labor recruitment and the urbanization of agricultural land for development (Chan, 1996).

It was not until China adopted the open policy in 1978 when rural-urban migration started to flourish together with the market economy regime and an export-oriented industrialization strategy (Chan 1996). When town and village enterprises (TVEs) were rural migrants' primary destinations in the 1980s, large metropolitan areas became new destinations for rural-urban migrants after the relaxation of *Hukou* in employment in the

non-state sectors in the early 1990s (Garcia, 2004). However, because of the existing *Hukou* system, which functions as an internal passport system and grants urban citizenship only to migrants deemed desirable by the city while keeping others under a temporary migrant status (Fan, 2002), migrants continue to be in a subordinate situation in the urban environment. The urban landscape is thus a two-category structure along the line of *Hukou*: one with all the social welfare entitlement and the other without (Chan, 1996). Based on these observations, Solinger (1999) argues that there be a virtual globalization process inside China, whereby Chinese government internally dichotomizes the country into core and periphery categories to promote the economic development of cities following a globalizing neoliberal ideology.

While *Hukou* has been playing a substantial role in determining migration, scholars examine Chinese internal migration through the following three approaches: neo-classical /human capital model, dual labor market and social capital studies. First, the neo-classical economic model is a significant migration research perspective, which started by assuming the rationality of immigrants' activities. It assumes that immigrants have prior knowledge of the economic and occupational situations in both the original and the destination places. Pull-push factors are used to explain the motivation and actual action of the migration. Fan (1996) has revealed that both the present and expected economic opportunities for migrants are important factors in explaining migration volumes and directions. Also, human capital part of the consideration under the neo-classical perspective, whereby migration is viewed as an investment process and a person's human capital determines whether a migrant can be in the job market in his/her migration.

Based on the dichotomized structure along *Hukou* policy, many have also adopted the dual labor market in the context of Chinese internal migration studies. This theory proposes that developed countries have developed a polarized urban fragmentation in the contemporary era of the capital globalization process. Sassen (2001) illustrated that global cities show a trend of economic polarization, where dual markets exist for both high-skilled elites and poorly paid workers in the service sector. With the Chinese cities exhibiting similar traits, reinforced by the specific workings of the *Hukou* policy, Chinese internal migration studies also adopt the dual labor market perspective. Wang and Zuo (1999) identified five differences between temporary migrants and urban residents in the Chinese cities. One of the important factors is the segregated labor market and occupation, which supports the dual labor market perspective and further confirms the criticism of the neoclassical model in the Chinese context. When the urban setting is bifurcated through the *Hukou* system, migrants are considered to be in a separate and subordinate condition in the society. A plethora of evidence is recorded in many different cities in China in supporting this model (Ding *et al.* 2001; Garcia, 2004; Roberts, 1997; Wang and Zuo, 1999; Solinger, D.J., 1999). Ding *et al.*'s (2001) work have shown the emergence of "*Hukou* dam," which constrains temporary migrants' access to the formal job market, but reserves them for the locals. The existence of "*Hukou* Dam" substantially affects the labor market structure in the cities while urban residents and migrants do not have equal opportunities in joining the formal job markets while migrants are trapped mostly in the informal sector.

In addition to the neoclassical and human capital explanation of internal migration, social capital also becomes an important factor in understanding migrants' life after their arrival

in the city and the interaction between migration origin and their destination. Massey *et al.* (1998) argue that through cumulative causation, migratory movements become self-sustaining after they start and chain migration plays a significant role in the continuation of the population movement. Similarly, Ma and Xiang (1998) have illustrated that when the first wave of migrants starts to settle down in the urban environment formally or informally, more migrants will follow their kinship relationship (*xueyuan guanxi*) and geographical relationship (*diyuan guanxi*) to the cities, which considerably lowers their risks in their migration destination. Ma and Xiang (1998) further show that many migrants secure their jobs in the cities before they make the decision for migration and hence “native place” serves as an important factor in seeking mutual support and building up native-place based enclaves. Moreover, Fan and Taubmann (2002) indicate that about 75% of first-time migrants find jobs through their relatives or friends and native-place is necessary for sharing information to usher more migrants to the cities. Xiang (2005) examines the case of *Zhejiangcun* in Beijing and demonstrates that social capital, such as networking, significantly affects the turnouts of migration results in Beijing. Therefore, under the hierarchical social structure in the Chinese urban context, social capital serves as an important means to mobilize and sustain migration.

In addition to *Hukou*'s effect on the labor market, Wang *et al.* (2002) have demonstrated that geographical location and urban expansion substantially affect ethnic enclaves, which are viewed as subordinate in implementing new urban developing policies.

Internal migration studies in China provide a foundation in understanding migrants' decision-making processes. However, while most studies focus on the rural to urban migration, little is known about the trajectories migrants experienced after they arrive in

the cities. Also, internal migration studies have over-generalized the rural migrants in cities as an indifferent group, while the internal differences and structure of the migrant people is largely missing. This research will focus on the spatial-temporal developing trajectory of *Henancun* in Beijing to show the unstable urban context migrants are facing in the city, the internal structure of *Henancun* and migrants' various coping strategies both to secure their migration and to thrive their business in Beijing.

2.2 China's Urbanization

Chinese urbanization can be divided into three periods since 1949. First, between 1952 and 1960, the First Five-year Plan (1953-57) and the Great Leap Forward (1958-60) dominated Chinese urbanization, when China attempted to industrialize based on a model of the Soviet Union (Chan, 1994a; Young and Deng, 1998). During this time, the development policy was highly urban-oriented and sometimes "price scissors" were adopted to describe this phenomenon. During the Great Leap Forward period, the urban population²⁴ reached 19.7% by 1960, which was the highest among any year before 1981 (Chan, 1994a, Young and Deng, 1998). Second, 1961 to 1976 represented a period with two major events. Between 1960 and 1966, due to the rapid urbanization before this period, the government adopted agriculture-prioritized policies and promoted agriculture production. During the Cultural Revolution period (1966-1976), around 30 million urban residents were moved to rural areas (Chan, 1994a) in response to the movement calling for "the educated youth to go to the mountains and rural areas." Then, after the 1978's opening policy in China, several policies were adopted to promote the urbanization process. First, the "household responsibility system" in the rural areas and reduction in

²⁴ Urban population is defined as the population who have an urban household registration based on their *Hukou* status. This urban population is not defined by where people are, but where people belong.

quotas (as a form of rural tax) freed labor from the agricultural land. Besides, the loosening of ration system in cities also provided possibilities for urbanization. This exemplifies the “urban biased” idea, which, based on the socialist industrialization belief, took urbanization as a cost for industrialization (Zhang and Zhao, 2003a). To maximize industrial output, the state adopted urban-biased policies to promote city-based industrialization (Chan, 1994b) by limiting access to urban welfares to rural migrants (Chan, 1994b, 1996; Wang, 2004; Garcia, 2004) and utilizing price-scissors mechanism between rural and urban areas (Wang, 2005; Renard, M. 2002). In the pre-reform period, the state limited the urbanization volume by highly controlling the migration process, which physically limited the population mobility; while in the post-reform period, Chinese governments at different levels, on the one hand, relaxed the migration process, but on the other, administratively denied urban citizenship to rural- urban migrants. In a relaxed migration control context, a continued urban bias in combination with an authoritarian political system has developed two forms of urbanization: one from above and the other from below.

First, the urbanization from above is viewed as a state-led urbanization process, tightly linked with different levels of governments' profit-seeking and economic development needs (Zhou Y. and Ma, L.J.C. 2003). Before the economic reform in 1978, only state-sponsored urbanization existed, which formed the basis of the Chinese urbanization model during that period. "As the state was also the major investor in both the urban economy and urban construction, the pre-reform model of urbanization was also called ‘urbanization from above’ (Shen and Wong, 2006:702)." Even after China's economic reform in 1978, the state-sponsored development is still a key driver of Chinese

industrialization, which promotes the spatial urbanization processes through new district development. Rapid urban land expansion has been observed in new areas or different development zones set up by various levels of government, such as Economic and Technological Development Zones (ETDZ) and High Technology Development Zones (HTDZ) (Wei, Y.D., and Leung, C. 2005; Li X. *et al.* 2010:2).

Second, the urbanization from below, a.k.a. the bottom-up urbanization, is considered as an urbanization processes of rural residents being urbanized through the process of "*li tu bu li xiang*"²⁵ (Ma and Fan, 1994; Ma, L.J.C. and Cui, G. 2002; Shen, J. *et al.* 2006). This rural-urbanization is associated with villages' intention to promote industry enterprises in rural areas since the 1980s. TVEs (Town and Village Enterprises) development is considered as the primary force behind this bottom-up urbanization (Li, X. *et al.* 2010; Shen, J. *et al.*, 2006). The difference is that urbanization from below features the self-employed entrepreneurship in village and township level, while urbanization from above is mostly led by the government.

In between the urbanization from above and below, "urban villages" (or *chengzhongcun*) emerged in large Chinese cities. Li and others have described urban villages as "rural villages surrounded by newly built city districts, and form a particular urban landscape of villages encircled by built-up areas of cities" (Li, X. *et al.* 2010:13). These villages provide affordable housing for mostly migrant laborers coming to the cities. The dualistic structure of urban and rural dichotomy, governments' policy to maximize development profits, and migrants' needs for affordable housing all contribute to the emergence of *chengzhongcun* in large Chinese cities (Wang, Y. *et al.* 2009; Zhang, L. *et al.* 2003b; Li, X. *et al.* 2010). Under this process, Wang *et al.* (2009) takes *Shenzhen* as a case study to

²⁵ *li tu bu li xiang*: leave the land but not the village.

understand the development process of urban villages in South China and summarizes that urban villages are a crucial part of urbanization in providing affordable housing and potential job opportunities for the low-income population. Despite its critical role in supporting urbanization, government officials, and urban planners take a negative view of *chengzhongcun* for their high crime rate, poor living conditions, risks for fire and pressures on infrastructure (Wang, Y. *et al.* 2009).

To some extent, migrant enclaves in Beijing and *Chengzhongcun* in South China share many similarities regarding their housing function, job opportunities, and migrant centers. Moreover, towards both rural migrant centers, the local governments all take pathological views against their existence and criticize them for their informal and illegal activities. For the migrant enclaves in Beijing, the outward urban development, as a “top-down” urbanization force, serves as a major structural force to relocate *Henancun* repetitively to give way to Beijing’s development. Moreover, it is precisely this unchallengeable urbanization force that has defined the socio-political circumstances *Henancun* and its dwellers are facing in Beijing. From an urban management point of view, this research examines the various political, social and economic policies that have significantly affected the existence of *Henancun* and their spatial trajectories in Beijing.

2.3 Marginality and Informal Economy

When the teleological thinking of urbanization-leading-to-modernity failed in several Latin American and African countries, researchers start to question the former belief about the causational relationship between urbanization and modernization (Ferguson, 1999). Marginalized groups are observed to gather and persist in both developed and

developing countries, while their social, economic, and political behaviors have also shown differences from the “mainstream” society.

When space is compressed by time in the globalization era, “the world’s corporate elite becomes placeless (Castells, 1983:210)” and this situation, on the one hand, redefines the socioeconomic and political norm in the society, and on the other excludes a significant portion of population from the social and political decision-making processes and their access to citizenship. Although different researchers take different angles to analyze marginality and marginalized groups in the society, “the process of capitalist rationalization (Wacquant, 1996)”, which also leads to a series of countries’ structural adjustment programs, appears to be the fundamental cause behind the creation of marginality and “advanced marginality” (Wacquant, 1996), and globalization catalyzes and perfects the labor division on a global scale (Harvey, 1989). Saskia Sassen (2001) has also noted the influence of globalization and an overall internationalization of the global cities since the 1960s. She emphasizes the changing socio-political focus and social order in a globalizing era whereby globalization has promoted the informalization and casualization of work in the society (p.288). Wacquant (1996) has also coined the term “advanced marginality,” which describes a much severer poverty situation now than in the Fordist time, especially in the United States. Among the marginalized groups in many different countries in the world, the forms of marginality are not the same in different contexts.

Similar situations in Beijing have also gained attention in academia. While Beijing has joined the globalization processes and become a global city, social stratification and different social classes also emerged in the society (Fan, 2002). Facing a discriminatory

context and a stigmatized identity in Beijing, *Henancun* and its dwellers also reflect a form of marginality in the society. It is not only their recycling business activities, but also their temporary access to land, and *Hukou* constrained access to the formal social facilities all to reflect their limited access to the local society.

Furthermore, informal economy literature is also important in understanding *Henancun* and its recycling business. Informal economy originally appeared in Hart's (1973) study in Africa, where he emphasized the dynamics and diversity of the activities which appear as "the gap between my experience there and anything my English education had taught me before" (Portes 2010), which considered informal economy as a dynamic outcome of a certain societal context. However, later on, International Labor Organization (ILO) abandoned the original dynamic understanding and took a more practical understanding to associate informal economy with poverty. This marginal social perspective is related to ILO's Kenya report in 1972. According to this point of view, the informal economy is linked to unstable workers and urban poverty. Cheng and Gereffi (1994) believe that "the informal economy represents problems of urban poverty caused by demographic dislocation in the process of imbalanced industrialization... people who have been squeezed out of agriculture but not yet absorbed into the 'modern' urban sector rely on informal activities for survival." While some informal activities serve as a survival strategy, some are viewed to take back some of the economic power from the centralized agents (Hart 1990) and to avoid the various fees posed by the government and other agencies. Castells and Portes (1989) stated that the definition of the informal economy includes economic activities, which are "unregulated by the institutions of society, in a legal and social environment in which similar activities are regulated." As the organizer

of *Henancun* in Beijing, recycling companies are well registered with various local departments and operate similarly to the recycling factory at Michigan State University except that the recycling and sorting activities are under an open market style. However, the changing political and social policies have gradually forced recycling business to become “informal” for them to maintain their operation and profitability in Beijing. Thus, informal economy literature provides a foundation for understanding *Henancun*’s organization and functioning in Beijing.

Since informal economy stays outside the state regulations, it becomes a form of “untamed market” (Hart, 1990). However, because of the lack of regulations, the informal economy has to rely on the social ties to function. Mutual trust becomes a significant factor in sustaining the existence of informal economic activities, which further illustrates the importance of social embeddedness in the informal economy (Portes, 2010), which is against its “untamed” feature in the economic activities. Second is the paradox that the more regulated a society becomes, the more informal economy will appear. As stated by Lomnitz (1988), “Order creates disorder. The formal economy creates its own informality.” Cheng and Gereffi (1994) argue that this situation is happening both in developing and developed countries and “it adopts a holistic framework in which informal firms are depicted as integrally linked to the regulated areas of national economies as well as the global economy” and “[informal economy] constitutes a source of national competitiveness”. Moreover, third, informal economy can also have a positive consequence for the state. Castells, M. and Portes, A. (1989) illustrates that “the informal economy evolves along the borders of social struggles, incorporating those too weak to defend themselves, rejecting those who become too

conflictive, and propelling those with stamina and resources into surrogate entrepreneurship." By providing a "cushion" in dealing with the limited capacity in the formal sector, informal economy functions as a way for the disadvantaged group to sustain relative peace in the society. Also, since the informal economy can also lower the costs of consumption for people in the formal sector, it can contribute both to the political stability and economic viability in the society as well (Portes, 2010).

Since recycling in Beijing is a "cash-trading" business, it is inherently not against informal activities. Moreover, as an important coping strategy to succeed in recyclers' competition, almost all recyclers adopts their own version of informal activities to increase their profitability. Meanwhile, as recycling companies are facing very strict regulations in the city, they are also forced to adopt informal strategies to survive in Beijing. Ironically, it is solely the strict social and political policies and regulations to formalize recycling activities that have forced migrants and recycling business to informalize their business operations.

2.4 Enclaves and Ghettos

2.4.1 Ethnic Economy and Ethnic Enclave Economy

This section examines two theories that look similar but derive from different perspectives: the ethnic economy and ethnic enclave economy, which are critical components of the economic sociology.

2.4.1.1 Ethnic economy and middleman minority

Ethnic economy studies derive from a middleman minority perspective to understand the "subtler racism" (Zenner, 1991) in the society towards stigmatized groups. Zenner (1991) shows that middleman minorities are associated with "economic success" and "political

impotency" while also being charged with "having hidden power (p.xii)." Thus, these middleman minorities are in the middle rung of the society in that they cannot easily join the elites while their socioeconomic status also prevents them from dropping to the bottom in the society. According to Light and Gold (2000), middleman minorities originally derive from the struggle of family-based traditional capitalism in the modern capitalist realm. The best illustration is Jews in Europe, whereby their businesses are successful, making them middleman minorities. Becker (1956) coined this term and expanded the concept to include trading people all over the world in any multi-ethnic context. According to these conceptualizations, a traditional family-based mode of business practice before they migrate to a new environment is necessary for them to become middleman minorities. Then Bonacich (1973) argued that the middleman minority theory is also applicable to other businessmen without a capitalist tradition, such as Asians in the United States. She argues that these migrant entrepreneurs choose to intensify their social solidarity in an uneasy overseas context. Then through ethnic solidarity and the willingness to do low-paid jobs, they fill in the market niches of the economy, which are not cost-effective for formal businesses due to the high cost of local labor. Light (1972) studied self-employment among different racial and ethnic groups in the United States and proposed that social trust is essential in building entrepreneurship among the middlemen. Later Bonacich and Modell (1981) coined the term "ethnic economy," which refers to the self-employed, employers, and employees based on a co-ethnic basis. However, although ethnic economy provides coethnics with better access to jobs, incomes, and social services, it does not imply any location or spatial clustering structure (Light and Gold, 2000). In building up the ethnic enclaves, class also emerges

during the process. Since international migrants come at different time, earlier cohorts are usually with a higher socioeconomic background and their earlier arrival and longer time spent in the society also help them to consolidate their position in the enclaves. Later migrants, due to their relatively lower socioeconomic background and less social capital in the host society, generally fall into a lower class than the earlier waves of migrants (Portes, 1987; Light and Bonacich, 1988).

Despite facing constant demolition and relocation, *Henancun* developed a recycling sector and formed a relatively stable migration path and migrant economy (a form of ethnic economy) in Beijing. It offers a chance to incorporate ethnic economy perspective to the study of the recycling business and migrants in China. Similar to the situation as a “middleman” in the society, *Henan* migrants are *de facto* entrepreneurs in Beijing’s recycling industry who have dominated the business as their ethnic economy. However, their entrepreneur identity is almost completely ignored due to various social and political policies they are facing in Beijing.

2.4.1.2 Ethnic enclave economy

On a separate path, the power of spatial business clustering is noted in the ethnic enclave economy literature. Although similar to the concept of ethnic economy, ethnic enclave economy is an extension of the dual labor market theory, which argues that there exist an inferior, secondary job market parallel with the primary sector and disadvantaged groups are channeled and eventually locked in the secondary labor market (Tolbert *et al.* 1980). Not satisfied with the dual market concept, some authors argued for a more sophisticated segmentation of the labor market, either based on ethnic economy or market niches for ethnic businesses (e.g., Portes and Bach, 1985; Castles and Miller, 2009). The

characteristics of enclaves help to build economic advantages. Wilson and Portes (1980) illustrate that economies operated by co-ethnics could enhance the power to monopolize the market. Also, the horizontal and vertical integration of ethnic businesses guarantee the value of each stage of production stays within the ethnic community. Later, with inclusion of coethnic employers and employees, the ethnic enclave economy, according to Portes and Bach (1985), is characterized by a locational cluster of businesses whose owners and employees are coethnics. This form of spatial clustering of co-ethnics-operated businesses is a fundamental element in the thriving of ethnic economy.

Although *Henancun* has shown marginality and informality in the society, little is known about the details on how marginality is reflected in their activities and their coping strategies. Based on the economic sociology framework, this dissertation will investigate how *Henancun* becomes the way it is today in coping with the stigmatization *Henancun* is facing, how social capitals functions in negotiating their activities in Beijing and how *Henancun* and some of its dwellers thrive in their recycling business.

2.4.2 Ethnic Enclave and Ghetto Development

In addition to the economic sociology framework in understanding *Henancun*, ecological theory in the U.S. provides a comparative context in understanding how social context shapes the migration trajectory in the receiving society. The ecological theory emerged from the Chicago schools in the 1920s based on European immigrants in the U.S. This line of literature has focused substantially on the after-immigration lives of the international immigrants and how they were further assimilated into the American society through a melting-pot model in the U.S.

Under this line of thinking, residential segregation and spatial assimilation are two stages immigrants experience when they seek to join the American society. When immigrants start to surpass cultural and economic barriers in the society, they move out of their immigrant enclaves or racial ghettos and try to achieve spatial assimilation with residential dispersion into where the majority group lives and realize a “melting-pot” model in U.S. cities. Cultural and economic assimilation enables spatial assimilation, which reinforces the cultural and economic assimilation and finally leads to social assimilation. Massey (1985) also argues that residential locations reflect immigrants’ level of cultural and economic assimilation.

But this model cannot be applied to the racial ghettos in the U.S. and various studies have revealed structural barriers in various aspects to limit spatial assimilation for certain groups. Chicago’s segregation situation is examined through the dissimilarity index based on 1980 census data, and Darden (1987) shows that blacks and whites are highly segregated in all socioeconomic levels no matter how high black groups’ socioeconomic status is. Racial discrimination, as a structural factor, can be found in all aspects of the society. Scholars have discovered occupational discrimination (Porter 1985), educational discrimination (Darden 1981) and housing discrimination (Darden 1982, 1995; Gotham 2000).

In the case of *Henancun* and its dwellers, while the business provides financial support in their migration, their income cannot be transformed to a better living condition in Beijing. This is due to their temporary migration status, their unstable business condition and various stigmatized and discriminatory policies that have been facing in Beijing. While they have developed chain migration to sustain their rural-to-urban migration,

assimilation is nearly impossible under the structural barriers that have derived along the *Hukou* system. This situation is very similar to the enclave/ghetto studies in the U.S. in that rather than the structural force along race and ethnicity to constrain assimilation for certain socially, politically and economically disadvantaged groups in the U.S., the structural constraints in Chinese cities are the political and social policies which set the boundary for migrants' existence in Beijing.

2.5 Recycling under Solid Waste Management

To understand *Henancun* in Beijing, not only do we need to stage it within an ethnic enclave framework, but the associated recycling business also needs examining. In most developing countries, resource recovery from solid waste relies heavily on informal recycling activities. In many case studies, scholars have shown that these are often critical but unrecognized in many cities' solid waste and resource management programs (Velis C. *et al.*, 2012; Sembiring E. and Nitivattananon., 2010; Wilson D., *et al.*, 2009; Afon, A., 2007; Ahmed and Ali, 2004). However, the recycling rates achieved by the informal recycling sector could reach up to 15-20% in developing countries (Wilson D. *et al.* 2009). And not only do the informal recycling activities increase the recycling rate, Medina (2000:52) estimated that up to 2% of the urban population survive by scavenging in Asian and Latin American cities while Scheinberg A. *et al.* (2010) provide similar results by showing that in average, the informal and micro-enterprise collection and recycling sector provides livelihood to over 0.5% of the population in their 12 referenced cities in different developing countries. Furthermore, because the informal recycling activities rely solely on the revenue produced from buying and selling the recyclable materials, it could save more than 20% of what is needed to be spent on solid waste

management otherwise (Wilson *et al.*, 2012). In recent years, due to the importance of these informal activities, researchers have argued that these informal activities should be integrated into the solid waste and resource management programs.

Meanwhile, the informal recycling sector operates usually side by side with the existing, if any, formal recycling sectors. In many countries, the informal recycling sector has almost all of the characteristics for being an informal sector illustrated by International Labor Organization (1972) as: ease of entry, reliance on indigenous resources, family ownership of enterprises, small scale of operation, labor intensive, with skills outside the formal system, unregulated and competitive markets. As a small-scale, labor-intensive, low-technology counterpart with the formal one, the informal solid waste sector refers to "individuals or enterprises who are involved in recycling and waste management activities but are not sponsored, financed, recognized or allowed by the formal solid waste authorities, or who operate in violation of or in competition with formal authorities. (Velis *et al.*, 2012)" In many developing countries, open dumping makes recyclable materials available to scavengers, and subsequently, the urban poor form an efficient informal recycling system based on recycling activities. Wilson *et al.* (2009) further argue that although the formal waste management sector views their informal counterpart as backward and unhygienic, the informal sector is efficient in recycling and also could reduce poverty, which is compatible with the Millennium Development Goals set by United Nations (2005). In recent years, more and more studies have suggested that informal recycling sector is necessary for urban solid waste management and should be integrated into the formal solid waste management programs (Velis C. *et al.*, 2012; Wilson D. *et al.*, 2009; Sembiring E. and Nitivattananon, 2010).

Similar to recycling in other developing countries, recycling in China has also become an informal business since the market economy turned in 1978. In Beijing, recycling has been viewed as “dirty, messy and backward,” against the modern image Beijing has been pursuing. Business-wise, viewed differently from other formal entrepreneurship, recycling has been considered as a “tolerated” business for temporary rural migrants to sustain their livelihood in Beijing.

2.6 Summary

Based on the reviewed literature, this dissertation will embed the analysis within but not limited to China’s internal migration studies, urbanization studies, marginality studies, enclave and ghetto studies and informal recycling in solid waste management studies. Based on the examination of these existing researches on marginality related studies, this research tends to propose that *Henancun* and its dwellers are not simply facing various *Hukou* related forces as illustrated in various Chinese studies. On the contrary, *Henancun* is facing double exploitation for its dwellers as well as the recycling companies as *Henancun* organizers. The exploitation derives from complex social, political and economic policies in Beijing, which have set a limit on migrants and *Henancun*’s capability in seeking security/stability and profitability. These limitations further forced migrants and recycling companies to adopt various coping strategies, formal and informal, legal and illegal, in Beijing in coping with the structural and institutional barriers they are facing in Beijing. Drawing upon the researches on a global scale, this study will challenge the existing Chinese studies on several main points through examining the nature of *Henancun*, the structural forces faced by *Henancun* dwellers as well as

recycling companies, the complex internal structure, migrants coping strategies and the sources of informality in *Henancun* and the recycling business.

In the reviewed literature, there are some issues I would like to point out before we move onto our analysis.

First, in Chinese internal migration and migrant enclave studies, I would like to argue that the contemporary studies on these issues have treated migrants as an indivisible group. This situation is not necessarily correct in many cities because the internal structure of migrants and their businesses are very complex and we should not treat them as one indivisible group in our studies.

Secondly, migrant enclaves, as well as *chengzhongcun*, are in general treated as one static place in the city. This is also not the case for *Henancun* since they have experienced repetitive demolition and relocation inside Beijing. The spatial trajectory of migrant enclaves is mostly missing in the literature as well.

Third, I also would like to pay specific attention to the complex nature of the structural and institutional barriers *Henancun* and its dwellers are facing in Beijing. While most of the institutional barrier studies of migrant enclaves and *chengzhongcun* have focused a lot on the land title and migrants' *Hukou* status, *Henancun* becomes an interesting case because the obstacles it is facing derive from both the migrants' temporary identity and the recycling business' informal status in the city.

Fourth, while many studies on marginality issues in other countries have explained the interactive but distinctive relationship between the marginalized groups' space (such as slum, shantytown or favela) and city, Chinese urban studies tend to treat the migrant enclaves as part of the city by default while they have largely ignored the self-sustainable

feature of these enclaves in the city. This is very convenient from an urban governance point of view since migrants are excluded from any potential rights to the urban land they are living. This study will try to challenge this default understanding by illustrating the complexity of *Henancun* it has developed to be through various self-institutionalized social services and social facilities. Although the chance of the long-term existence of “*Henancun*” is still very slim, the development of *different* migrant enclaves should be given enough respect in future Chinese urban studies.

Last but not least, while marginality studies have recorded migrants’ informal activities as a way to make their living in a stigmatized social circumstance, *Henancun* is still viewed by the local government from a pathological angle. The business’ operating styles, its limited investments, migrants’ activities in recycling are all part of the informal recycling business which the local government has been criticizing. However, how did informal activities become a norm in *Henancun* and recycling business has not been examined in any literature.

So, this study will try to challenge the existing literature from the above mentioned several points and hope this research could help people to have a relatively newer view on *Henancun*, its dwellers and the migrant recycling business in Beijing.

CHAPTER 3

THE DEVELOPMENT AND SPATIAL TRAJECTORY OF *HENANCUN*

In the 20 years of development, *Henancun* has always been telling a two-folded story: one with rural-to-urban migration, while another with the recycling business. Nowadays, *Henancun* makes possible the livelihood and business for more than 200,000 rural migrants through recycling in a city that resides 20,000,000 people. While some are long-term migrants who work in recycling with a regular schedule, some are short-term and seasonal to make quick money to fulfill their social obligations, such as paying for marriage, paying for neighbors' and friends' wedding, building houses and even paying for medical services. Generally speaking, internal migration and recycling business in Beijing made possible the emergence of *Henancun* recycling enclaves, and they go far beyond residential functions and serves as an economic, social and even political haven for both the "floating" migrants and the "informal" recycling in the city of Beijing, recycling, in fact, had nothing to do with *Henan* migrants till the late 1980s. *Henancun* becomes the way it is today in the historical process of a series of local policy changes, strict political controls, and exclusive social circumstances. This chapter focuses on the developing history and the spatial trajectory of recycling business in Beijing and *Henan* migrants' involvement to examine the meaning *Henancun* represents in the process of China's economic turn to the market economy.

3.1 Recycling Business in Beijing

Recycling business in Beijing has experienced dramatic changes from the 1950s to the 2000s along with significant policy changes happening in China. In general, it could be categorized into four periods based on recycling purposes, recycling population and recycling organization.

3.1.1 Recycling under Planned Economy

Recycling business in Beijing was in practice even before the Communist regime established in 1949. At that time, resources were scarce which ensured a very “efficient separation, collection, and re-utilization of all useable ‘wastes’ as secondary raw materials (Wilson, 2009:634). In Beijing, recycling businesses were mostly small-scale private family companies until mid-to-late 1950s when private companies were reorganized to become state or publicly owned under the “public–private joint management (公私合营)” program in China. In 1957, Beijing city government set up the Beijing Waste Company (北京市废品公司), which was renamed in 1965 to become Beijing Materials Recovery Company (BMRC) and Beijing Supply and Marketing Co-op was in charge of the BMRC, which served as the only official recycling network in Beijing (Shi and Furedy, 1993; www.lunnex.com). The BMRC was also in charge of district level recovery companies, which had two main functions in the recycling business: maintaining recyclable material flow and post-recycling processing.

To collect materials and maintain their flow from both residents and various businesses, BMRC has also set up district/county level MRCs, under which redemption stations have been arranged in each district/county to store and sort different materials for that specific district or county. Further, each redemption station also set up 20 to 30 recycling depots,

including both fixed location ones and itinerant ones, as nodal points to directly purchase recyclable materials from residents. In the recycling structure (See Figure 11), the redemption stations serve as an overall collection “market” for collecting all kinds of materials before processing, while the stations hired people to collect materials from industries, companies, and residents. For residential materials, the stations hired residents, mostly retired or unemployed people, as agents to run the recycling depots to buy materials from residents. The stations will provide them with funding to purchase materials and pay either monthly salaries or by percentage of the worth of materials they collected as their income. Also, recycling stations also assigned people to work at particular industries and mining companies and set up regular collecting schedules to maintain the material flow. During that time, each station had their operational territory and was responsible for its profits and losses based on their profit only²⁶. Further, redemption stations at that time also had material processing facilities based on different material types, for example in the metal section, there was cutting and pressing facilities. Also, transportation was also a stand-alone section of the recycling company to maintain the material flow smoothly between the upstream industries and station and also the station and downstream industries.

²⁶ Based on interviews with various government-run district level recycling companies in Beijing.

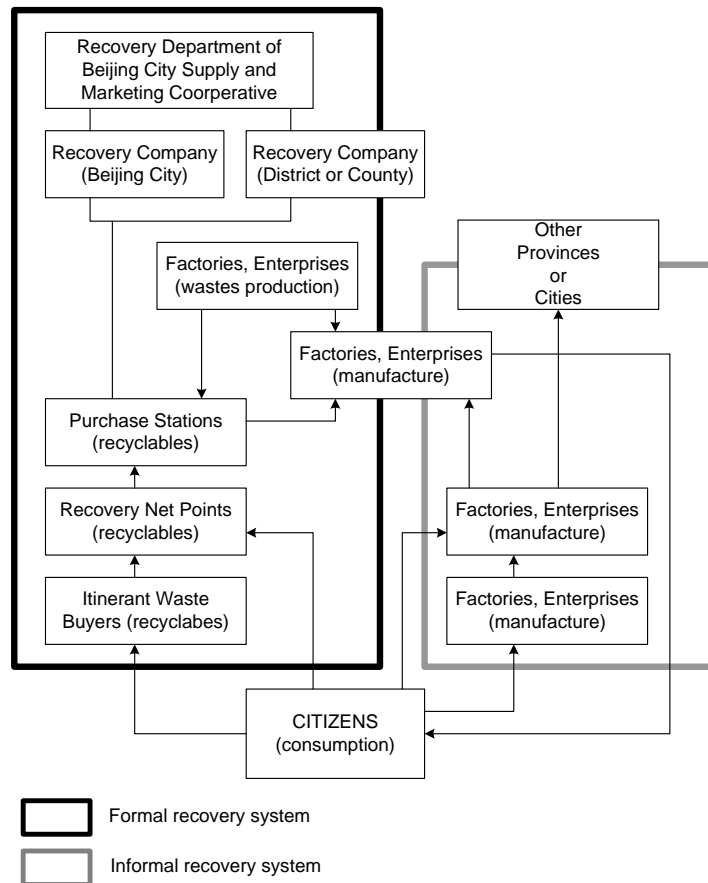


Figure 11: Chart: Beijing City materials' recovery system. (Source: Shi and Furedy, 1993)

However, due to the monopoly status, all stations were able to stay profitable at the time. Moreover, sometimes, recycling stations were picky about the materials and occasionally refused to send out trucks to collect materials for being “too little” or “too crappy (Mr. Wang, as Case 8 in Chapter 4).” In addition, the government also gives incentives to recycling companies as recycling business is under the category of “special industry (特殊行业),” which normally includes hotels, entertainments, auto repairing and rentals, pawn shops, auctions, stamp making, and recycling whose work is considered to have the potential to involve some illegal activities so that they need to be registered with the local police station. The income tax for recycling was reduced from 55% to 27.5%, and also

workers at different depots receive health care fees as incentives as well (Shi and Furedy, 1993).

In addition to all the benefits that recycling companies enjoyed under planned economy in China, recycling at the household level also worked as important extra income for families. Families tended to sort everything into details for recycling and also some everyday items, such as toothpaste and batteries, required families to trade in the used ones, toothpaste tubes and used batteries, in their purchase of new items. While the main purpose of the recycling company was to recover all types of materials, the recycling business was very efficient and effective. In 1985, 12 types of 274 subcategories of materials were under the recycling scheme (www.lunnex.com), while Shi and Furedy (1993) also recorded the official recycling data for 14 types of materials from 1983 and 1989 including fiber, paper, newspaper, old shoes, textiles, glass, plastic, rubber, bone, hair, steel & iron, copper, aluminum, lead and other. Besides, recycling during this time is highly controlled by the state and run only under the management of the official recycling companies. Even those contract workers for the companies are residents with financial difficulties or who have the flexibility to gain extra money for their families. This period of monopolized recycling lasts from the 1950s to around early 1980s when China introduced a series of state-level policy changes with the open policy in 1978.

3.1.2 Recycling in a Transition (the late 1970s—the mid-1990s)

At the end of the 1970s and early 1980s, China experienced an economic turn from a planned economy to a market economy through its open policy in 1978 (Chan 1996). In the 1980s, recycling, together with several other forms of small-scale service jobs such as newspaper stand, breakfast carts, milk delivery, parking lot watchers and night market

stations, provided many urban laid-off workers a second job opportunities after market economy out competed many traditionally State Owned Companies (SOCs), which were forced to lay off a significant number of employees. Also, after the market turn, the newly introduced “household responsibility system” in the rural areas in 1982 and the loosening of the ration system in the early 1980s also made possible a long suppressed rural-to-urban migration. Together with all the effects associated with this market economy turn, the recycling business experienced great change including the purpose of recycling, recycling population, and even recycling organization from the early 1980s to the mid-1990s. During this period, recycling business developed dramatically both in the formal realm and informal sector.

The first major change happening in the recycling business is the shift of the purpose of recycling from targeting resource recovery to be profit-driven. Shi and Furedy (1993) have shown that recycling has changed from covering all types of materials to focus on selected materials. They also explained that the transition was due to (1) the upgrading of people’s living standards, which made residents no longer take recycling profits as worthy; and (2) recycling companies’ focus on profit, which forced them to concentrate on selected profitable materials. After examining the recyclable material recovery data in Beijing from 1983-1989, the overall weight of recyclable materials dropped from 604,115 tons to 491,408 tons (Shi and Furedy, 1993). Also, the number of redemption stations set by the MRCs in Beijing declined from over 400 at its peak to 270 in 1989 (Shi and Furedy, 1993; Wilson *et al.*, 2009). Although the purpose of recycling changed in the 1980s, residents are still the only people who could hold a recycling license to

operate the recycling depots and redemption stations while recycling still served as an important employment opportunity for the local people who had difficulties in their lives. Furthermore, recycling also started to witness a population shift which accompanied the emergence of an informal recycling sector from the mid-1980s. The process of informalization in recycling is not only a result of the market turn, but rural-to-urban migration played an important role in the transition as well. After the “household responsibility” policy and a relaxed control on migration, rural population started to migrate to the major cities in search of job opportunities in the mid-1980s. From my interview with many migrant recyclers in Beijing, the pure motivation for migration was that “migration will at least save food for others at home.” Beijing happened to become many migrants’ first choice because, as several first-wave migrants recalled, “the capital of China should offer the best.” The perceived attractiveness of the city also came from the songs and magazines glorifying Beijing during the height of communist regime. However, when migrants arrived in Beijing, many joined jobs in manual work opportunities, such as farmers again (raising pigs, chickens or growing vegetables), contract factory cleaners, truck loaders, construction workers and other manual work as such. Most were not satisfied with their first jobs not only because of the meager income but also the rigid working schedule which differed drastically from their previous agricultural environment, where they had the freedom to determine their working schedules. When some migrants built up good personal relationship with their workplace, the latter would generously allow them to have any trash from the business operation for free as a bonus on top of their meager salaries. Through the process of selling recyclable materials to local registered recyclers, migrants gradually became connected with local

recycling workers. Over time, they also became aware of the very low entry requirement such that instead of selling materials to recyclers, they could take on this role. In the late 1980s, subcontracting jobs were popular among the traditional recycling depots even stations, and it was a very practical and safe way to materialize the local *Hukou* identity²⁷ with cash returns while locals retained their privileges as business owners and established urbanites. Finally, the rapid urban development guaranteed the generation of a vast amount of recyclable materials, which, in turn, created a surging demand for recycling jobs. Thus, the growing request of the recycling sector and the retreat of urban locals from the on-site recycling work created a perfect market niche for rural-to-urban migrants in need of jobs and ready to commit their hard work in Beijing.

In addition to the changes in the recycling purposes and population, the recycling structure was also under challenge between the mid-1980s and about mid-1990s. After rural-to-urban migrants had started to arrive at cities, recycling opened a very attractive market niche with little entry skills, flexible schedule and better paychecks. Starting from loading trucks for recycling, cleaning warehouses and companies, sorting materials in recycling depots, rural-to-urban migrants began to join the recycling business scene in Beijing. However, between the mid-1980s and mid-1990s, migrants either worked for the local recyclers or worked outside the formal structure. The right side of the Figure 10 clearly shows the informal recycling structure under development during this period. Moreover, in the following years, the informal half of the recycling business developed rapidly and gradually took over the formal structure in Beijing.

²⁷ Local urban *Hukou* status was required to open a recycling yard in the state-owned recycling company in the 1980s.

3.1.3 Developing Migrant Recycling Business in Beijing (the mid-1990s—around 2003)

Starting around 1992²⁸, the planned economy began to fade away from the recycling business, while migrants and private companies began to join the recycling business. It was around the year of 2005, the BMRCs and all district level recycling companies finished their turn from state or publicly owned to become joined stock enterprises entirely. This period witnessed the transition of the recycling business from the official system to a migrant-dominated private recycling type. However, the turn is not in all aspects “complete” in that migrant-run recycling activities we considered “informal” even after the formal business gradually stepped out of the recycling scene. But this period is crucial in shaping migrants’ role in a once formal business in Beijing and changed the overall landscape of recycling since.

The formal-to-informal recycling structure shift was closely related to the developing of a market economy, whereby efficiency leads to advantages. When migrants entered the recycling business, they started to compete with state-owned and collectively owned companies. Due to the low efficiency, complex administrative system, and high welfare costs of state-owned and collectively owned enterprises, they started to lose business to the family-based, small-scale, highly flexible, and efficient migrant counterparts. A former manager of a district MRC²⁹ revealed that “in about 1999, almost all the state-owned or collectively owned recycling enterprises could no longer make the same profits as during the time of state monopoly.” One example suffices to show how this transition

²⁸ www.lunnex.com

²⁹ The state-owned recycling company at the time of the interview was not conducting any recycling work. The state-owned company had become a landlord and was using the rent collected to pay the salaries and welfare for the company workers, who were no longer working in the recycling business.

changed the recycling business in Beijing: In 1998, the *Chaoyang* district reorganized the district recycling enterprise principally by setting up five recycling buyers' market (redemption stations) in order to keep all the recycling activities in order. Only one market still functions as a post-processing (packaging) center in 2011, while the other four have been demolished, redeveloped, and become the property of the recycling companies who collect rents as their primary income. Since the mid-1990s, some migrant recyclers have already saved enough money and started to open their own recycling companies through the help from the official MRCs. During this time, recycling business was still considered as a "special industry" and requires application to the local police office for the special industry permit to apply for the business license. The permit was only given to local *Hukou* holders in Beijing, which made only the local *Hukou* holders as recycling license holders. Between 1995 and 2003, an upward mobility sequence started to develop among migrant recyclers from working as itinerant recyclers, community recyclers to material yard buyers (being in charge of recycling depots for buying materials from residents) and then to be in charge of the redemption stations. Although migrants started to become a dominant power in the recycling scene, recycling licenses were still tightly controlled by the central and local government. Recycling licenses were only issued to the local residents who worked in the official recycling business and recycling was still treated as a "special industry (特种行业)." Thus, although rural migrants are working in all different areas of recycling, they still could not open their own recycling business independently in Beijing. And even when some migrants already started to build redemption stations, the recycling license for the station was still under the name of someone who worked for the official recycling business. This

situation lasted until 2003 when Beijing Government published “Notice on Beijing People’s Government Publication of the Third Round of Canceling and Adjusting Administrative Review Project List in Beijing.”³⁰ Officially, this notice has canceled the “special industry” status of recycling and second-hand market in Beijing while recycling companies are required to be registered directly with the Municipal Industry and Commerce Administration.

Besides the economic and business transition happening during this period, migrant recyclers’ marginalized social and political status, in fact, catalyzed the formation of recycling enclaves in Beijing. During this period, many recycling workers mentioned their experience with the *Shourong* policy³¹, by which many migrant workers were put into custody for never-happened stealing or other cases. To stay away from further harasses, many migrants chose to join organized recycling yards for protection. Since most migrant recyclers were from *Henan* province at that moment, they formed a proto form of migrant enclave focusing on recycling business—*Henancun*. One of the interview respondents (Mr. Zhou as Case 5 in Chapter 4) said that “I never went outside the recycling enclave after I was locked up twice. The profit [in the enclave] was not as good as outside, but it felt much safer in the enclaves. Ironically, many itinerant recyclers started to save their money at my house because it was insecure for them to keep money with them on the street and our house was much safer than theirs. The banking business inside enclaves helped my yard buyer business a lot.” During this period, *Henan* recycling enclaves emerged in different parts of Beijing. Many enclaves, in the name of a recycling company, also supported the development of *Henan* hometown restaurants,

³⁰ 北京市人民政府文件 京政发[2003]8号 北京市人民政府关于印发北京市第三批取消和调整行政审批项目目录的通知 <http://govfile.beijing.gov.cn/Govfile/ShowNewPageServlet?id=2263>

³¹ More detailed information about *Shourong* is in Chapter 4.

public bathrooms, middle and primary schools and kindergartens for migrants, and even pools of temporary labor workers also started to gather around different *Henancun* in Beijing.

In 1999, Beijing Materials Recovery Company (BMRC) finished its transition from collectively owned to a joint stock company, which is still owned by the Beijing Supply and Marketing Co-op. But the company no longer collects all material types but only focuses on selected materials, the post-processing phase of the recycling business and businesses on international trade. (www.baike.com)

3.1.4 Domination of Migrants in Recycling (2003-Present)

With the retreat of the formal recycling business from the collection phase of the recycling business, migrant-run business gradually dominated this area. When the restriction on recycling business license holders' *Hukou* registration was lifted by the city governments in 2003, *Henan* migrants began to out-compete the traditional state-owned and collectively owned recycling enterprises and came to dominate the recycling business. In 2003, *Henan* migrants started to operate, manage and open the recycling companies as well. Based on the original official business structure, *Henan* migrants developed their own informal hierarchical recycling business structure in Beijing. By then, *Henan* migrants outnumbered others in this economic sector and they have dominated almost every aspects of the business hierarchy.

At the same time, urban redevelopment projects have also speeded up the transition of recycling towards migrants' domination. Under the official document "advice about testing on promoting the development of Beijing's large-scale company based recycling

system³²” in 2006, all recycling markets and sorting businesses should be outside the 5th ring road of Beijing. In 2005, *Chaoyang* District introduced a program to regulate and standardize the recycling business as well. The traditional state-owned and collectively owned recycling companies faced lots of pressure for closing down from the district government because they were well registered and recorded in the administrative system. Meanwhile, the informal nature of many migrant-run businesses and their small size in comparison with the state-owned and collectively owned recycling centers help the migrant recycling enterprises survive the government review and further to dominate the recycling market (by interviews with Mr. Wang, Case 8 in Chapter 4). Nowadays, Beijing’s recycling market is dominated by *Henan* recyclers, and *Henancun* serves as important gathering, sorting and distributing centers in the recycling processes. Throughout the history of recycling business after its early reorganization around 1958, the recycling business has completed a transition from a state-owned or collectively owned business to mainly *Henan*-migrants-dominated private business in Beijing. During this process, although *Henan* migrants’ economic income increased significantly, their political status is still limited thanks to *Hukou*-constrained discrimination and the “informal” status of recycling business itself. Similar to ethnic economy, recycling serves as an essential market niche in sustaining migrants’ livelihood in their migration and resembling the ethnic enclave economy, *Henancun* become important ethnic enclaves in Beijing to give migrants residential, economic and social support in their migration destination. An ethnic economy and ethnic enclave economy are emerging through the

³² 关于推进北京市再生资源回收体系产业化发展试点方案的实施意见
www.bjmbc.gov.cn/download/ad/1069516645.doc

Henancun enclave in Beijing, although some discrepancies from the theories are apparent in the enclave development processes, which I will elaborate in the following section.

3.2 Informal Recycling Business Structure in Beijing

In today's Beijing, *Henan* migrants dominate the recycling business in almost every aspect and its operation has virtually eliminated the traditional formal recycling business in the collection phase of the business. However, in order to efficiently maintain the material flow of recyclable materials, they have adopted a similar business structure. Today's recycling operation is fundamentally different from the formal one in that it relies solely on the profits derived from price differences in each stage of the material flow and highly depends on the market price fluctuation of the materials. The collection of materials is no longer channeled towards one designated company as in the planned economy and market price is almost the only driven force to maintain the material flow from its source to the collector.

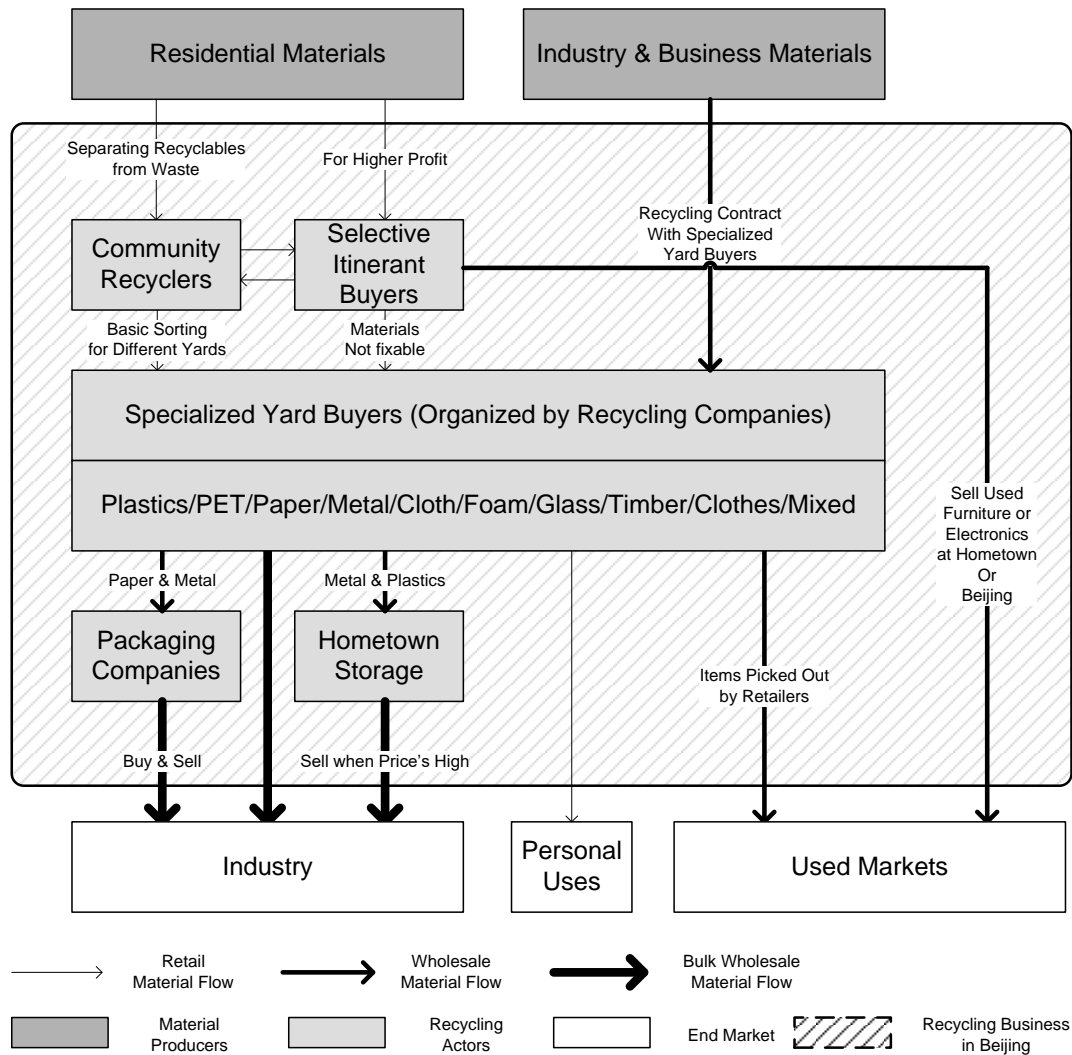


Figure 12: Chart: Informal recycling structure in Beijing today

(1) Community Recyclers have a fixed location at the gate of their assigned community with a “legit” recycling permit assigned by the township government, which they have the priority to buy all the recyclable materials from the community residents. They generally do primary sorting to separate different materials in order to sell to different yard buyers. When they collected enough materials to fill up their tricycles, trucks or vans, they will take them to the recycling yard and sell them based on different yards’ specialized materials. For large items, such as furniture and household appliances, the community recyclers normally sell them directly to the itinerant buyers who rove around

among different communities for these large items. The community recyclers in general rent a living space next to the buyers' market so they can go back home directly after selling materials in the market.

(2) Itinerant Recyclers neither have a fixed location nor have recycling permits from any local organizations. They only focus on targeted high-profit items, normally either furniture or household appliances. Driving or riding their tricycles, trucks or vans, each of these buyers normally has a preferred territory where they know all the community recyclers and also send out their name cards to residents in order to secure sources for the targeted materials. After collecting a full load of items, they will return to the buyers' market, first try to fix the items and sell as used furniture or appliances either to bulk buyers or ship them back to hometown used market for higher profits. If the items are not fixable, they will disassemble the item and sell parts based on the material type they recover from it.

(3) Specialized Yard Buyers lease their yard from the (4) Recycling Companies and choose to specialize in specific materials, such as general plastics, PET (#1 plastic, polyethylene terephthalate), paper, metal, cloth, foam, glass, timber, clothes or mixed materials not belonging to any class. After community recyclers and itinerant buyers sell their primarily sorted materials to the yard buyers, hired workers or family members of the yard owner run detailed sorting based on how industry wants the materials. These buyers normally try to "secure" a certain group of returning sellers to maintain the inflow of materials. After the detailed sorting and before the materials are shipped to the packaging company or industry, people with special interests (Personal Use) will come to yards and buy items to their specific interest. For example, book collectors or sellers will

buy their favorite, based on weight, from the book pile to either keep for their own or sell in the used book market. Or, from a pile of steel bars, a craftsman might find cheap materials for model making. In PET recycling, some businessman would come to purchase bottle caps containing promotional codes at a discounted price. All these activities open specific minor niche markets for specialized persons with interests to extract the potential values from materials before they are shipped to be materialized. After these people picked out the valuable materials, the yard buyers will pack the leftovers onto a truck and ship them to Hometown Storage³³, deliver to a (5) Packaging Company³⁴ or transport to specific industrial Factories. Some yard buyers also have contracts with Industries or Businesses to buy a specific type of waste from them. The buyers routinely pick up loads of materials and keep them in a clean shape and in large quantities in order to sell for a better price.

(6) Used Market also serves as an important receiver of recycling materials. Most of them focus on high-value items such as furniture or household appliances. These markets are also closely associated with recycling business through different channels. Some market sellers are also itinerant buyers while some would go to the entrance of *Henancun* to buy from other itinerant recyclers before they arrive at the market. Some recycling company owners also expand their businesses to include used market into their recycling company by providing a particular yard to reside the appliance itinerant buyers while providing them storage spaces in front of their rented houses.

³³ Hometown Storage is for specific materials, such as plastics or metal. These materials are expensive and the price is not stable throughout the year. Buyers of these materials purposely keep them for a period of time to achieve a buy-low-sell-high strategy.

³⁴ Packaging Companies are formal companies, which reduce the size of the recyclable materials, mostly for cardboard or metal, by pressing the materials into cubes for further long-distance shipment.

This recycling structure adopts parts of the traditional structure of the state-owned recycling business. Their business is viewed as “informal” while the business operation has long been criticized for being “dirty, messy and backward (脏乱差)” due to its open-market operation and various pollution issues associated with the sorting and processing process. While the situation is similar to the status of recycling in many developing countries, in China, there is no sign of intention to further regulate or incorporate them into the urban system as appearing to be more and more relevant in other contexts.

3.3 Recycling as a “Migrant” and Informal Business

Although recycling in China has long been associated with “garbage picking” activities, the scale of recycling activities has far exceeded the level of “picking” in garbage piles. While China has kept its economic growth at two-digit level since 1992 for about 20 years, the waste produced from people’s enriched lives has opened a giant niche market for rural migrants in the cities. As an official report “A report on the recycling population in Beijing” conducted by Beijing Ministry of Commerce in July, 2012, about 14,000 people are registered to be working in the official recycling stations or depots. In addition, there are 1617 registered resource recycling companies and 98,000 people working as registered recyclers. Based on the registered recycling stations/depots and recycling companies, 112,000 people are registered recyclers in Beijing. In addition, the report also commented that only about 22.1% of the recycling companies are unregistered while around 80% of the recycling stations/depots are also unregistered, an estimate of 200,000 people is always referred to be the total number working in the recycling business in Beijing. And from the percentage of unregistered recycling activities, the original official system has lost its dominating status to their informal counterparts. And, recycling has

gradually adopted a “migrant” label with it in Beijing. This section will focus on the dominance of migrants in recycling through a descriptive analysis of my questionnaire based study.

3.3.1 Migrants in Recycling

Nowadays, recycling business in Beijing is dominated by rural migrants but in fact, these migrants are mostly from only a handful of provinces, such as *Henan*, Hebei, Sichuan, Hunan, etc. And the most significant province associated with the recycling business in Beijing is undoubtedly the *Henan* province. Even out of the 18 administrative units at the city level in *Henan* province, most recycling migrants come from the *Gushi* County of the *Xinyang* City area. Based on the 303 respondents (out of 304 in total) who provided their hometown information, 74% are from *Henan* province, while only 14% are from Hebei province as the second largest contributing province (Figure 13).

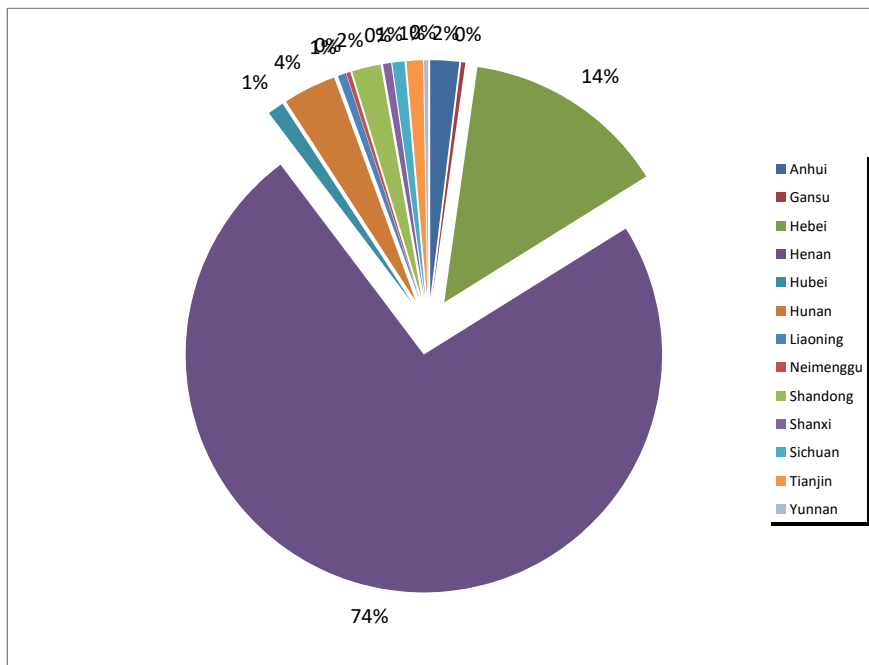


Figure 13: Pie chart: Migration origins³⁵

³⁵ See Appendix F. Q1.4 PHUKOU

This is also well reflected in the urban landscape around all the recycling centers in Beijing. Almost every recycling enclave has certain social and economic aspects from *Gushi* County, *Henan* province. The connection between the recycling enclaves and *Henan* province is also visible through various stores featuring *Henan* hometown restaurants, *Henan*-flavor deli stores, *Henan* hometown style snack shops and the long-distance bus services between Beijing and *Henan*. (Figure 14)



Figure 14: Photograph: *Gushi* and *Henan* elements outside a recycling enclave

Because of its close tie to the *Gushi* county and *Henan* province, the recycling enclaves in Beijing is considered as a form of *Henan* migrant enclave in Beijing, which is comparable with other migrant enclaves, such as Zhejiang village, Xinjiang village and Anhui village (Fan and Taubmann, 2002; Gu and Liu, 2002). In addition, as rural migrants from *Gushi* county of *Henan* province are associated closely with the recycling business, the recycling business has also been labeled as a matter of *Henan* migrants' business in Beijing. So, these recycling enclaves are also a form of migrant enclaves, which for easy notation is also named as "*Henan* enclaves," a.k.a. *Henancun* (translated directly as *Henan* village) in Chinese.

3.3.2 The Informality of Recycling

As we have illustrated that the official recycling structure has given way to the migrants-run informal recycling structure, the business itself has also become "informal"

comparing with its traditional official status. Although the informality of recycling business in China echoes similar status as informal recyclers in the form of garbage scavengers and tax avoiders in other developing and developed countries, the Chinese version of informality is due in large part to (1) the political and administrative structures; (2) pollution issues; and (3) safety and security related critics.

The first reason for the informal status of recycling business is due to the political or administrative structure in managing recycling. In most countries, recycling is or is encouraged to be part of the Solid Waste Management program (Wilson *et al.*, 2009) to promote recycling to reduce solid waste. However, in the administrative system of China, the Solid Waste Management is under the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development, while the Ministry of Commerce is in charge of the recycling companies and activities after the official recycling business gave way to the migrant recycling business. As illustrated in Chapter 1, recycling companies and activities have been considered as an economic activity instead of a type of service provided to the public. Comparing with other high-tech or international corporations in the charge of Ministry of Commerce, the recycling activities and companies do not represent the “modern” image of China’s economic development, which put these activities as a burden instead of a glory for the ministry. This status has left recycling largely out of the Solid Waste Management Plan. Thus, in the “Comments about Developing Test Plans for Incorporating Resource Recovery Companies in Beijing³⁶,” Ministry of Commerce made development plans for recycling business and focused mainly on regulating or formalizing the economic activities and limiting the local pollution impacts from the

³⁶ 关于引发《关于推进北京市再生资源回收体系产业化发展试点方案的实施意见》的通知 京商交字[2006]52 号

recycling activities in Beijing. By treating recycling and solid waste management separately, recycling business itself does not have the status of a service provider to better the environment, but has to strive to maintain profitable while being labeled a potential threat to the environment in Beijing.

And, recycling business has been viewed as a polluter in the city throughout its collecting, transporting, sorting and storing processes. Recycling process normally reverses the distribution process and thrives solely on profits which are based on the profits earned through transportation and sorting from the retail to the wholesale operations. In the collecting stage, roving vendors' tricycles are officially not allowed by the government due to the potential to drop materials onto the street. In the transporting stage, the Ministry of Commerce also has regulations for recycling stations and depots to use unified close-back trucks to ensure zero-pollution. When the recyclable materials reach the recycling yards, sorting process is also related to pollution as fragmented parts, waste water (in washing process), and even some illegal burning of rubber casing around the metal wires that are sought for. After sorting, the packaging and long-distance transportation also have the potential to leave traces of solid waste along the roads. As Beijing Municipal Commission of City Administration and Environment (北京市市容管理委员会) is in charge of the cleanness of Beijing while recycling is under the management from the Ministry of Commerce, recycling, as a form of economic activity, is viewed quite as a "polluter" rather than a waste reducer.

In addition, recycling enclaves, in the shape of open markets, are quite vulnerable to fire accidents, which put these enclaves under high risk not only from the fire accidents but also various unfair policies to prevent fire incidents. In recent years, several fire accidents

in Beijing's recycling enclaves or used markets have tightened the control on renewing license for these enclaves in some districts. Several recycling enclaves experienced forced demolition in *Daxing* District after a severe garment processing related fire incident on Apr. 25th, 2011, which caused 17 deaths and 25 injured. Meanwhile, the recycling enclaves in *Daxing* district could not complete their annual recycling license renewal with the District Commerce Bureau due to the fire incident. In addition, the township government further shut down various *Henancun*'s voluntary projects to "formalize" and "standardize" their recycling operation and banned all recycling activities that are associated with potential fire causing materials especially cloth recycling. While different local government departments are in charge of different aspect of the recycling business, when an unexpected hazard situation happens, like the fire incident in *Daxing* district, it is not uncommon for the government to stop recycling business all at once.

Last but not least, recycling, as a way to turn used parts back to raw materials, is also criticized for the inherent nature of its potential association with stolen items. When the police receive stealing case report, the first target they check is always the recycling enclaves in the adjacent areas. In all of the recycling enclaves, the manager's office always has the chart to illustrate what is forbidden from recycling on their walls (Figure 15). To some extent, recycling markets are always under police's radar as related to stealing activities, which not only leads to a stigmatized reputation to the recycling enclaves but also put recycling business at risk financially for accidentally purchasing stolen materials as well.



Figure 15: Photograph: Forbidden items from recycling posted by police

3.4 Informal and Unstable Recycling Space in Beijing

3.4.1 Informal Recycling Space in the Making

The emergence of *Henancun*, or recycling enclaves, as crucial migrant clustering space is closely related to the city's discriminatory policy on the rural migrants in Beijing. In the beginning of the enclave development stage, migrants are partially forced to join the enclave due to safety reasons, which could be seen from various migrants' responses about their experience with the *Shourong*³⁷ policy in Beijing in the 1990s. The notorious *Shourong* policy, including *Shourong* education and *Shourong* Forwarding, was in place officially from 1982 to 2003. In 1982, this policy was initially designed to help, educate, help settle and return to hometown the homeless and panhandlers in the city as a way to apply social welfare and maintain the “image” of cities. But in the early 1990s, the policy started to include people with no legal residential permits (national ID), no stable living space (temporary residential permit) or no stable income (outsourcing labor permit) in the city. This policy has lead to many controversial debates across China and many migrant workers were locked up and sent back to their hometown if they couldn't afford the price

³⁷ *Shourong*: 收容 in Chinese, which literarily means “to take in”

to bribe themselves out. Out of the 303 respondents in the questionnaires, 72 reported to have experienced *Shourong* lock-up from the policy, which has significant effects on migrants who arrived in Beijing between 1990 and 2005.

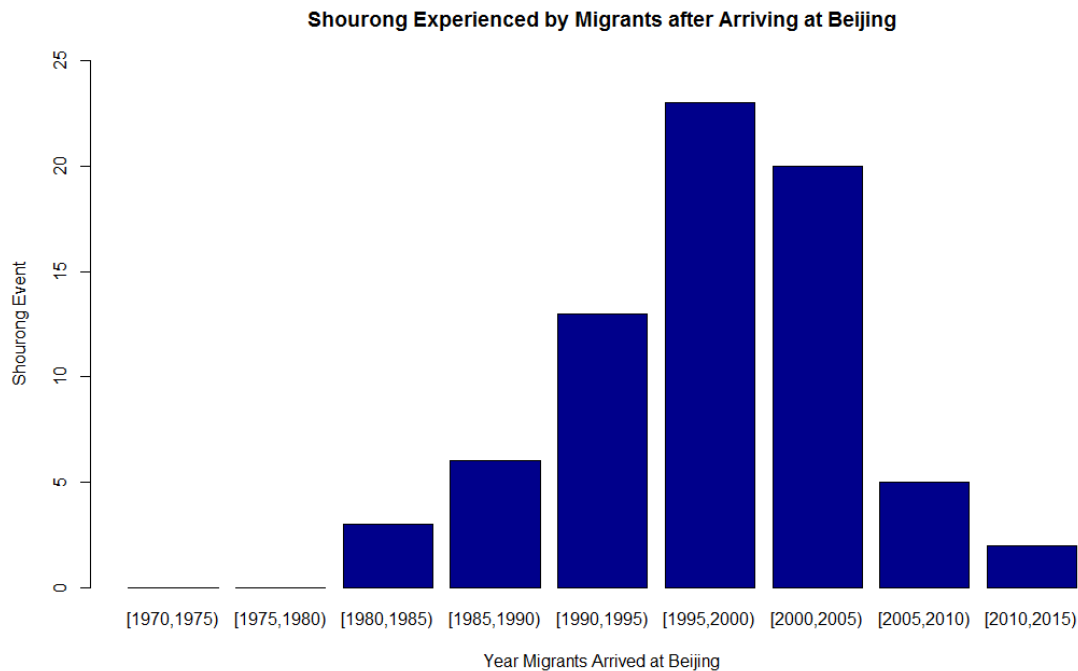


Figure 16: Chart: *Shourong* experienced by migrants after arriving at Beijing

In addition to t³⁸he aggregated questionnaire data; many interviewees have told their stories of the *Shourong* policy, and many left Beijing to escape the potential threats from *Shourong* policy as a result. *Shourong* policy's effect is especially significant for people who worked mostly on the street for a living. Here's a quote from one interview respondent, Mr. Zhou (Case 5 in Chapter 4), as he stated his personal experience with *Shourong* policy. After a *Shourong* lockup in 1990 and forced by the police to beat other locked-up migrants, Mr. Zhou went back to his hometown in *Henan* province for one year to escape any possible revenge from other migrant workers. Then he returned to Beijing in 1991 to continue his bottle recycling.

³⁸ See Appendix F. Q1.1 FYINBJ & Q1.22 *SHOURONG*.

“I recycled glass bottles in *Wohuqiao*, but bought them at *You'anmen*. At that time, one bottle sold for ten fen, but we bought them at nine. So basically, we made money on transportation. Every morning, we went there at 4 or 5am. It was about 20-30 kilometers away. We rode tricycle over and loaded the gunny sacks then came back to *Wohuqiao* market to sell. However, all the three of us were stopped by the Community Watch (Public Order Joint Defense Force) and put away for stealing gunny sacks [which almost cost nothing and highly available across Beijing's market at the time]. Then, I had to admit stealing and let two friends to go back to the market for help. The market owner showed proof for my legal stay on the market and also paid a fee to take me out. After the lock-up, I stayed in the market *all* the time. We only made about 50 *yuan* a day but were safe for staying inside the market *all* the time.”

In addition to *Henancun*'s affordable housing, the threat from *Shourong* policy also sped up the enclave formation. As the case of Mr. XF, several interview respondents had shared their agreement with the reluctance of going onto the street for recycling activities when the threat of *Shourong* policy was in effect. Thus, to some extent, *Henancun*, as a migrant recycling enclave also gained support from migrants themselves as a way to protect themselves against the unfair, stigmatized and discriminatory policy that was in Beijing, which greatly hinders recycling activities. Thus, although *Henancun* is “informal” to some extent in the city, they provided an informal space for protection in the business and secured migrants' livelihood in a way not to be affected by the hostile urban environment.

Furthermore, when more migrant workers took advantage of *Henancun*'s affordable housing and market's protection, various services also started to emerge around *Henancun* areas to complement the neglected social infrastructure. Migrants began to open business and social service facilities such as hometown restaurants, grocery stores, deli shops, long-distance bus services between Beijing and *Gushi* country of *Henan* province, afternoon markets (selling whatever left from a city morning market), migrant primary and middle schools, public bathing facilities and even hotels. Figure 17, 18 and 19 show where migrants choose to buy grocery and living supplies and we can see that most of the respondents buy grocery inside the *Henancun* and about half of them also shop living supplies in *Henancun* as well. Also, temporary workers started to gather around several spots along the streets around *Henancun* and used markets, temporarily built rental housing and even unlicensed taxis all started their business around this neglected area in the city. Although the *Henancun* has the reputation for being "temporary" and "informal," it opens many potential opportunities for the non-recycling migrants whose livelihood now depend solely on the patronage from the residents in *Henancun* area as well.

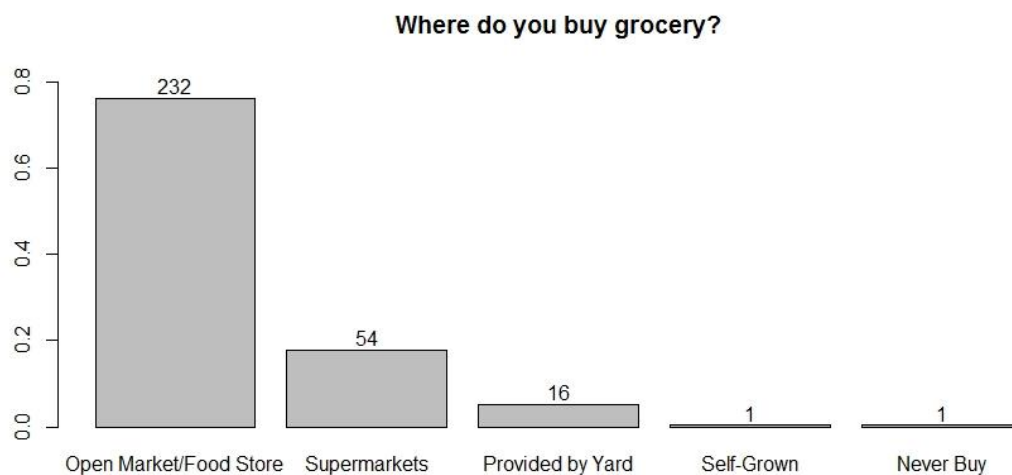


Figure 17: Chart: Where to buy groceries

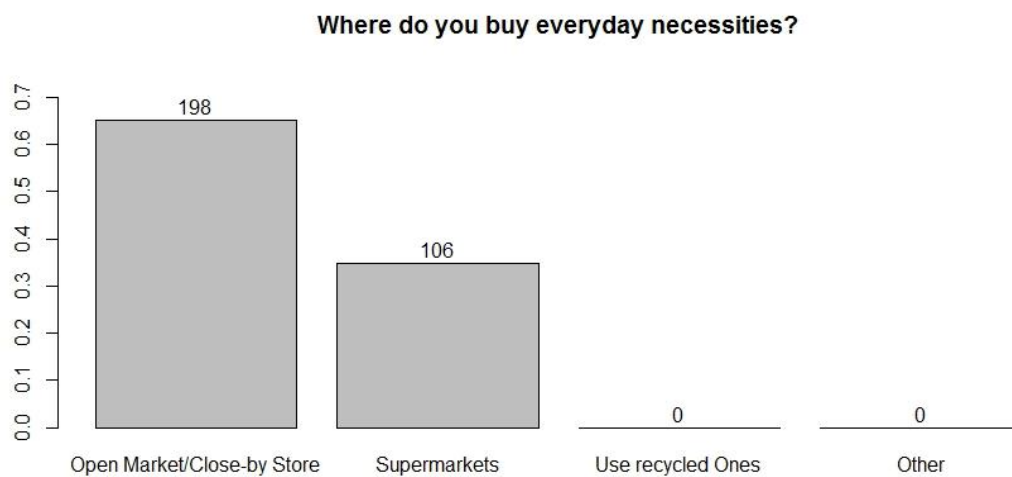


Figure 18: Chart: Where to buy other supplies³⁹

³⁹ See Appendix F. Q2.1 BUYFOOD & Q2.2 BUYOTHER



Figure 19: Photography: Self-organized Services in *Henancun*
 (top left: Hometown (*Xinyang*) Deli; top right: Selling fruits at market
 bot left: *Zhenhua* migrant school; bot right: Selling seafood at market)

With a self-sufficient social service system, *Henancun* gradually started to isolate or to be isolated from the city due to various potential *Shourong* threats that were in place still the early 2000s. Furthermore, *Henancun*, together with other “informal” services exist almost exclusively on the fringe of Beijing due to land availability and affordable housing, which are also mostly invisible to the Beijing local residents. From our questionnaire, most of the migrants in the recycling business rarely communicate with Beijing local people (Figure 20). Because of the long existing *Shourong* policy and stigmatization which relates recycling workers with liars, thieves, and being dirty, migrants also bear the pressure when entering the urban “formal” space as well. Mr. Zhou mentioned his experience with taking subway in Beijing and in his own words,

“When I go to the city, I always try to avoid buses or subways, because my hands look different. They are full of callus from working with trash and the dirt in my fingernails can never be cleared. Also, I never sit down either on buses or in subways because my clothes are not as clean and I don’t want people to judge me on that.”

In Beijing, the distinction between informal, rural, or outside sphere and formal, urban, or local sphere is very strong due to the long existing stigmatization by associating crimes, poverty, dirtiness, despised jobs, and misdemeanors with rural migrants in the public media. This unfair situation has penetrated every aspect in both local residents’ and migrants’ business as well as livelihood. In the case of recycling business, local residents and businesses are able to conduct recycling activities through the agent of community or contract recyclers, who are required to have recycling permits through the local community (while unlicensed recyclers normally pay extra to secure their material in-flow). Except for the short negotiation on price, where materials are shipped to and how they are sorted are not visible or aware to/by the local people. In the industrial and business realm, recycling yards normally sign official annual contract with a particular industry or business. In *Henancun*, almost every yard, especially the metal and plastic recycling yards, has a car in order to show the strength of the company in front of the contract customers; however, as one yard buyer illustrated that “I almost never drive it for personal reasons because the market is so unstable and I can’t afford to drive it too much.”

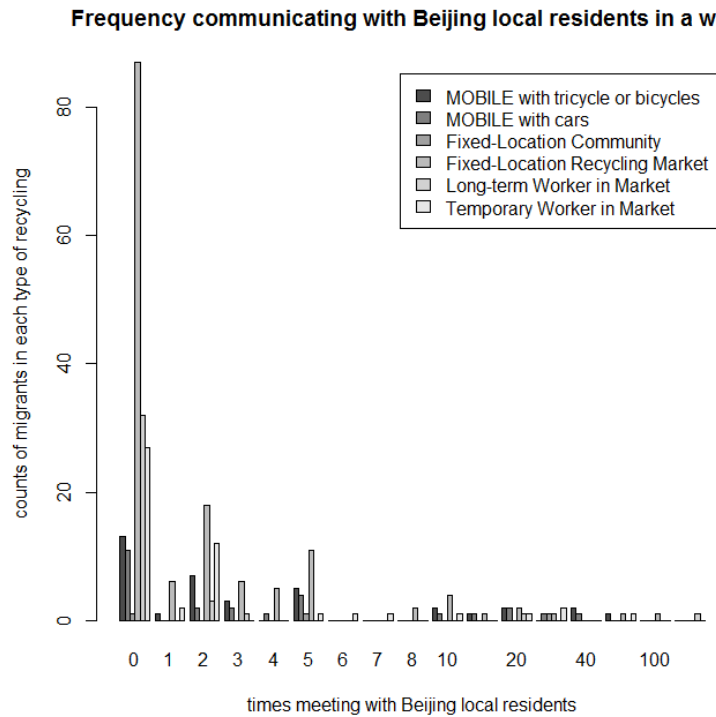


Figure 20: Chart: Frequency communicating with Beijing local residents in a week⁴⁰

However, at the same time, the connection between the two is invisibly ubiquitous in every aspect as well. Although invisible, *Henancun* serves as an important site for collecting, sorting, packaging and shipping recycled materials from the end users back to the industry. They are also the practitioners of carry out recycling activities to support the sustainability and environmental protection advertisement hanging everywhere on the streets in Beijing. But most local residents do not have any clue about what people are doing when they ride tricycles or electronic ones on the streets in Beijing, not to mention where they live at night. It is precisely the divided urban vs. rural, formal vs. informal sphere in the city that not only led to but also reinforced the coherence of *Henancun* in recycling migrants' business and livelihood.

⁴⁰ See Appendix F. Q.2.4 INTOUCHBJ.

3.4.2 Unstable Recycling Space in the Contract

The first step to start a recycling enclave, or *Henancun*, is to lease a piece of land from the village government. However, under the Chinese land system, when most recycling companies leased the land from the local village government, the land remains collectively owned, which leaves companies little bargaining space when the land faces redevelopment by a township or district government. Unfortunately, due to their adjacency to the city, these places also happen to be the place to produce the highest potential profit through redevelopment by the state. Therefore, the recycling enclaves have been facing serious threat of being demolished for urban renewal (with compensation) and the companies would have to find another location to continue their business. Throughout the past 25 years, *Henancun* has been constantly changing its location and these migrant-run recycling businesses and enclaves have always been ready to move since every first day they arrive at a new location.

In the land leasing contract between *Henancun* and yard buyers in *Daxing* district, there are five explicitly stated responsibilities for the yard buyers.

- “1. If the contract cannot be carried out due to irresistible factors (natural disasters, national policy adjustments, national land expropriation, or market’s need to use the yard space), neither party take any economic responsibilities. The concurrent month rent will be adjusted based on the actual days in business.
2. The yard buyers are required to have safety measures on fire prevention, theft prevention and gas prevention. If accidents happen, yard buyers will take all the responsibilities and the market will not take any responsibility.

3. If no incidents happen during the contract period, the cash collateral will be fully returned to the yard buyers. If there are any incidents happen against regulations, disciplines or market rules, charges will first be taken from the cash collateral and the yard buyers are required to pay in full within one week.
4. In case of a yard buyer's improper business attitudes, breaking rules, affecting normal business activities and the buyer do not adjust their behavior, the market will clear the particular buyer's yard. All the economic loss, rent and cash collateral will not be returned.
5. If the provided houses are not enough for yard buyers to carry out recycling activities, yard buyers are allowed to build by themselves but the houses have to be built to the same standard as required by the market. All the constructions belong to the market and the yard buyers do not have the rights to demolish."

As in the first responsibility, national land expropriation is viewed as irresistible, which although is quite common in all different businesses especially in renting. But *Henancun* has experience much more demolition than other businesses or enclaves due to its normally adjacent location to the city, which makes them face much more direct threats from urban sprawl, urbanization and redevelopment projects.

3.5 Outward Moving Trend of Henancun in Beijing

Since the late 1980s, *Henancun* has started to emerge in Beijing. And throughout the past 20 years, it has experienced many demolition and relocation events in its developing process. Because the recyclable materials are generated mostly in the city, these enclaves

tried their best to stay as close to the recyclable sources as possible. But as the city sprawls, the markets lost their rented land and gradually move outward towards the fringe of Beijing. The questionnaires asked migrants about their previous locations in Beijing, the time they spend there, and the particular work they carried out at each place. In the total of 303 questionnaire replies, 238 respondents filled out their spatial trajectory in Beijing. Based on their responses, I have developed a series of maps (Figure 21-27) to document where they were since the first migrant arrived in Beijing in 1971. The three different colors used are associated with three distinct enclaves where I took the survey and the location only captures their location at the end year in the specified period in the map. Figure 28 compiled all the respondents together to show their previous location versus their current locations. And a clear trend of outward movement can be seen in migrants' spatial history in Beijing.

The timeline of the demolition and relocation of *Henancun* are closely associated with urban development projects such as fourth and fifth ring roads constructions, Olympic Park development, new residential center construction, river management projects and also projects to “build new socialist countryside (新农村建设).” Fig 29 illustrated the locations that more than four migrants have reported to stay before versus the existing locations which are recorded through interviews with recyclers during the fieldwork. During my fieldwork in 2012 and 2013, DXK *Henancun* is in the process of being closed and demolished for “new socialist countryside development⁴¹, ” and many migrant recyclers have already moved out of one market in DXK region to seek new locations to farther north.

⁴¹ 社会主义新农村建设

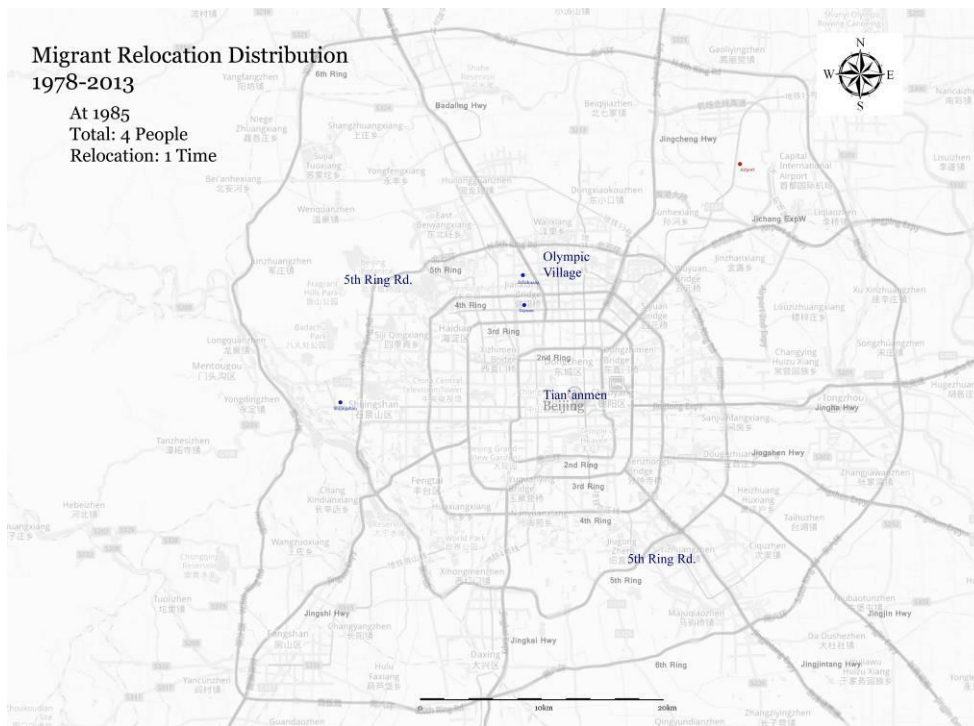


Figure 21: Map: Questionnaire respondents' locations in 1985

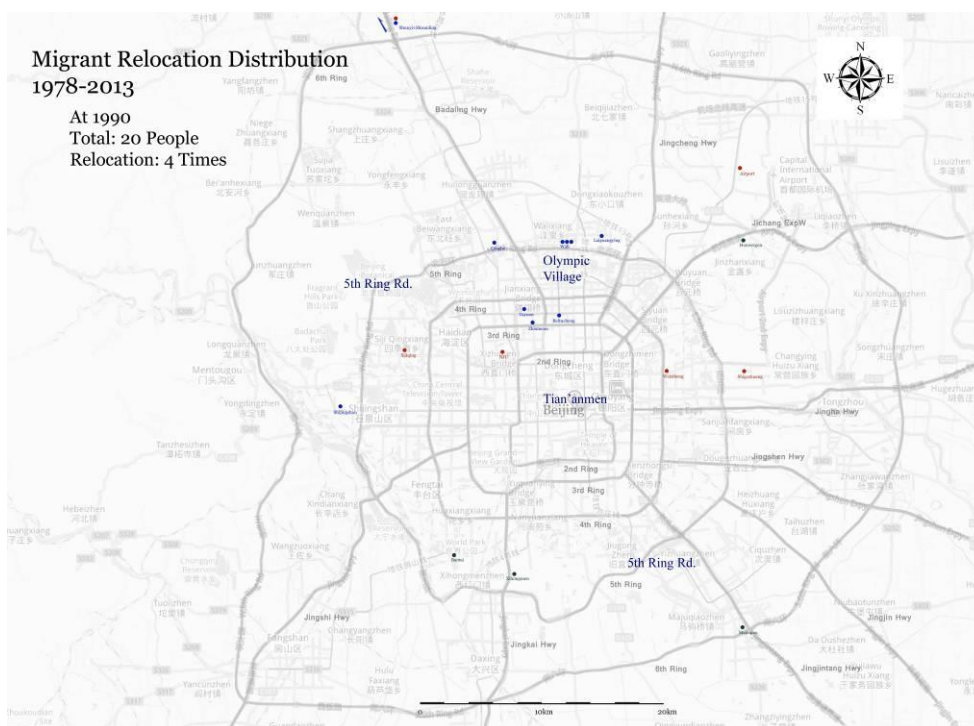


Figure 22: Map: Questionnaire respondents' locations in 1990

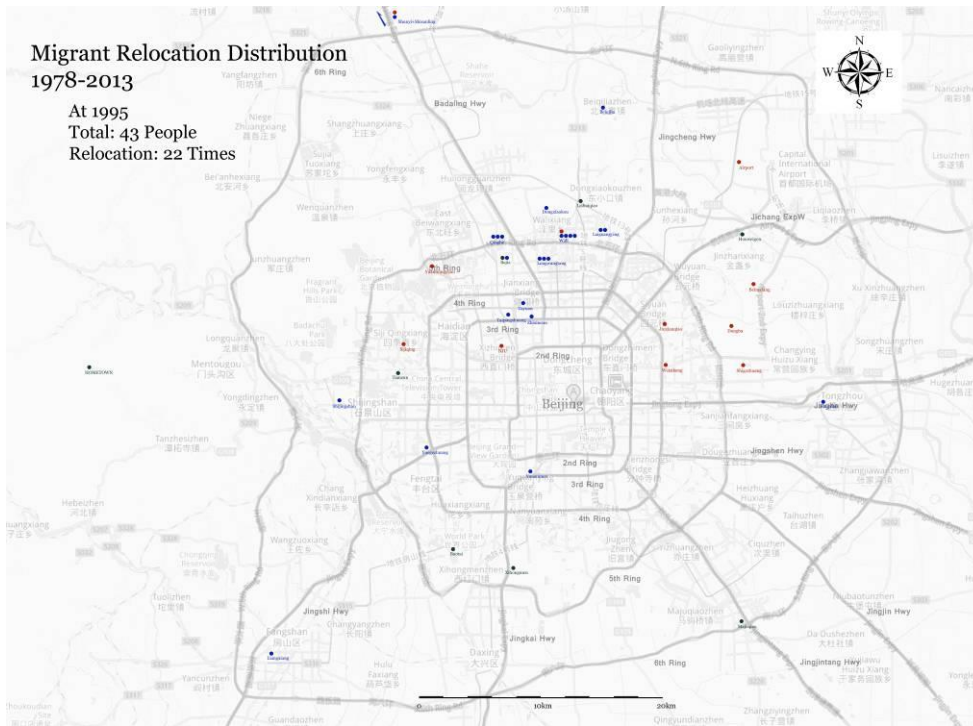


Figure 23: Map: Questionnaire respondents' locations in 1995

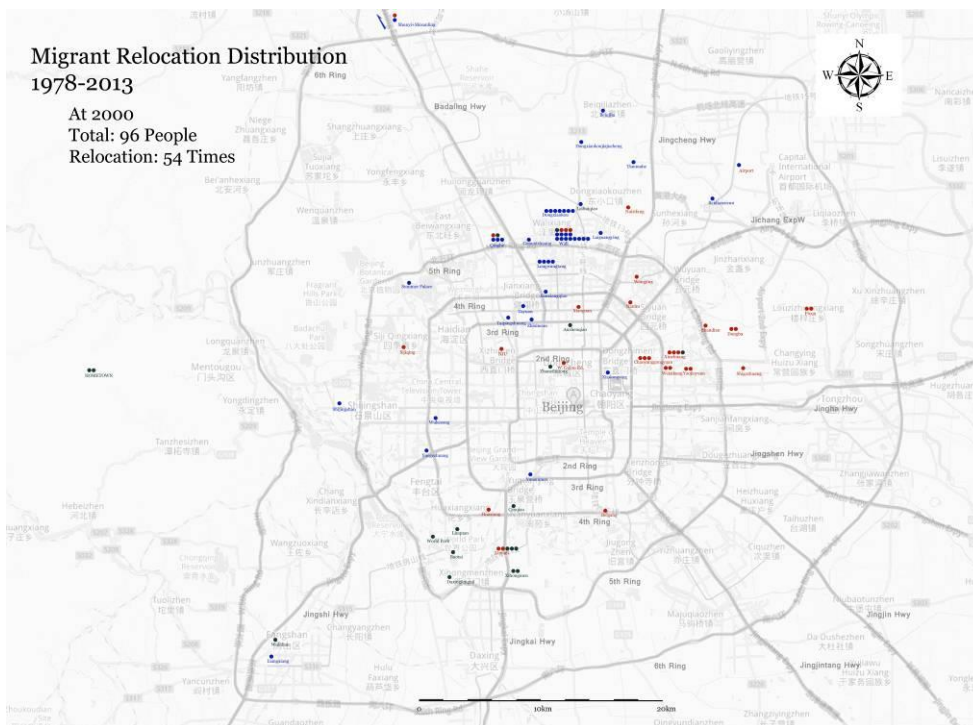


Figure 24: Map: Questionnaire respondents' locations in 2000

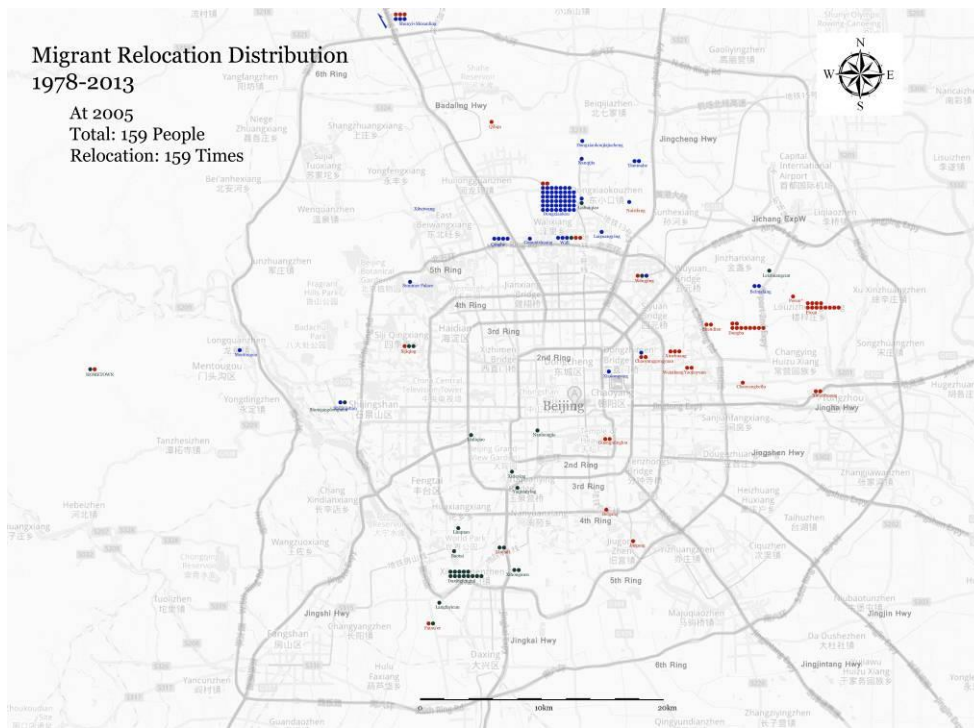


Figure 25: Map: Questionnaire respondents' locations in 2005

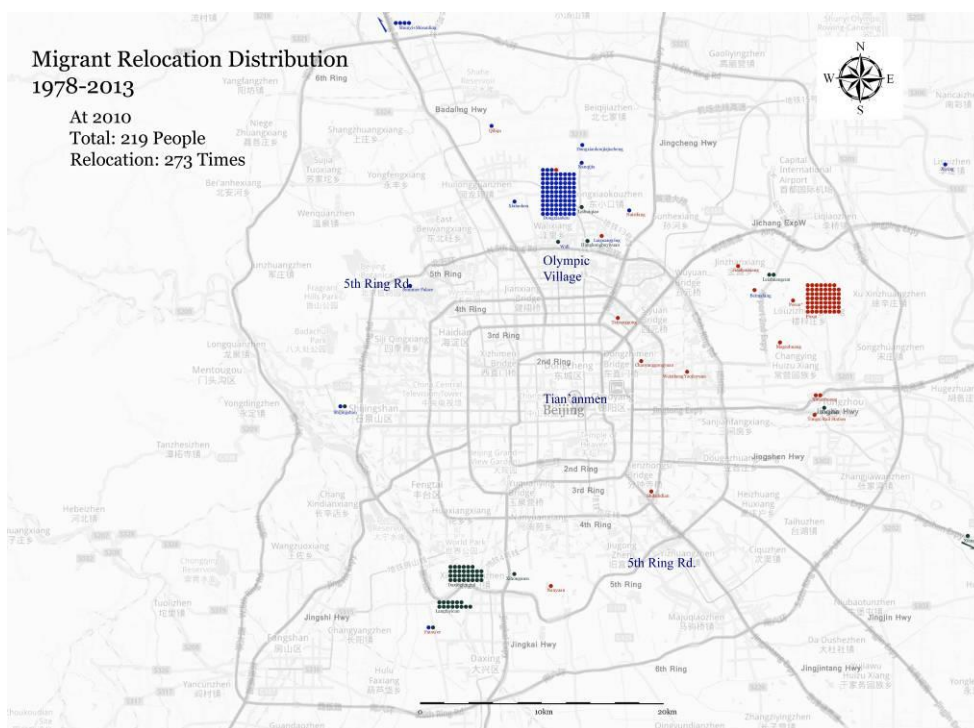


Figure 26: Map: Questionnaire respondents' locations in 2010

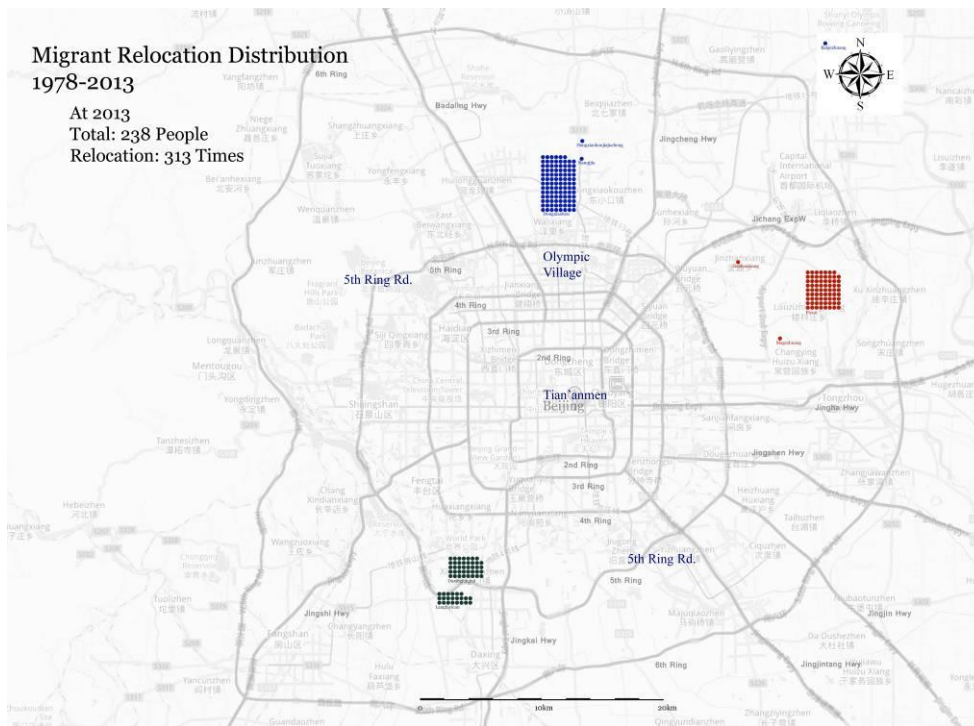


Figure 27: Map: Questionnaire respondents' locations in 2013

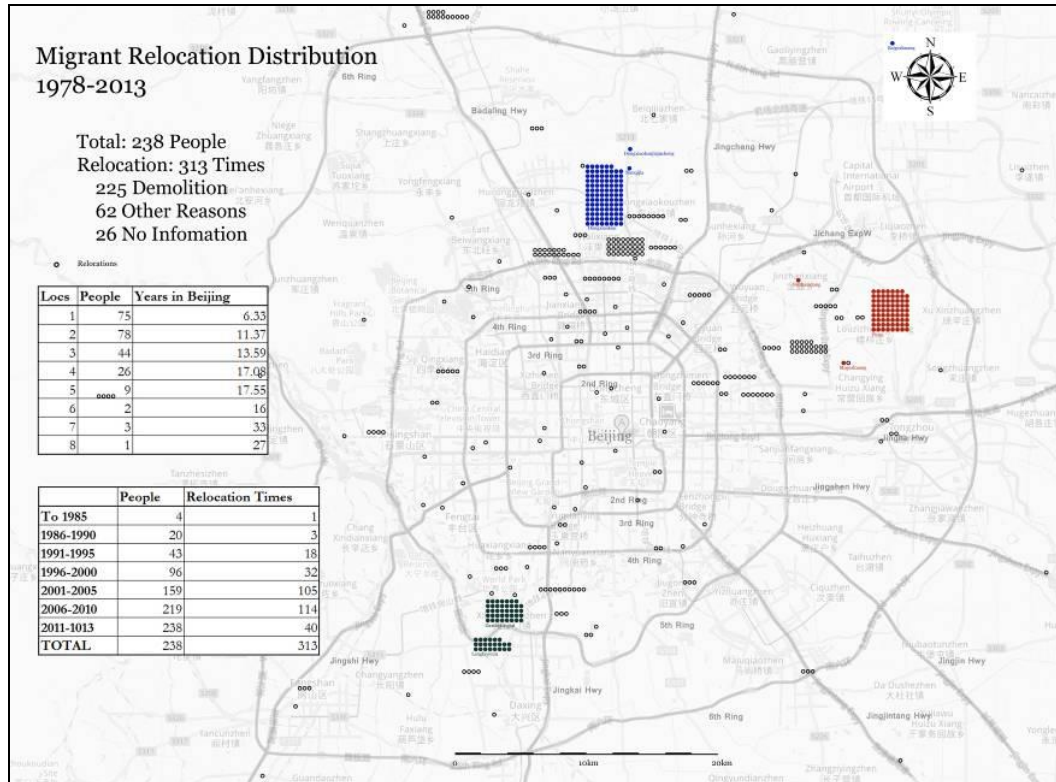


Figure 28: Map: Questionnaire respondents' previous locations vs. current locations

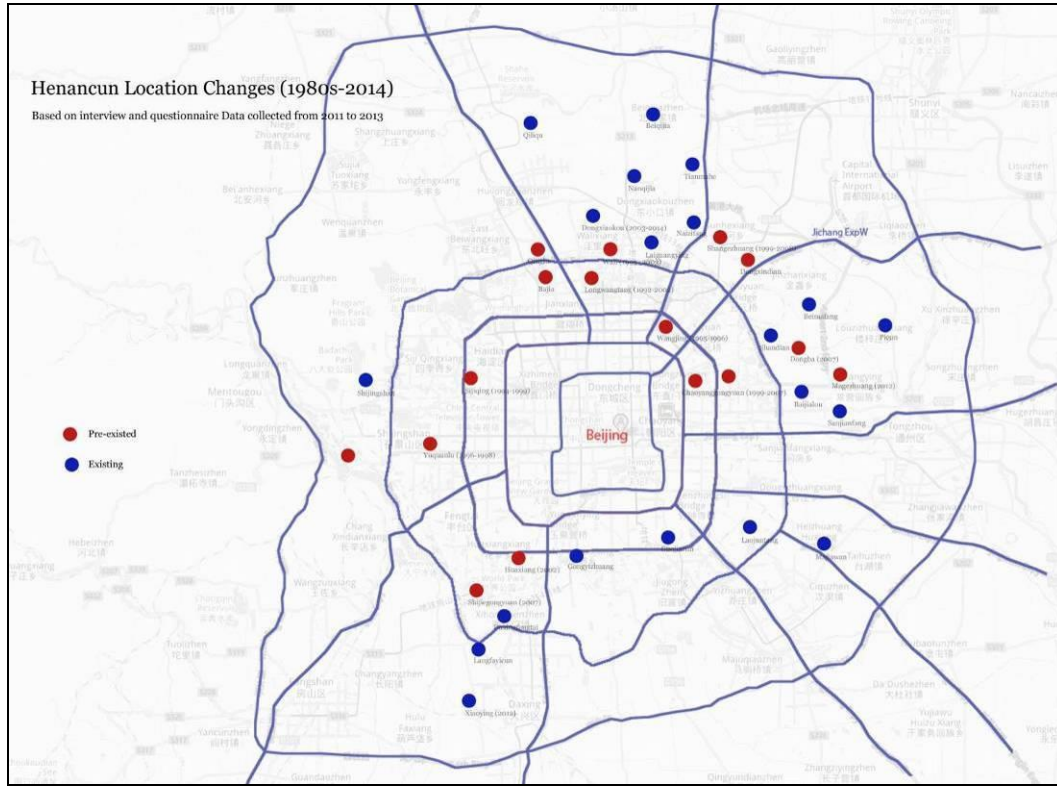


Figure 29: Map: Outward movement trends in *Henancun*'s developing history (based on interviews)

3.6 Conclusions and Discussions

Recycling business in Beijing has experienced a significant turn from its original collectively/state owned and official status before the 1980s to market-based migrant-run, private business. While the rigid official recycling system gradually lost business to the flexible migrant businesses, recycling opened an important market niche in providing jobs opportunities and living space for the rural-to-urban informal/floating migrants. Additionally, the official and formal recycling structure also gradually gave way to a migrant dominant family based recycling structure as well, while the official recycling companies, in the end, abandoned their recycling activities and become land lords and post-recycling companies, such as packaging or metal processing centers.

However, although recycling has become a migrant business, the “status” of recycling also turned from an official/formal status to become an informal sector. This is due to three main reasons from the administrative, environmental and safety/security aspects in Beijing. When more rural people follow chain migration into Beijing’s recycling business, migrant recycling enclaves started to emerge in the 1990s. These recycling company-based migrants enclaves further gained popularity among the rural migrant recyclers in the mid- to late-1990s as a safe harbor to protect them from various discriminatory social and political policies, such as *Shourong*. Furthermore, when more and more migrant recyclers gathered around *Henancun* sites for security, other migrant businessmen also joined the market to provide various social services and facilities, such as grocery stores, hometown restaurants, public bathing facilities, migrant schools, and even a temporary worker gathering point. These services and facilities are built to supplement the missing institutions that is lacking in the area and make *Henancun* more self-sustaining and to become stand-alone enclaves in the city. When recycling businesses and everyday livelihood could be sustained inside the enclaves, an informal space featuring recycling business is in the making since the 1990s.

However, due to its “informal” status and unstable land leasing contract with the local government, *Henancun* has been facing threats from demolition since the first day they started their recycling business. Through a series of migrant location maps, we can clearly see that *Henancun* has been moving outward from their original locations inside the 3rd ring road in Beijing. Various infrastructure construction and urban development projects, such as the building of fourth and fifth ring roads, new residential community development, Asian Games development, Olympic Games Village development and river

management projects, have expropriated *Henancun*'s space in the past 25 years. This trend also does not seem to come to an end and even when most *Henancun* and their migrant recyclers have been pushed farther and farther away from the central city, the threat of demolition is always there as a factor to shape *Henancun* and its migrant dwellers' business and livelihood in Beijing.

Therefore, *Henancun* in Beijing serves as a very interesting case as both a migrant and business enclave. Different from various slum, shantytowns or favelas in other social contexts, *Henancun* as a recycling enclave emerged as a formal-turned informal recycling center. Additionally, rather than the central debates on land deeds in other studies, *Henancun*'s land has never been in the possession of migrant recyclers or recycling companies. As migrants are labeled as "temporary" floating population, migrant run recycling business has turned the recycling business from their formal identity to an informal status. Therefore, the demolition and relocation have become part of *Henancun*'s experience in Beijing since the companies have never owned or had the title of the land in the first place. The informal status of recycling business and migrants' temporality in their migration have become a natural excuse for the local government to use the land for various urban projects that are more locally embedded. This situation is quite unique among the enclave development in other social and political contexts whereby the "enclave" space is developed or occupied by the residents in the first place. In *Henancun*'s case, the land lease is always based on formal but temporary land leasing contracts between the land owner and recycling companies, which have significantly deprived migrants' and recycling companies' claim in holding onto their *Henancun* in Beijing.

In the next chapter, I will continue to examine the structural forces that have shaped *Henancun* regarding the recycling companies and the migrant recyclers, so I will be able to show how *Henancun* never is or will be part of the city of Beijing.

CHAPTER 4

MIGRANTS' INCOME AND EXPERIENCE IN *HENANCUN*, BEIJING

Henancun and its dwellers have experienced many times of demolition and relocation events in Beijing as shown in the previous chapter. However, the social need for the recycling service in Beijing has created a relatively stable but informal job market for migrants to make their living in the city. This chapter quantitatively examines migrants' income and their experiences in Beijing at the individual level using the first-hand questionnaire data collected in the three *Henancun* in Beijing.

First, I examine recycling migrants' disposable income in two forms: the disposable income in a good year and a bad year. The reason for using two variables to understand migrants' disposable income is due to the constant fluctuation in the recycling business as an informal cash-trading business that relies heavily on the market price. According to interviews with various migrant recyclers, the price for the recycling materials has been steady until a peak emerged in 2008. After 2008, the price of recyclable materials dropped sharply and many migrants associated this price drop with the slowing down in the financial crisis that was witnessed globally. I am using linear regression models and generalized linear models to test the relationship between income and migrants' education attainment as well as their experience on the individual level in Beijing based on the Mincer wage equation (Zheng *et al.* 2009).

Second, I further explore migrants' opinions on their experience in *Henancun* through the retrospective questionnaires to understand how *Shourong* experience, migrants' feeling of being unfairly treated and satisfactory with the recycling business relate to their intention to change their current job and the willingness for them to let their children continue with their recycling job opportunity. The study is on an individual level, and I will be using contingency tables and odds ratios to investigate the relationship between the variables mentioned above.

4.1 Migrants' Income in Recycling

Migrants' earnings in the city is always an important variable reflecting migrants' economic status in their migration. Since migrants have gradually taken over from their urban counterparts to dominate in the recycling business, recycling has become many migrants' sole income to support their migration in Beijing. However, because the recycling business in Beijing is a cash business, the economic gain for migrant families rely heavily on the price of recyclable items in particular years, which further depend on the overall economic situation in the society. In the test questionnaires, a simple question asking about migrants' average yearly disposable income is not feasible because many indicated that their income has a vast fluctuation from year to year. Thus, to understand migrants' income in Beijing, two questions are asked for migrants to indicate their disposable income in a good year for their family (Q3.14 DISPINCH) and in a bad year (Q3.14 DISPINCL) respectively. Moreover, these two variables will be analyzed individually to examine the relationship between migrants' human capital/demographics and their income level in the city.

4.1.1 The Disposable Income in a Good Year

However, although these two variables are both income related, they represent different meanings in migrants' income. The disposable income in a good year represents the maximum money one could make in a good year, which could be considered similar to the earning variable that depends on their human capital and demographics since structural factor (the market price in this case) has a limited effect on migrants' income. Meanwhile, the disposable income in a bad year is limited by the structural force (low market price in this case), and it represents migrants' ability in dealing with the bad situation. The income analysis is based on the standard labor economics literature that the expected earning is related to his human capital and demographics (Zheng *et al.* 2009). The Mincer earnings function is adopted in this analysis as a base model to study migrants' income. The logarithm of earnings is modeled as years of education and a quadratic function of "years of potential experience."

$$\log(\text{DISPINCH}_i) = \log(y_0) + \beta_1 \cdot \text{AGE}_i + \beta_2 \cdot \text{BJYEAR}_i + \beta_3 \cdot \text{BJYEAR}_i^2 + \beta_4 \cdot \text{EDU}_i + \beta_5 \cdot \text{RT}_i + \varepsilon_i$$

Where, DISPINCH_i is migrant worker i 's disposable income in a good year for his/her family. AGE_i (Q3.1 2013-YBORN) is included to represent one type of "years of potential experience. BJYEAR_i (Q1.1 2013-FYINBJ) indicating the years migrant i has stayed in Beijing, is used as the variable to represent "years of potential experience" for migrant i in recycling. EDU_i refers to the migrant i 's education attainment level (Q3.2 EDU: 1: illiterate; 2: primary school; 3: middle school; 4: high school; 5: professional middle school; 6: academic college; 7: professional college; 8: graduate studies). While this variable is slightly different from the years of education in Mincer's function, I

assume that illiterate (1), primary school (2), middle school (3) and high school (4) to have the same interval between the adjacent categories. Meanwhile, I reclassified the two observations of professional middle school to have the same value of high school (4) and two observations of professional college as one additional category above high school (5). There are no observations of migrants whose educational attainment is from academic college or graduate studies. Also, I also include a dummy variable of RT_i , representing the type of recycling job migrant i is conducting (Q1.4.1 TYPERCY). I have reclassified the type of recycling jobs and use $RT = \text{"MOBILE"}$ to represent itinerant recyclers ($TYPERCY = 1$ MOBILE with tricycle or bicycles or $TYPERCY = 2$ MOBILE with cars); $RT = \text{"COMMUNITY"}$ to represent community recyclers ($TYPERCY = 3$ Fixed-Location Community); $RT = \text{"MARKET"}$ to represent yard buyers ($TYPERCY = 4$ Fixed-Location Recycling Market) and $RT = \text{"WORKER"}$ for workers ($TYPERCY = 5$ Long-term Worker in Market or $TYPERCY = 6$ Temporary Worker in Market). Table 1 provides the descriptions and summaries for these variables.

Moreover, multicollinearity has the potential to significantly affect our test results. Thus, before the analysis, pair-wise correlation is calculated in R. With $n = 262$ observations, the correlation coefficient between $BJYEAR$ and EDU is 0.00373 (t-test: 0.06); the one between AGE and EDU is -0.3304 (t-test: -5.64), which is understandable since older migrants experienced the period of cultural revolution and schools were mostly closed during that period. The correlation coefficient between AGE and $BJYEAR$ is 0.213 (t-test: 3.516). So, we could tell that the pair-wise correlations among $BJYEAR$, AGE , and EDU are not very strong, which would not lead to multicollinearity issues in our analysis. Lastly, correlation coefficient between $BJYEAR$ and $BJYEAR^2$ is 0.945 (t-value:

46.59), which indicates that these two factors are highly correlated with each other.

However, because the proposed methods have shown that migrants' income has a quadratic relationship with experience earned in migration, both the BJYEAR and BJYEAR² will be used as independent variables in our analysis.

I have tested two regression models based on the Mincer equation. Table 2 shows the two models, which explain 28 and 29 percent of the variation in the logarithm of migrants' disposable income in a good year. In the first model, EDU comes out to be significant at 1% level, and the coefficient of 0.192 indicates that the increase of one level in EDU attainment (e.g. from primary school to middle school) would contribute to 1.92 times ($e^{0.192}$) of the disposable income holding other variables constant. In the model, AGE, the number of years in Beijing and its quadratic term are not significant. However, the signs of their respective coefficients indicate that the number of years in Beijing has a positive relationship with migrants' income in a good year while migrants' age has a negative correlation the migrants' income in a good year. Among the three dummy variables indicating the recycling job type, the dummy variable for being a market yard buyer is significant at 1% level. That is to say, holding every other variable constant, being a Market Yard Buyer would be translated to have an expected disposable income in a good year 3.08 ($e^{1.125}$) times the expected disposable income in a good year for a Community Recycler, 2.99 ($e^{1.125-0.03}$) times for a Mobile Recycler and 2.32 ($e^{1.125-0.2833}$) times for a Recycling Worker, which is to say that the disposable income for a good year is significantly related to the work type of being a Market Yard Buyer.

In the second model, I include the identity of being a migrant from *Henan* province as a dummy variable. With all the other variables, which I tested in the model (1) remain

almost the same in terms of their significance, being a migrant from *Henan* province would have an adverse impact on migrants' income in a good year. The expected income during a good year for a non-*Henan* migrant would be 1.289 ($e^{0.254}$) times for a *Henan* migrant. While I have already illustrated that *Henan* migrants are the dominating group of people in the recycling business, their relatively lower income during a good year partially confirm our observation for *Henan* migrants' domination. While recycling has become a market niche for migrants from *Henan* with minimum barrier due to the fact that they are well socially and economically connected, migrants from another province would normally face a higher threshold when they join the recycling business. The higher expected income for migrants from other regions indicates that this situation agrees with our assumption on the relationship between recycling and *Henan* migrants.

Table 2: Regression results for the income equation in a good year

Variables	log(DISPINCH ⁴²)			
	(1)		(2)	
	Coeff. (p-value)		Coeff. (p-value)	
AGE	-0.003998	0.42336	-0.00493	0.32121
EDU	0.192	0.00132***	0.1693	0.00480***
BJYEAR	0.006873	0.72837	0.009467	0.63517
BJYEAR ²	0.00004031	0.94802	-3.914E-05	0.94921
dummy: <i>HENAN</i> ⁴³			-0.254	0.02534**
job type dummies:				
MARKET YARD BUYER	1.125	0.00413***	1.071	0.00598***
MOBILE RECYCLER	0.03096	0.43622	0.2696	0.4948
RECYCLING WORKER	0.2833	0.47799	0.1734	0.66378
Intercept	9.431	<2e-16***	9.766	<2e-16***
No. of Observations	262 (df:254)		262 (df:257)	
adjusted R ²	0.2824		0.2937	

***, **, and * indicate statistical significance at the 1, 5, and 10 percent levels,

⁴² See Appendix F. disposable income in a good/bad year: Q3.5 DISPINCH/DISPINCL

⁴³ See Appendix F. dummy: *Henan*: Q1.4 PHUKOU

respectively.

4.1.2 The Disposable Income in a Bad Year

After examining the factors that contribute to the prediction on the expected income in a good year, I also investigated the variables that relate to migrants' income in a bad year. However, for a migrant to survive in their migration, their income in a good year should not be zero; but for their income in a bad year, it is possible to have zero as their income. While the reason to use the logarithm of income as the dependent variable is to transform the right skewed income distribution to be more normally distributed, the existence of 0s in the data has posed problems to the analysis. Here I used two methods to cope with the zero situation that emerged with the income in a bad year. (Figure 30)

4.1.2.1 Method 1: Add a small number to the zeros

The minimum value of the disposable income variable in a bad year other than zero is 2000. To add a “small” number to all 0s while keeping them at the low end of the log transformation, I added 100 to all the 0s. Although the distribution is still not quite normal, the logarithm function could be applied to the income.

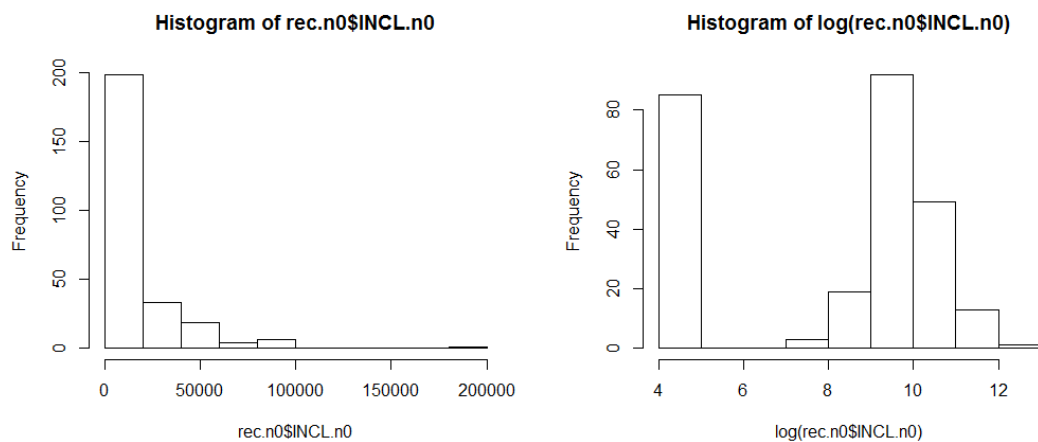


Figure 30: Chart: Distribution of the disposable income in a bad year

Table 3: Regression results for the income equation in a bad year
log(INCL.n0)

Variables	(3)		(4)	
	Coeff. (p-value)		Coeff. (p-value)	
AGE	0.00717	0.6619	0.009	0.5804
EDU	0.1295	0.5057	0.1759	0.3724
BJYEAR	-0.026	0.6932	-0.0311	0.637
BJYEAR ²	0.00059	0.7735	0.0007	0.713
HENAN			0.5194	0.1656
job type dummies:				
MARKET YARD BUYER	0.6784	0.5961	0.7887	0.5378
MOBILE RECYCLER	1.3315	0.3087	1.4133	0.2795
RECYCLING WORKER	1.944	0.1393	2.1685	0.1012
Intercept	6.5151	0.000119***	6.3484	0.0002***
No. of Observations	262 (df:254)		262 (df:253)	
adjusted R ²	0.028		0.032	

***, **, and * indicate statistical significance at the 1, 5, and 10 percent levels, respectively.

Table 3 shows the results for the two regression models for migrants' disposable income in a bad year. No single none-intercept variable is significant at 10% level, and I suspect that this is because there are too many 0s in the dependent variable which has significantly impacted the distribution. Thus, to some extent, these two models are not very useful in our analysis.

4.1.2.2 Method 2: Two-step analysis

The first step, we treat the disposable income variable as a binary variable including 1s and 0s, which represent whether or not the disposable income in a bad year for a particular observation is non-zero or zero respectively. We can run a logistic regression based on this binary variable to see which variable contributes to the zero income in the bad year for migrants.

Table 4: Logistic regression results for the binary income in a bad year
log odds of L0

Variables	(5)		(6)	
	Coeff. (p-value)		Coeff. (p-value)	
AGE			0.0105	0.4738
EDU	-0.2069	0.1789	0.0182	0.9182
BJYEAR	-0.098	0.09584	-0.0528	0.4369
BJYEAR ²	0.0026	0.1545	0.0014	0.5202
<i>HENAN</i>			0.6658	0.0563*
job type dummies:				
MARKET YARD BUYER			0.172	0.8674
MOBILE RECYCLER			0.9399	0.3749
RECYCLING WORKER			1.9879	0.0709*
Intercept	1.9	0.000923***	0.0375	0.979
No. of Observations	262 (df:258)		262 (df:253)	
AIC	333.41		317.36	

***, **, and * indicate statistical significance at the 1, 5, and 10 percent levels, respectively.

Table 4 shows the results for two logistic regression model results for the binary disposable income variable of either zeros or none-zeros. The first model (5) indicates that none of the independent variables are significant. But when we include the indicator variables of their migration origin and the recycling work type, some independent variables show significance at the 10% level. The status of being a *Henan* migration is significantly related with the logarithm of the odds for being non-zero income in a bad year. Holding other variables constant, the odds for the disposable income in a bad year to be non-zero for a migrant from *Henan* province is 1.9460 ($e^{0.6658}$) times the odds for a migrant from somewhere other than *Henan* province. This confirms our observation that because *Henan* migrants dominate the recycling business, the risk of running the business is lower for them than the migrants from other provinces. In addition, the work being a recycling worker is significant at 10% level and it indicates that the odds that holding

every other variable constant, the income in a bad year is none-zero for a Recycler Worker is $7.3 (e^{1.9879})$ times the odds for a Community Recycler, $2.85 (e^{1.9879-0.9399})$ times the odds for a Mobile Recycler, $6.15 (e^{1.9879-0.172})$ times the odds for a Market Yard Buyer. This is understandable simply because recycling workers' salary is not tied to the changing market price of the recyclable materials, which means their income is more stable than other recyclers whose income is closely related to the fluctuating market price for recyclable materials.

The second step, after testing the binary situation of the disposable income in a bad year, I would develop linear regression Mincer models only on the none-zero disposable incomes in a bad year.

Table 5: Regression results for the non-zero income equation in a bad year
log(DISPINCL)

Variables	(7)		(8)	
	Coeff. (p-value)		Coeff. (p-value)	
AGE	-0.00052	0.9359	-0.00036	0.955
EDU	0.2711	0.00059***	0.2569	0.00109***
BJYEAR	0.01884	0.4397	0.0191	0.4309
BJYEAR ²	-0.000377	0.611069	-0.000394	0.5927
HENAN			-0.26628	0.07423*
job type dummies:				
MARKET YARD BUYER	1.2254	0.036221**	1.1764	0.04312**
MOBILE RECYCLER	0.712627	0.2271	0.6554	0.2641
RECYCLING WORKER	0.7428	0.2081	0.6123	0.2996
Intercept	8.1089	<2e-16***	8.1524	<2e-16***
No. of Observations	177 (df:169)		177 (df: 168)	
adjusted R ²	0.1486		0.1596	

***, **, and * indicate statistical significance at the 1, 5, and 10 percent levels, respectively.

Table 5 shows the results for two regression models using the logarithm of non-zero disposable income in a bad year as the dependent variable. Both models indicate that

migrants' education attainment is significant at 1% level and being a market yard buyer is also significant at 5% level in predicting the logarithm of the non-zero disposable income in a bad year. The first model (7) concludes that the expected disposable income in a bad year for one person with certain level of education attainment is 1.311 times the income for one with one lower level of education, with other variables being held as constant. Moreover, the expected none-zero disposable income in a bad year for a Market Yard Buyer is $3.41 (e^{1.2254})$ times the expected non-zero disposable income in a bad year for a Community Recycler; $1.67 (e^{1.2254-0.712627})$ times for a Mobile Recycler and $1.62 (e^{1.2254-0.7428})$ times for a Recycling Worker. The second model shows very similar results, but in addition, it suggests that the identity of being a *Henan* migrant is also significantly related with the logarithm of the non-zero disposable income in a bad year. The non-zero disposable income in a bad year for a none-*Henan* migrant is expected to be 1.3051 ($e^{1.3051}$) times the non-zero disposable income in a bad year for a migrant from *Henan* province.

Thus, we can see that the education plays a significantly important role in predicting the expected disposable income in both good and bad years. Also, the Market Buyers status is also significant among the various recycling jobs in predicting the disposable income in a good year and the non-zero income in a bad year. Meanwhile, Recycling Workers are significant in having none-zero incomes in a bad year. Further, the identity of being a migrant from *Henan* province serves as a double-edged sword in that during a bad year; *Henan* migrants tend to have none-zero disposable income. However, for the disposable income in a good year as well as the non-zero disposable income in a bad year, being a

Henan migrant is related with relatively lower income than the migrants from other provinces.

4.2 Migrants' Experience and Their Opinions about Migration

In Chinese cities, structural barriers have set a long-existing discriminatory and stigmatized social and political context for the migrant recyclers in Beijing. They also have a profound influence in migrants' experience as well as their opinions about their feelings in Beijing. In the questionnaire, we have four subjective questions to understand how migrants' experience affects their views about their feelings in Beijing, including (1) the feeling of being unfairly treated (Q1.23, UNFAIR⁴⁴); (2) considering other jobs (Q1.21, CHGJOB); (3) satisfaction with the current job (Q1.20, SATISFY); (4) whether wanting their children to work in the same job if children are not working (Q3.4.5, KIDPW). Here I use both contingency table/odds ratio and logistic regression as methods to examine what factors are related to their opinions.

Hypothesis 1: *Shourong* experience is related to recycling migrants' feeling of being unfairly treated in the city.

Table 6: *Shourong* experience vs. feeling being unfairly treated⁴⁵

	Unfairly treated	Not unfairly treated	Total
<i>Shourong</i>	43	29	72
No <i>Shourong</i>	45	177	222
Total	88	206	294

$$\text{Odds Ratio} = 43 \times 177 / (45 \times 29) = 5.832184^{***} (2.28e-10^{***})^{46}$$

The odds ratio is equal to 5.83 which is significant at 1% level in the significance test using

⁴⁴ See APPENDIX F & 7

⁴⁵ See Appendix F. Q1.20 SATISFY, Q1.21 CHGJOB, Q1.22 *SHOURONG*, Q1.23 UNFAIR,

⁴⁶ ***, **, and * indicate statistical significance at the 1, 5, and 10 percent levels, respectively.

$$\log \hat{\theta} \sim N(\log \theta, SE = \sqrt{\frac{1}{n_{11}} + \frac{1}{n_{12}} + \frac{1}{n_{21}} + \frac{1}{n_{22}}})$$

Thus, we can argue that the feelings of being unfairly treated are significantly related to their *Shourong* experience in Beijing. The estimated odds for the group who experienced *Shourong* to feel being unfairly treated are 5.83 times the odds for the group who does not experienced *Shourong*.

While we can see that the *Shourong* experience has a huge impact on migrants' feeling of being unfairly treated in Beijing, I continue to examine whether this being unfairly treated feeling is related to migrants' satisfying feeling with their jobs.

Hypothesis 2: I hypothesize that being fairly treated is an important feeling in determining migrants' feeling of satisfactory with their jobs. That is to say, the null hypothesis H0 is people who feel being fairly treated are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs.

Table 7: feeling being unfairly treated vs. satisfactory with the current job

	Unsatisfied with job	Satisfied with job	Total
Unfairly treated	27	61	88
Not unfairly treated	66	140	206
Total	93	201	294

$$\text{Odds Ratio} = 140 \cdot 27 / (66 \cdot 61) = 0.939 \text{ (0.8191)}$$

The result is not significant, which suggests that we reject our null hypothesis that people who feel being fairly treated are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs. And being fairly treated is not a significant factor relating to migrant's satisfactory feeling in their jobs.

Hypothesis 3: I propose that people who feel being unfairly treated would express the intention to change their jobs. Thus, the null hypothesis H0: Individuals who felt being unfairly treated in the city have the intention to change their jobs.

Table 8: feeling being unfairly treated vs. intention to change their job

	Intention to change job	No intention	Total
Unfairly treated	38	50	88
Not unfairly treated	60	146	206
Total	98	196	294

$$\text{Odds Ratio} = 38*146/(50*60) = 1.849^{**} (0.01942^{**})$$

The odds ratio of 1.849 is significant at 5% level and the odds for the group with feelings of being unfairly treated to express an intention to change their jobs are 1.849 times the odds for the group without the feelings of being unfairly treated.

After confirming that feeling being unfairly treated is related to migrants' intention to change their jobs, I further investigate the relationship between migrants' satisfactory feeling about their jobs and their intention to change jobs.

Hypothesis 4: I hypothesize that H0: People who are satisfied are less likely to have the intention to change their jobs.

Table 9: feeling satisfied with their job vs. intention to change their job

	Intention to change job	No intention	Total
Satisfied w/ job	45	156	201
Unsatisfied	53	40	93
Total	98	196	294

$$\text{Odds Ratio} = 156*53/(45*40) = 4.593^{***} (5.132\text{e-}09^{***})$$

The odds ratio of 4.593 is significant at 1% level, and the result confirms the null hypothesis that the odds for people who are satisfied not intending to change their job are 4.593 times the odds of people who are not satisfied.

Next step, I am interested in the last opinion variable about migrants' intention to let their children continue working in their jobs. Here I am using migrants' satisfactory as the variable to test the relationship.

Hypothesis 5: People who are satisfied would want their children to continue with their business.

Table 10: satisfactory with their job vs. intention to let their children continue the job

	Continue with job	Not continue	Total
Satisfied w/ job	18	170	188
Unsatisfied	5	84	89
Total	23	254	277 ⁴⁷

$$\text{Odds Ratio} = 18 \cdot 84 / (5 \cdot 170) = 1.779 \quad (0.266)$$

The odds ratio is not significant with a p-value of 0.266. This rejects our null hypothesis that people who are satisfied would want their children to continue with their business. However, most of the recycling people are not willing to let their children to continue with the recycling business and only $23/277=8.3\%$ would be willing to let their kids continue with recycling.

I think this might also be due to recyclers' work type, which led me to draw additional hypothesis that the recyclers' willingness to let their children continue their job is also related to the size or type of their business. And since yard buyers are considered entrepreneurs with much larger investments, I would assume that the odds for yard buyers to let their children continue recycling would be higher than the other groups. I reclassify the work type to be either yard buyers or not and use this as a control variable to indicate the size or type of the business. In other words, I further divide the contingency table into two layers based on recyclers' work type and use these to describe

⁴⁷ The difference of total respondents is due to the fact some people's children are already working, or they are not married.

the conditional association between migrants' willingness to let their children continue recycling and whether they are satisfied in their jobs.

Table 11: satisfactory vs. children's jobs with business type controlled

		Continue the job	Not continue	Total
Yard Buyers	Satisfied w/ job	15	82	97 (15.46%)
	Unsatisfied	1	36	37 (2.70%)
Others	Satisfied w/ job	3	88	91 (3.30%)
	Unsatisfied	4	48	52 (7.69%)
Total	Satisfied w/ job	18	170	188 (9.57%)
	Unsatisfied	5	84	89 (5.62%)

Because several entries are less than five, we cannot use the chi-square distribution based reference for our odds ratio. Thus, we will rely on partial tables to interpret the difference in different levels (the type of business in this case). We use Table 11 to investigate the conditional association between migrants' satisfactory and their intention to let their children continue their business. When we are focusing on yard buyers, satisfactory has an effect in that $15.46\% - 2.7\% = 12.76\%$ more people who are satisfied with their job would be willing to let their children continue their business than the people who are not satisfied. However, for people who are not yard buyers, it is more likely for the unsatisfied people to let their children continue with their business. This situation is very uncommon in that it goes completely against our assumption and obviously satisfactory does not lead to other recyclers' willingness to let their children continue their business. However, if we compare the situation for these two levels against the overall situation, we can see that the real relationship is hidden for people who are not yard buyers.

4.3 Summaries

In the first part of this chapter, I use linear regression and generalized linear regression to examine how disposable income in a good year and a bad year relates to the human capital factors such as education attainment and years of experiences for migrant

recyclers at the individual level. The original study (Zheng *et al.*, 2009) has shown that Education, Years in Beijing and Age are significant in explaining the wages of the residents in the urban villages of Beijing. Our results illustrate a different situation. First of all, education attainment has a significantly positive relationship with migrants' disposable income in a good year. Also, the different types of recycling jobs that represent the internal structure of the recycling business also affect migrants' disposable income in a good year as well. Moreover, further, the identity of being a migrant from *Henan* province has shown significant but negative relationship with disposable income in a good year. For the disposable income in a bad year, I used a two-step method to understand first the difference between the zero and non-zero disposable income in a bad year for the migrant recyclers. Two factors stand out significant and showed that being a migrant from *Henan* province is more likely to make non-zero disposable income and also working as a relatively more stable recycling worker is more likely to have non-zero disposable income in a bad year. Further, for none-zero disposable income in a bad year, education attainment and a yard buyer job type are significantly related to the logarithm of the income, just like the previous linear model for the disposable income in a good year.

However, different from similar studies conducted in the urban villages in Beijing (Zheng, *et al.* 2009), neither of age and years in Beijing is significantly related to migrants' income no matter in good or bad years. This situation indicates that the job experience, which is viewed as a human capital represented by the time in Beijing and migrants' age, is not necessarily related to their income level in a good or bad year. This situation indicates that in the recycling work, job experiences are not significant for making a

better disposable income, which leads to further argue that as part of an informal sector, recycling is facing some potential institutional and structural barriers in the city to limit their upward mobility concerning their disposable income. And I will further examine this topic in the following two chapters.

Secondly, I also use contingency tables and odds ratio to study the relationship between migrants' experience and their view about the recycling job they are working in.

Sufficient evidence in odds ratio has shown that the experience of *Shourong* is significantly related to their feeling of being unfairly treated in the city. But, the feeling of being unfairly treated in the city is not significantly associated with their satisfactory with their recycling job. While the feeling of being unfairly treated is significantly related to migrants' intention to change their jobs, the satisfactory of their jobs indicates a stronger relationship with their intention to change their jobs. And interestingly, in hypothesis five, I have further tested the relation between migrants' satisfactory and their willingness to let their children continue with their current jobs. The result shows that the market yard buyers are more likely to let their children continue with their jobs than migrants from other types of recyclers. This has further confirmed my argument in Chapter Three that the internal structure of the recycling business is significantly related to migrants' income, their experiences, and feelings in their migration. Thus, when I examine the institutional and structural barriers in the following chapters, I will also investigate the role of the barriers at different levels in the informal recycling structure in Beijing.

CHAPTER 5

INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS FOR *HENANCUN* AND ITS RECYCLING DWELLERS

在北京做回收的这些外地人都有这么个程序，最开始是蹬板车的，然后慢慢的才在社会或者大院里做回收，有说法就是：父亲是游商，儿子是坐商。

The outsiders in Beijing's recycling follow such a process whereby they rode tricycles at the beginning and later started to recycle in a community or our market yard. There's a saying about this: a father is an itinerant businessman, while a son is a sitting businessman. -----interview with a market manager

Henancun, as a migrant enclave focusing on the recycling business, is widely viewed as one of the migrant clusters in Beijing (Fan and Taubmann, 2002; Gu and Shen, 2003). But at the same time, its location at the rural fringe area of Beijing also makes it comparable to many *chengzhongcun* (urban villages) cases in South China. As plethora of researches on the institutional barriers *chengzhongcun* faces in the city illustrated that they can provide affordable housing for rural migrants to support their migration (Wang, *et al.* 2009; Zhang, L. *et al.* 2003b; Li, X. *et al.* 2010), government officials and local planners usually take a pathological view of their existence for their high crime rate, poor living conditions, risks for fire and pressures on infrastructure (Wang *et al.* 2009; Liu *et al.*, 2010; He *et al.*, 2010). He *et al.* (2010) showed that the state “tolerates” the emergence of *chengzhongcun* to keep the economic growth at a low cost as well. *Henancun* in Beijing shares similar situations as their counterpart of *chengzhongcun* in

South China in providing affordable housing, building available socioeconomic space for migrants, and providing various social facilities for rural-to-urban migrants in Beijing. At the same time, they also face similar institutional barriers as *chengzhongcun* as well regarding *Hukou* limitations and land accessibility. However, since recycling has a whole business structure that includes the recycling company, recycling yard buyers, itinerant and community recyclers, migrants at different layers face very complex and sometimes entirely different institutional barriers and have very different expectations in their business as well as their livelihood in Beijing.

This chapter focuses on the structural constraints, or institutional barriers, that faced by *Henancun* and its migrant recyclers at different layers of the recycling structure. However, the long existing rural-urban divide along the *Hukou* policy has led to the segregated job markets for people with urban and rural *Hukou*, and restricted rural migrants' access to various social facilities in the city, such as social welfare, kindergarten, education and housing. In this chapter, instead of focusing on *Hukou*'s direct impact on migrants' business and livelihood, I rather consider *Hukou* as a long existing context. However, the impact of *Hukou* is not neglectable, and its implications have materialized in every aspect of migrants' living and business. Additionally, as I have argued in the first chapter that *Henancun* is more than merely a migrant enclave and its recycling business is also very important in its development. Therefore, this chapter will tackle the structural barrier issue from two important aspects: the ones faced by migrant recyclers and ones by the recycling companies in Beijing.

5.1 Recycling Structure and an Upward Ladder to Climb

Although the recycling system to ensure commodity flow remains effective and efficient after China's market turn, the business has changed dramatically when incorporating the new labor force of rural-urban migrants in Beijing. While almost all of the migrants initially joined recycling from the very bottom end of the structure, some of them have gradually made their way up to become an entrepreneur as a yard buyer or even a market owner. This process has been widely referred to by almost all recycling actors as an upward mobile ladder in the recycling business. Using migrants' own words, "a father is an itinerant businessman, while a son is a sitting in (父亲是游商, 儿子是坐商)." The difference between "itinerant" and "sitting" represents a status change in addition to a change in economic returns. Being an itinerant businessman in recycling is widely considered as a first step in the city, but being a sitting businessman represents that life is stabilized with a secured business for which you can sit back as a manager.

During many interviews with different migrant recyclers in Beijing, although the saying is a metaphor to describe a consistent upward mobile process in recycling, it has two inherent meanings with it. First, as a businessman, the "upward" ladder represents an improvement in profitability economically. While itinerant recyclers need to find the material sellers, sitting recyclers would have consistent in-flow materials bringing to them. Secondly, due to recyclers' long-time association with *Shourong* policy in the city, a sitting businessman also represents one that could avoid this political and social policy, in other words, they become part of the "formal" system and are protected against those unfair structural barriers. This represents a social or political upward mobility instead of a purely economic one. Therefore, naturally, the analysis of structural/institutional barriers

and the coping strategies is a two-sided story: the economic side vs. the political/social aspect, or to seek profits vs. to seek security/stability in the city.

5.1.1 The Recycling Structure

As illustrated in Chapter Three, Beijing's recycling today has partially adopted a recycling structure that was set up during Mao's planned economy. Under the planned economy, recyclable materials were an important source of industrial resources. A couple of examples here would help illustrate this situation. Before the 1980s, one has to bring a used zinc toothpaste tube to purchase a new one to ensure that all zinc tubes are recycled through the vending system. Besides, families and work units during Mao's era separated all used materials, such as newspaper, used fabrics, animal bones, bottles, batteries, and metal, to sell to local recycling depots, redemption stations or itinerant buyers. The sales are always considered as important part of the family or workplaces (Furedy, 1993).

At that time, the efficiency of recycling in the society was achieved by two important factors. First, there existed a very efficient recycling system. At that point, the recycling structure involved several important collecting or buying nodes along the commodity flow process: the lowest level is the itinerant buyers (*roving recyclers*); the second lowest level is the recovery net points (*recycling depots*); the next level is the purchase stations (*redemption stations*), which is the central place for sorting and organizing before materials could be shipped to different factories. Although local residents would sometimes go directly to a higher-level node to seek more money, the formal structure provided an effective commodity flow system connecting residents (or other factory users) with the factories. Second, recycling was operated based on monetary returns or administrative orders. While some items like toothpaste tubes or used batteries are

required to purchase new ones, many items are collected simple through cash trade. Until about the late 1980s, family recycling income was always considered an important supplement to the family income. At that time, schools would also organize pupils to bring used recyclables from home to sell as part of the fund to finance school activities as well. Thus, in addition to an efficient recycling system, the administrative orders and the monetary incentives have further ensured an efficient recycling system to avoid wasting any resources in the society.

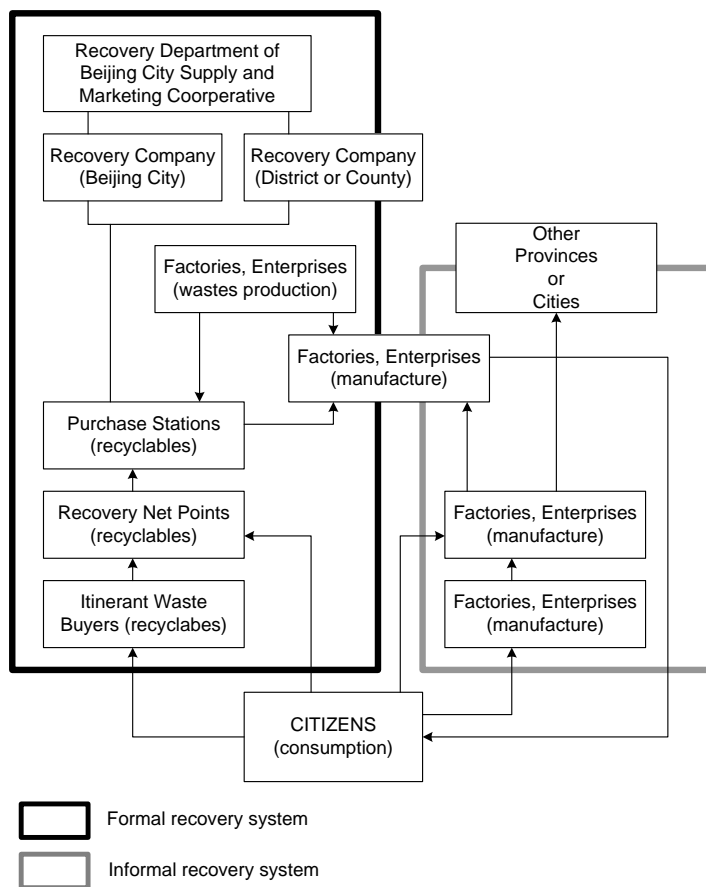


Figure 31: Chart: Beijing City materials' recovery system

After the market economy turn in China, when migrants gradually entered the urban labor force, recycling business have become an important market niche for them to have a job which has a similar working schedule—to work at will—as their agricultural background.

Also, when they saved enough money to subcontract from local recycling depots, their time flexibility, working for profit instead of salaries circumstance, and no administrative burdens have further enlarged their advantages in their competition with the conventional state-owned recycling counterparts. Besides, the return of young adults to cities from rural areas due to historical movement⁴⁸ during Mao's era has also helped reshaped the recycling structure in Beijing. Although the traditionally "efficient" recycling structure was still in place, the administrative orders no longer existed and monetary return or profit became the solely driven force in the recycling business (Figure 31 and 32).

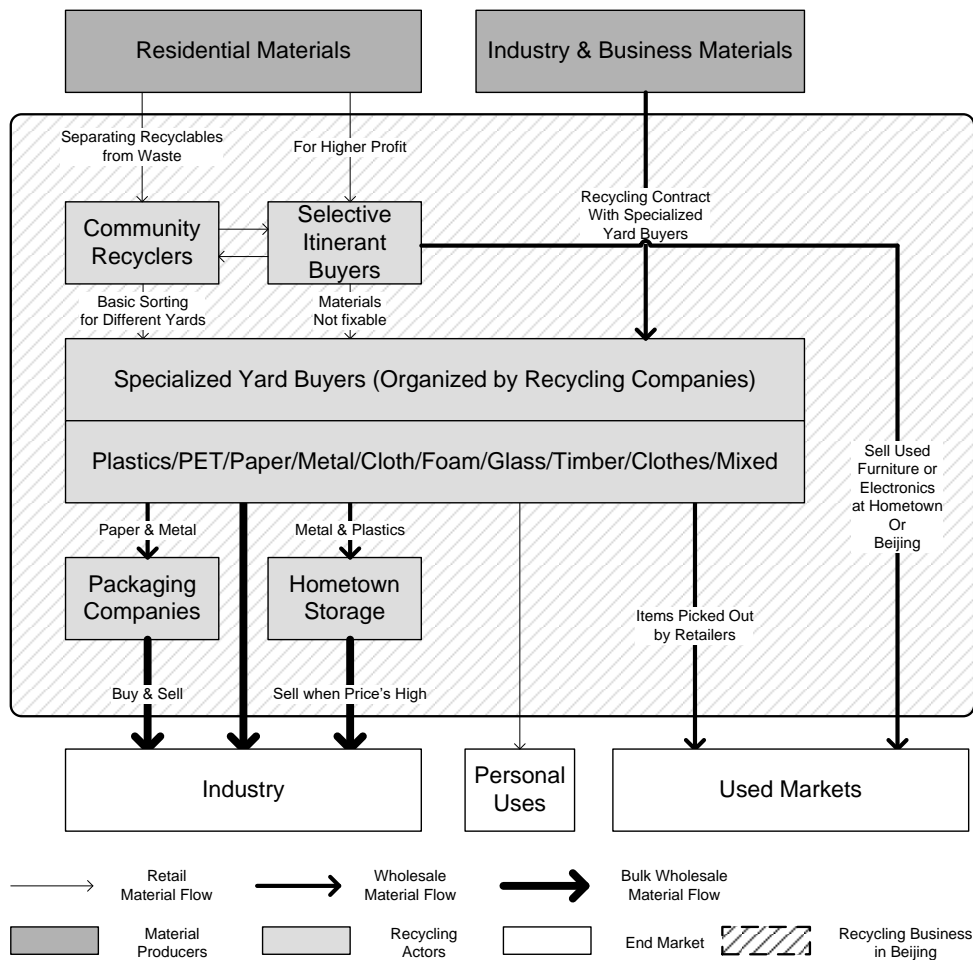


Figure 32: Chart: Informal recycling structure in Beijing today

⁴⁸ 上山下乡: *up-to-the-mountains, down-to-the-countryside movement*

Three major changes were happening with the market turn in the recycling structure in Beijing. (1) Rather than recycling depots that were set by the recycling companies to cover several *danwei* (work unit) and their associated residential communities, district government offices or residential committees have set up new community recycling depots in each community to provide job opportunities to local people in poverty and young adults who came back from the *up-to-the-mountains, down-to-the-countryside movement* (上山下乡). Although the community recycling depots served similar functions as the conventional recycling depots, the recyclers were no longer hired by the recycling companies. These new community recyclers are referred by themselves as “small-scale sitting businessmen (小坐商);” (2) Company itinerant recyclers no longer served as a key connection between residents and the recycling depots. Since the late 1980s, migrants have joined the recycling business, and the first investment for most migrants was a flat-back tricycle. Migrants became itinerant buyers in Beijing. Because they were not part of the conventional recycling companies, they sought profits by transporting the collected or bought recyclables from the street—residents or work units—directly to the redemption stations. These migrant itinerant buyers with were referred to as “itinerant businessmen (游商);” (3) the redemption stations, which were in charge of sorting and organizing materials, also changed their operations. The redemption stations were traditionally operated by the recycling companies, which divided up the company space and set up different sub-factories in charge of different materials. However, when migrants joined recycling, migrant families would lease a yard to recycle certain materials as well. By simply raising the collecting price a little, they swiftly dominated the recycling market. Since each yard would focus on single or mixed types of

materials, they are called yard buyers or “large-scale businessmen (大坐商).” At the same time, individually owned recycling companies also emerged in Beijing. They normally don’t have recycling or sorting function by themselves, and rather, they leased land from the local landowners (many times, the village government) and divided them into smaller yards and further lease them to different yard buyers.

Therefore, the recycling structure has changed from a four-level structure: itinerant recyclers—recycling depots—redemption stations---recycling companies to a three level one: itinerant/community recyclers—redemption stations (yard buyers)—recycling companies/organizers. Within the new recycling structure, different types of recycling work are not free to choose when migrants first arrive at the city because different jobs require different levels of investment to start. And the process of making one’s way up from a beginner can be witnessed in recycling to serve as an upward mobility model to fulfill migrants’ expectation in recycling.

5.1.2 A Dream to Follow in Recycling

No matter who I interviewed in the recycling business in Beijing, they all talked about this current upward mobile channel for migrants in the business: a *father is an itinerant businessman, while a son is a sitting businessman*. While the channel does not represent the *de facto* father-son relationship, it is telling a story about the process whereby migrants can upgrade their recycling jobs through wealth accumulation. In recycling, it is widely accepted that there are mainly three general types of work that most migrants are working in the itinerant recyclers, community recyclers, and yard buyers. Meanwhile, the yard buyers, who choose specific materials as their main recycling focus, are organized by a recycling company, which is registered with the local government. In addition to the

differences ways how these jobs operate, these different recycling jobs also represent varying levels of investment, income levels, and security status as well.

(1) In the business structure, the itinerant recyclers and community recyclers serve similar purposes as to purchase and transport the residential recyclable materials to the yard buyers (figure 33). While the community recyclers typically sign a contract with the local residential committee with payments involved, itinerant recyclers are very flexible recyclers without a contract. Since itinerant recycling does not involve any overheads or investment except for a tricycle around 100 *yuan*⁴⁹, it serves as a beginner's job in recycling. In the 1980s, when the first wave of migrants arrived in Beijing, itinerant recycling was normally the very first job they did in recycling. The benefit of being an itinerant recycler is that in the 1980s, they were highly mobile, which gave them access to various recyclables from trash and other waste on the street as well. While most migrants came to the city without any money in the 1980s, itinerant recycling served as an important job niche for them. Even today, these itinerant recyclers still act as an important component in purchasing recyclables from the residents. They are still widely referred to as itinerant businessman or 游商. The character 游 in Chinese literally means “swim,” and emphasizes not only “itinerant” but also “slippery” or “tricky” in that these people avoided all of the possible payments to run a business in the society. 商 means business or businessmen in Chinese.

⁴⁹ Sometimes, they also buy electric motors to change their tricycle to a motorized tricycle.

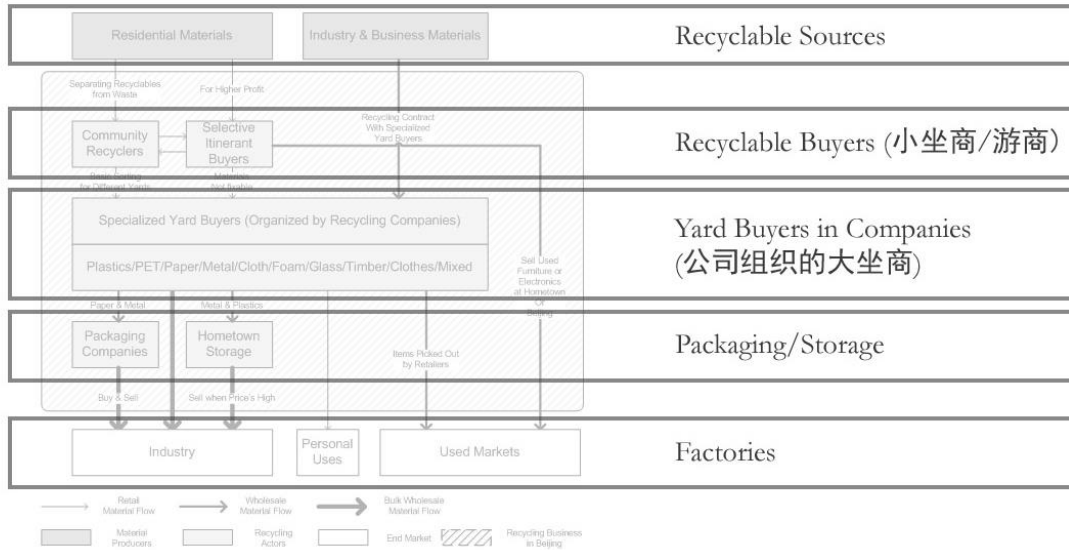


Figure 33: Chart: Levels of recycling jobs

(2) When migrants were saving money as itinerant recyclers, many of them also made local connections with certain areas they favored as their business territory. In the 1980s, community recycling spots were set up as a temporary way to solve unemployment problem for two types of residents: the local people living in poverty or having financial difficulty and the young people who returned from rural areas after the *up-to-the-mountains, down-to-the-countryside movement* (上山下乡). However, the job was not a favored one by many because it required a lot of manual labor and also was looked down upon in the cities as “garbage pickers.” Thus, as these jobs were almost exclusively provided to people with local *Hukou* status, migrants were initially excluded. But after migrants worked as itinerant recyclers for some time to know the local recyclers, they started to subcontract from them with a fee. While the local residents still held the title of the business, they became rent collectors while migrants became the recycler in the communities. They are referred to as “small-scale sitting businessmen” or 小坐商 in Chinese. 小 means “little,” which is used to represent the business size being little within

a community. 坐 has a literal meaning of “sit” or “sitting.” So 坐 is used here in corresponds to 游 to not only show that they sit to recycle, but also emphasize that they no longer has the need of being “slippery” or “tricky” in their business operation.

(3) While the itinerant or small-scale community recyclers need to buy materials piece by piece from the local residents, yard buyers are people who only focus on purchasing one or a few type(s) of materials inside an enclosed recycling company. In the survey, we recorded a total of 11 types of popular materials yard buyers would focus on as follows:

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 = 'Steel and Iron', | 2 = 'Copper and Aluminum', |
| 3 = 'Paper', | 4 = 'Wood', |
| 5 = 'Plastics', | 6 = 'PET', |
| 7 = 'Foam', | 8 = 'Leftover', |
| 9 = 'Furniture', | 10 = 'Electronics', |
| 11 = 'Variety', | 12 = 'Other' |

Some of the yard buyers would focus on two different types of materials, but most only have one type as the only kind they buy from the itinerant or small-scale community recyclers. To start being a yard buyer, one would need a large amount of start-up money to buy the initial batch of materials to keep the business running. For example, during the interviews, yard buyers indicate that the yard recycling for different materials requires varying levels of investment, for instance, paper recycling in a yard would require an initial investment of around 100,000 to 200,000 *yuan* in the early 2000s, but a metal (steel/copper) yard might require at least 1,000,000 to 10,000,000 *yuan* depending the size of a yard. Thus, as most migrants arrived at Beijing without money initially, many of them could not start straight as a yard buyer. Many became yard buyers after they saved

up enough money by working as itinerant recyclers and/or community recyclers. The yard buyers are widely referred to as “a boss” due to their *de facto* entrepreneurship as a businessman. In recycling, they are called “yard buyers,” or 大坐商. 大 means big/large and here represents their large business scale. So, we can see that their category is comparable with small-scale community recyclers since both have somewhere to sit when operating the business. But again, 坐 has the meaning of being “stable” or “secured” here as opposed to 游 being the opposite.

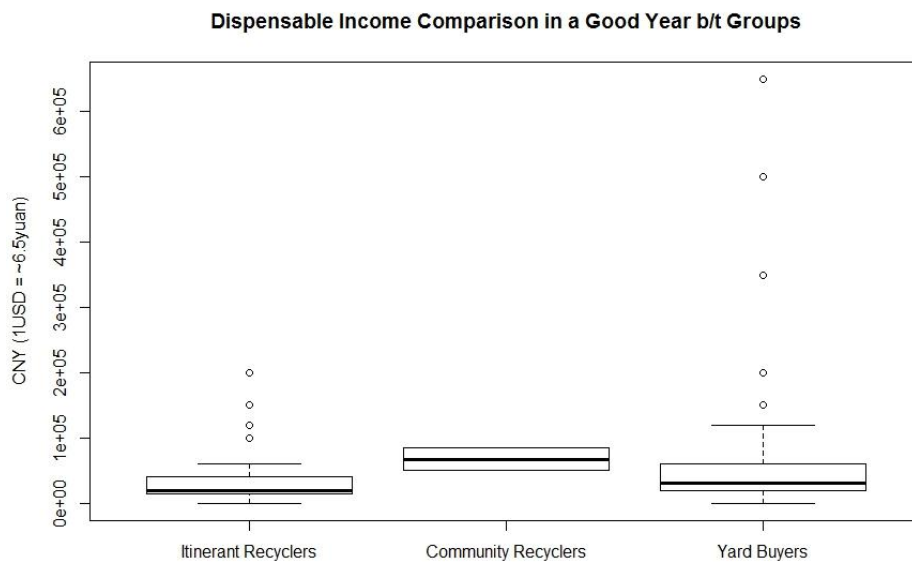


Figure 34: Chart: Dispensable income comparisons in a good year⁵⁰

⁵⁰ See Appendix F. Q3.5 DISPINCH

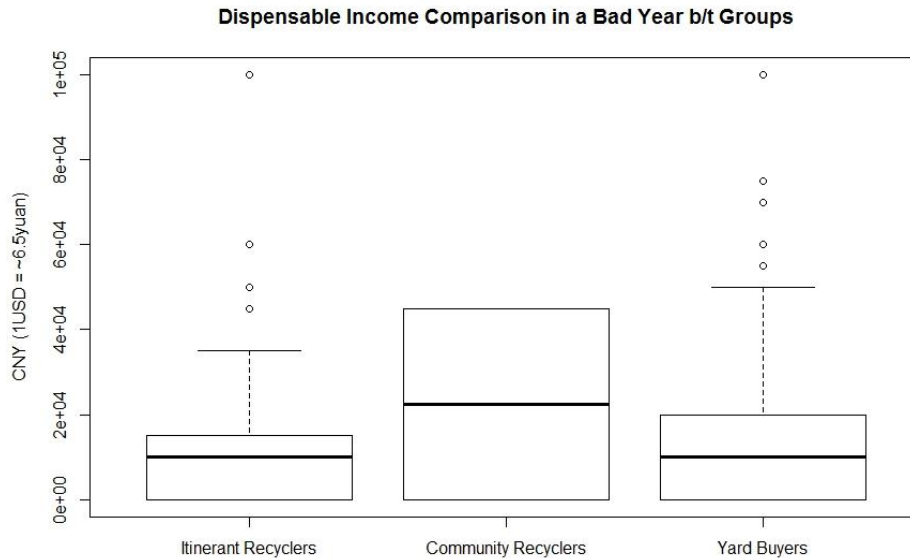


Figure 35: Chart: Dispensable income comparisons in a bad year⁵¹

Recycling income is very unstable due to many factors such as price change, location change, government orders or even international relationship. In the questionnaire, I asked about recyclers' income in two different questions, as referring the condition being a "good year" or "bad year" income-wise, to loosely control the yearly fluctuation. Figure 34 and 35 show a comparison among these three different groups on their income level in a good year and a bad year. No matter whether it is a good year or a bad one; community recyclers have the least outliers, which indicate that their income is relatively the most stable one among the three. The median income for Community Recyclers is higher than the median income of the itinerant recyclers, which further suggests that the community recyclers are at a relatively better position income-wise. Although yard buyers have a median income similar to the itinerant buyers, during a good year, there are many outliers on the high-value range which suggests the possibility of higher income than the itinerant recyclers. Because yard buyers have more responsibilities for overheads, their actual

⁵¹ See Appendix F. Q3.5 DISPINCL.

income is expected to be greater than the itinerant buyers as well. There are several key points here:

(1) Community recyclers are the most stable recyclers among the three income-wise. But disappearing together with the risk associated with it is the potential to have a high-cost high-income year as well. However, due to the limited observations (4) of community recyclers in our sample, this argument is weakened.

(2) During a bad year, all three groups of recyclers have the potential to have an income of 0, which suggests that although community recyclers are more stable, they are still under certain levels of risk, income-wise.

(3) Two unstable recycling groups—itinerant recyclers and yard buyers—both have many high-income outliers during both good and bad years. These outliers serve as important attractions for migrants in the business, and they also well demonstrate the potential association of high income with the high risk these two groups are bearing.

So, although these three types of jobs are significantly different from one another in operating styles and investment levels, there exists an upward mobility ladder within the three groups of recyclers. Itinerant recycling is considered unstable newcomers' jobs while yard buyers are viewed as bosses, which indicates an economic and social status upgrade from being an itinerant recycler to a yard buyer. Community recyclers are viewed as having a very stable job with relatively small investment so that changing from an itinerant recycler to a community recycler represents a stability upgrade. Therefore, the upward mobility from an itinerant recycler (游商) to a fixed-location (community or yard) recycler (坐商) accounts for both economic and social status upgrading for the migrant recyclers. Meanwhile, the recycling companies which organize the yard buyers

and housing rentals for both community and itinerant recyclers are not approachable in the recycling ladder system because recycling companies normally do not have recycling business by itself and need the local connections to access land leasing and recycling business licensing.

The next section will examine the overall structural barriers for almost all migrant recyclers in Beijing through descriptive analysis from the questionnaires conducted in 2012 and 2013. Also, since people at different layers of the recycling business face structural barriers and threats from various institutions, the following sections will examine migrants at various job opportunities to further investigate the structural/institutional barriers at their corresponding level.

5.2 Structural/Institutional Barriers for Migrant Recyclers in Beijing

5.2.1 *Hukou* (Household Registration System)

There are several structural/institutional barriers faced by almost all migrant recyclers in Beijing. One important characteristic shared by all migrant recyclers is their “migrant” status, which is directly defined by their rural *Hukou* status. When migrants arrive at Beijing with *Hukou* status other than locally registered status, they need to register at the local police office to obtain a “temporary living permit (*暂住证*),” which is required upon signing the housing lease for a living place in Beijing. While researchers have indicated a waning impact of *Hukou* in regulating people’s movement (Wu *et al.* 2014), this project also finds that the migrant recyclers have expressed nearly no concern about their rural *Hukou* status for their stay in the city although almost all of the questionnaire respondents are rurally registered at places outside Beijing.

But, is *Hukou*'s impact diminishing in migrants' business and livelihood? Although many migrants responded to my question with sentences like "*Hukou* is not a thing any more," I am skeptical in arriving at the same conclusion. I found in my study that *Hukou* policy has been so well institutionalized in the society that migrants no longer expect *Hukou* would change in a way that can change their condition in cities. Rather than losing its power in the society, *Hukou* policy has gradually developed to become a social context that defines migrants in Beijing with an "outsider" identity. Moreover, recycling migrants in *Henancun* still faces structural and institutional barriers that relate to their rural *Hukou* status in aspects such as housing, education, and the *Shourong* policy.

5.2.2 Housing

After China took the market turn at the end of the 1970s, Chinese cities also abandoned the traditional way of assigning housing as a type of welfare by the work unit (*danwei*) (Bjorklund, E.M., 1986; Yeh *et al.*, 1995; Feng *et al.* 2008) and instead, cities have gradually developed its land leasing system and the real estate businesses (Wu, 1996). Today in Beijing, different real estate services indicated that commodity housing price outside the fifth ring road, which is the place for recycling businesses, are over 40,000 *yuan*/m². If we compare this price with migrants' disposable income in Figure 27 and 28, we can immediately draw the conclusion that by income from recycling, it is very hard for migrants to purchase commodity housing at the places even close to their businesses on the outskirts of Beijing. Thus, almost all migrant recyclers in Beijing choose or are forced to rent rather than purchase houses in Beijing. While many shook their head when I asked them about their housing choices, several interview respondents complain with a

surprising tone, “the price for buying one restroom in Beijing is enough to build a three-story house at home, with a yard. So why do I want to spend money here?”

But although most migrant recyclers rent housing inside *Henancun* or the recycling companies, the company runners such as company owners, managers, or office clerks in general have or rent commodity housing and commute to work in the company offices that locate inside *Henancun*. They are either Beijing residents or have gradually gotten used to their new identity as a company owner and manager in a formal business style. Migrants in the three groups shown in the above structure are mostly, if not all, either residential housing renters or living inside their recycling yard around or inside *Henancun*. Despite having different recycling styles in their business, itinerant and community recyclers mostly live either in the housing section of *Henancun* or rent directly from local villagers for their cheap rents. Living next to *Henancun* also gives them the advantage of knowing the price change in a very fast manner and keeps their commuting distance to a minimum. They normally get up before dawn, ride tricycles to their preferred or assigned locations to buy recyclables during the daytime and ride back at dusk to sell to different yard buyers next to their rental houses before going back home. (Figure 36)

Meanwhile, yard buyers typically rent a yard that is about 0.5-1 *mu* (666m²) from the recycling company and live at the built houses inside the assigned yard to not only save on housing but also to watch and protect their materials at night right by their houses. While this situation has the advantage of living with their “commodities” as a security measure, it also increases the risk of fire incidents since they cook and furnace at their house next to the materials as well. (Figure 36)



Figure 36: Photograph: Housing for recyclers in *Henancun*

However, the housing situation is not great. Many migrant recyclers indicate that their living condition has been the same for the past 25 years after they first arrived in Beijing. I will explain this situation in the following sections. The average housing area for one person in the questionnaire is less than 10 m^2 . As we can see from Figure 30, most migrant recyclers live in a house between $10\text{-}20 \text{ m}^2$. For people who live within 10 m^2 , there average 2.3 persons living in that house; for other housing sizes $10\text{-}20 \text{ m}^2$: 2.8; $20\text{-}30 \text{ m}^2$: 3.1; $30\text{-}40 \text{ m}^2$: 3.9; over 40 m^2 : 4.5. Thus averagely, people who participated in the questionnaire, in general, live at a place under 10 m^2 per person. (Figure 37)

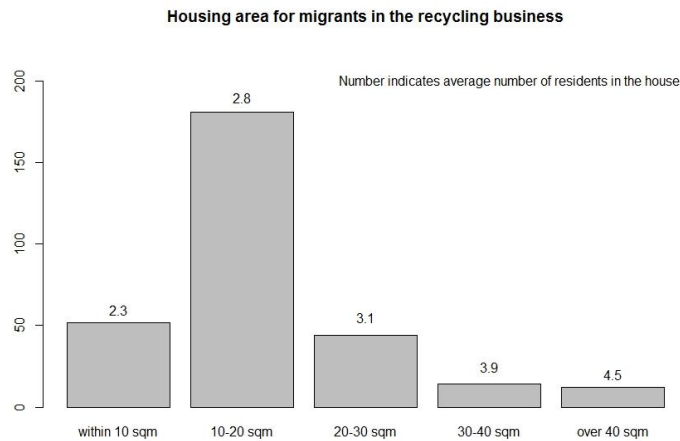


Figure 37: Chart: Size of housing and the averaged number of residents living in their houses⁵²

Also, the housing condition question is also constructed under the local context. Since recyclers are mostly not under complete poverty, their houses have all the necessities to live under Beijing's climate. TVs, refrigerators, and sometimes even washers are present when I visited their houses because in the recycling market, these items are all available at usable conditions at very low prices. Thus, the question about housing focuses mostly on the elements that relate to housing hygiene conditions. Table 12 shows the results based on all 304 questionnaire takers.

Table 12: Housing condition for housing in *Henancun*⁵³

In House	Restroom	Running water	Solar hot water	Elec hot water	AC	Furnace	Public heating
#	11	140	149	19	61	241	9
%	3.62%	46.05%	49.01%	6.25%	20.07%	79.28%	2.96%

From Table 12, we can see that about half of the people participated in the questionnaire have running water and solar heated water at their rental houses and close to 80% of the people have furnace in their house. These numbers are relatively high because they

⁵² See Appendix F. Q1.10 NOINHOUSE, Q1.13 HOUSEAREA.

⁵³ See Appendix F. Q1.13 IHRESTRM, IHRUNNINGW, IHSOLARWT, IHELECWT, IHAIRCOND, IHFURNACE, IHPUBCHEAT.

represent the very cheap way to obtain the necessities recyclers need to survive Beijing's summer and winter. Meanwhile, the high-cost necessities such as electrically heated water (6.25%) and AC (20.07%) are present at much fewer houses, which indicates that migrants would also like to keep investment at minimum. Meanwhile, restroom and public heating, which are considered as part of the public facilities that need infrastructure development from the recycling company or the local government, have an extremely low presence at recyclers' houses. Therefore, we can see that the housing condition stays at a surviving level while both the company/local government and the migrant recyclers use minimum investment in building the rental housing and yard houses in *Henancun*. In the official contract between the company and yard buyers, the company usually builds one or two one-story one-bedroom house(s) for each recycling yard. These houses are company property and are not allowed to reconstruct. To keep investment low, recycling companies only provide the houses to accommodate the minimum needs for family to live in the yard. Meanwhile, the contract also specifies that if the yard buyer decides to build housing for their family use in the yard, the built houses would belong to the company, which makes yard buyers reluctant at building additional houses for themselves. However, many yard buyers would rather purchase temporary mobile houses or build temporary houses as a coping strategy, which I will discuss in the next chapter.

My research also investigated the willingness or actions of migrants purchasing new houses for their families. During my interviews with the itinerant, community recyclers, and yard buyers, every one of them indicates the uselessness to own commodity housing in Beijing. The reasons they gave generally involve (1) housing in Beijing is too

expensive; using much less money, they could build a several-story house at hometown with a nice yard; (2) buying houses no longer grants local *Hukou*; (3) they have no interests for staying in Beijing forever, so they would rather buy houses in their hometowns. While these are the main reasons for recycling migrants not to buy houses in Beijing, questionnaire results also suggest the same answer when I ask about whether they have already purchased houses anywhere by a multiple-choice question. Out of the 303 responses from the questionnaire, only one person indicated that he had purchased local housing in Beijing. Among the 302 answers otherwise, I further ask them to show where they have bought or where they intend to buy houses for their family. Table 13 shows the results from this question:

Table 13: Where have you purchased or do you intend to buy houses? ⁵⁴

Answers	Responses (302 total)	Percentage
1 = 'Self-Built one at Home Town',	1 – 0	
2 = 'Self-Built one at my Rural Village',	2 – 123	40.73%
3 = 'Bought one at Home Town',	3 – 22	7.28%
4 = 'Bought one at Rural Village',	4 – 0	
5 = 'Self-Built one at Another Town',	5 – 0	
6 = 'Self-Built one at Another Village',	6 – 1	0.33%
7 = 'Bought one at Another Town',	7 – 0	
8 = 'Bought one at Another Village',	8 – 0	
9 = 'Plan to self-build one at home town',	9 – 2	0.66%
10 = 'Plan to self-build one at home village',	10 – 14	4.64%
11 = 'Plan to buy one at home town',	11 – 4	1.32%
12 = 'Plan to buy one at home village',	12 – 3	0.99%
13 = 'Plan to self-build one at another town',	13 – 0	
14 = 'Plan to self-build one at other village',	14 – 8	2.65%
15 = 'Plan to buy one at another town',	15 – 2	0.66%
16 = 'Plan to buy one at another village',	16 – 0	
17 = 'I'm not going to build or buy house',	17 – 72	24.17%
18 = 'I haven't thought about this question'	18 – 51	16.89%

⁵⁴ See Appendix F. Q1.12 HPLAN.

Out of the 302 responses, about half of them (48%) have already self-built houses at either their rural home village or the town that their village belongs to. About 11% intend to buy, or self-built houses in their home village or hometowns. And 24% has no intention to buy or build houses at all while about 17% have not taken housing into serious consideration.

Therefore, we can see that migrant recyclers are mostly living with dense and poor housing conditions while they almost have no intention to buy housing in Beijing at all. On the contrary, many of them still take hometown as the potentially permanent place to live sometime in the future. This situation is well beyond housing itself, and in fact education is another barrier migrants are facing in the city.

5.2.3 Education

When *Hukou* has lost its power on controlling people's migration from rural to urban areas, its far-reaching impacts in various social aspects remain strong, such as job market, housing and education. But education serves as a highly important factor in that most migrants took their children's education as their only way to join the formal system, which they considered themselves to be excluded from. The most important issue associated with education is the country-wide College Entrance Exam. All high school graduates will take the three-day exam at the same time in the province related to their *Hukou* registration. However, universities have the rights to decide how much percentage of students they are willing to accept from certain provinces, which makes the odds greatly favoring the provinces with more universities. However, since most universities are in the major cities, college entrance exam competition becomes extremely intense for

the rural provinces and provinces with high population. *Henan* has a total population that ranked the 3rd among all of the 31 provinces in China during the 2010 census. And in 2013, *Henan* province has a total number of 758,000 people who took the college entrance exam, which ranked 1st among all provinces. But it has an A-level college acceptance rate of 6.79%, which ranked the 26th among all provinces⁵⁵. We can see that *Henan* migrants in recycling are facing a very serious challenge in how to let their children succeed in the college entrance exam. Also, because the place to receive the public education is also *Hukou* based, many migrant recyclers would have to decide where they will have their children to receive education, the formal schools at hometowns or the migrant-run schools in Beijing, to better prepare for the college entrance exam as well.

In *Changping* district of Beijing, two important documents relate to migrant children's education. One is the "temporary method for applying public education for floating population's children under education ages in Beijing (北京市对流动人口中适龄儿童少年实施义务教育的暂行办法)" published by Beijing Municipal Commission of Education in 2002. The method emphasizes that children, whose age is between 6 and 15 years old and who have not finished the nine-year compulsive education, should go to school to receive the compulsive education. For migrant children who have relatives being responsive to them at their hometowns, they should go back to their hometown to receive the compulsive education; if this is not the case and the child's parents have resided in Beijing for over half a year with temporary living permits, the child can apply for local public schools to receive compulsive education. The method also indicates that

⁵⁵ College entrance exam data are from <http://gaokao.ajiao.com/163062.html>; and <http://edu.people.com.cn/n/2014/0606/c367001-25114811.html>.

parents should prepare the following documents: (1) *Hukou* documentation for the family, (2) parents' ID, (3) temporary living permits, and (4) working proof before they can go to the street office or township government to submit their application for “temporary education allowance documentation (在京借读批准书).” Then parents can use this allowance and transcripts from the hometown school to apply to local public schools for the opportunity to receive local education for their children. However, the local schools retain the rights to decide whether they would accept the child or not. In fact, in many cases, migrants have to pay an additional “construction” fee before the school would accept their children as students.

In 2014, another important documentation “Examination standards for the non-Beijing-*Hukou* children’s schooling application ‘Five Documentations’ in *Changping* District⁵⁶” came in place at the end of April. Although this documentation is from the district level education department, every district has published similar standard at the same time. The document required that migrants should provide additional local residential location proof in supporting their application. Thus, since 2014, migrants need to provide five documents, including the previously mentioned four and the residence proof in their application. Previously, migrants could bring ID, *Hukou* and house deed or rental contract to the local street office or township governments to apply for a hand-written proof. But in 2014, this document has become house deeds or rental documentation only, while also put strict regulations on the allowed type of rental houses to exclude military properties, economic housing, indemnificatory apartments, commodity houses or basements. However, in 2014, public media has recorded cases where application was

⁵⁶昌平区非京籍儿童入学“五证”审核标准 <http://edu.sina.com.cn/zxx/2014-05-06/1036417298.shtml>

turned down for many migrant applicants who live in rental houses⁵⁷. Thus, local formal education is nearly inaccessible for many migrant parents who even have spent more than ten years working in Beijing.

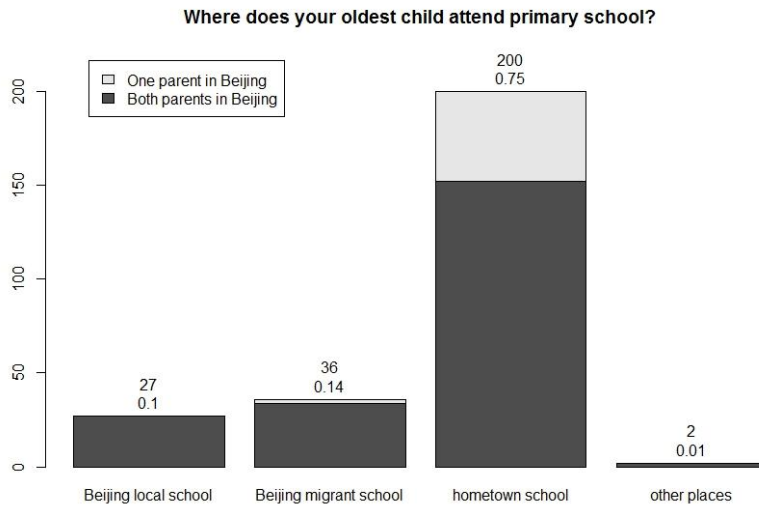


Figure 38: Chart: Where migrants' oldest child attends primary school? (266 responses)⁵⁸

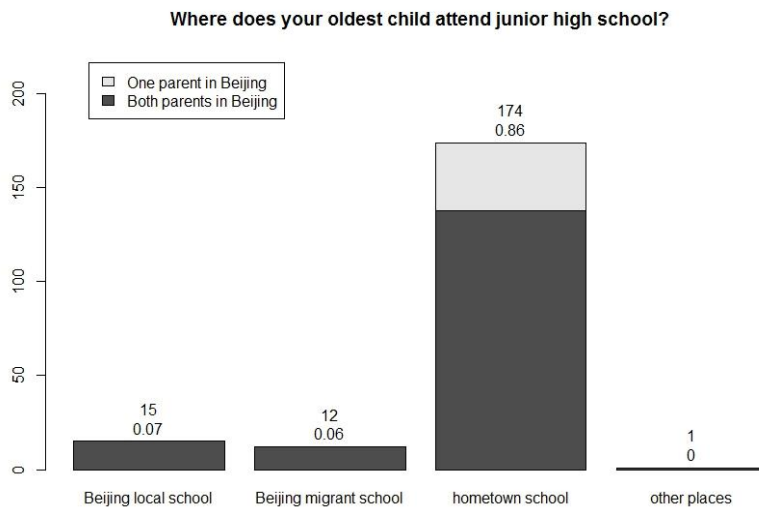


Figure 39: Chart: Where migrants' oldest child attends junior high school? (202 responses)⁵⁹

⁵⁷ 北京幼升小非京籍政策紧缩 外地户口孩子难上学.

<http://learning.sohu.com/20140520/n399784881.shtml>

⁵⁸ See Appendix F. Q3.4.1 WIFEHERE, Q3.4.2 KIDBJFP, KIDBJMP, KIDHTP, KIDOTP.

⁵⁹ See Appendix F. Q3.4.1 WIFEHERE, Q3.4.3 KIDBJFM, KIDBJMM, KIDHTM, KIDOTM.

Figure 38 and 39 show that many migrants choose to let their oldest child attend schools at their hometowns. The questionnaire is designed to cover migrants' choices in selecting school locations specifically for the nine-year compulsory education. The percentage of migrants who have their children to take hometown primary school is 75% while the one for junior high school is 86%. Furthermore, more children tend to stay in Beijing through primary schools (total of 24%) than middle schools (total of 13%), which is because since Beijing has much higher odds for local children to enter a college, college entrance exam competition is much more severe at their migration hometowns. This situation has further led to a condition whereby migrant hometown education emphasizes much more on succeeding in an exam rather than teaching materials outside the textbooks, while Beijing's education has different objectives. To succeed in the college entrance exam, migrants would preferably send their good school performing children, who have the potential to succeed in the exam, back to their hometown to receive more "practical" education.

From Figure 38 and 39, we can also see that many families would take a split family strategy to accommodate this educational dilemma as well. This has been a common coping strategy for migrants to accommodate the education reality in China. However, socially and culturally this strategy has led to many unforeseeable conditions. During my visit in *Gushi County of Henan* province, many local officials have indicated that because many grandparents are illiterate, they cannot take care of help with their grandchildren's homework or questions. Meanwhile, without parents' presence, many middle school, and high school children have formed or joined various street gangs and further led to all kinds of social problems in their family. There are further coping strategies with this

situation as well. The “wealthy” migrant parents or migrants whose parents are not able to take care of the children would pay money to the hometown teachers to take extra care of their children, meaning the teachers’ home would serve as host families for the children to take care of them and make sure they are on the right track. However, this is not the main theme of this dissertation, and I will leave this topic for my future studies.

5.2.4 Demolition and Relocation

While recycling normally follows urban development for the recyclable materials from construction and housing decoration, recycling enclaves, such as *Henancun*, in fact, face serious threats from various urban development projects as well. At the end of Chapter Three, I have examined the spatial movements of *Henancun* in Beijing since the 1980s. However, almost these demolitions and relocation happened due to urban renewal or urban infrastructural development. The most well known ones are related to several large urban projects such as the 1990 Asian Games in Beijing, the 3rd, 4th and 5th ring road construction, *Wangjing* residential area construction, 2008 Beijing Olympic Games construction, *Tiantongyuan* residential area construction and various Subway system construction projects. As we have already illustrated in previous sections, the recycling business is highly efficient because of the direct connection with local residents through community and itinerant recyclers, traveling distance serves as a major cost in recycling. The closer a recycler could live to the source of recyclable materials, the higher profit they could obtain. While these projects are pushing *Henancun* farther and farther away from the central city, profits are also cut heavily by the increased travel distance in between. Almost all itinerant and community recyclers express their concern over the

repetitive demolition and outward relocation of *Henancun* in a similar fashion. In one of the itinerant recycler's words,

“I am not sure about what would happen if we [*Henancun*] need to relocate again. I have been traveling farther and farther now, and if *Henancun* moves too far from the city, I will not be able to make anything out of recycling. But I'm not just talking about myself. Beijing will be full of trash one day if we recyclers are too far from the city to make a profit.”

However, while the local government's pathological interpretation of *Henancun* is not helpful for the demolition situation, the main reason for *Henancun* to face repetitive demolition lies in the spatial conflicts they always have with various urban development projects. *Henancun*, as both a migrant and business enclave, always takes serious consideration on how its spatial location would maximize their recycling profits. To some extent, the factors they take into consideration, for example, being close to the central city, low construction density, and large contingent cheap land, all happen to be the characteristics urban development projects prefer in a city. This coincidence is interesting and understandable, but it is also devastating for *Henancun* as a business seeking long-term spatial stability. I will illustrate this in more detail as one of my main arguments in Section 7.2. Therefore, the migrant enclave has always been and will continue facing demolition and relocation in the future, and migrant recyclers and the recycling companies have already taken demolition and relocation as a known fact in that they never expect to stay in one place for long. In *Dongxiaokou* area, when I ask my interviewees about their stay in *Dongxiaokou*, many of them are surprised that they can

stay at *Dongxiaokou* since 2003 or 2004 (close to 10 years when I conducted my interviews in 2012 and 2013).

5.2.5 *Shourong*, Stigmatization, and Discrimination

Recycling in China is now widely viewed as an informal economy in that they are too flexible and could avoid all governmental regulations even taxations, but another important historical reason for being viewed it as informal is the possible relationship it has with potential criminal activities of stealing. When urban infrastructure such as copper wire, sewer cover, traffic signs are missing, the first thing police would do is to search the recycling centers for clues to find the criminal. Because of this potential connection between the illegal activities and recycling business which is considered as the easiest place to cash out the stolen items, the police put a lot of attention in regulating the recycling activities. On walls of almost every recycling company office, there are always signs to show what items are allowed to be recycled and what items are resurfaced from potentially stolen infrastructure items (Figure 40).



Figure 40: Photograph: Forbidden items from recycling posted by police

When *Henan* migrants first joined the business in Beijing in the 1980s, many of them made their living through hard manual work in the recycling business. However, since they worked mostly in the recycling business and many stolen cases are also related to recycling, gradually their fame is stigmatized through these connections as well. Even during my interviews with *Henan* migrants, they did not deny that they have heard about stories that migrants from *Henan* province were involved in stealing in the 1980s and 1990s. And since that was a much faster and easier, despite illegal, way to make a fortune and many people in recycling also made a good living during those years, the loose association has become a stigmatized tie between the two. However, although many people talked about the few possible cases of stealing they “heard” from someone, nobody could practically trace back to the source where the stigmatization and discrimination started in Beijing.

Although we cannot confirm any of the stealing and fortune making stories that stigmatizes *Henan* migrants and *Henancun*, *Shourong* as a discriminatory social policy did have long-existing effects on migrants’ life in Beijing. *Shourong* (收容) is short for the two-part policy of *Shourong—Qiansong*⁶⁰ (收容遣送) in China that was in place after 1982 and ended in 2003 when a college student was beaten to death under this policy in *Guangzhou*, China. This policy originated in 1982 when the State Council of China established the policy as of “the custody and repatriation method for vagrants and beggars in cities 城市流浪乞讨人员收容遣送办法.” This was originally set as a welfare policy to help, educate and arrange the urban vagrants to manage the inflow of rural

⁶⁰ *Shourong*: putting in custody and *Qiansong*: repatriation

migrants under poverty in cities. This policy expands to cover the “*Three-No People*”⁶¹ 三无人员 in the early 1990s and required that people with non-local *Hukou* status to apply for a temporary living permit in the city. When *Three-No People* were caught, they would be *Shourong*, or locked up and *qiansong*, or sent back to their hometowns. Figure 41 shows that 87.5% (64 out of 72) of the people who experienced *Shourong* in Beijing arrived in Beijing before 2003 while 48.28% (112 out of 232) of the people who did not experience arrived at Beijing before 2003.

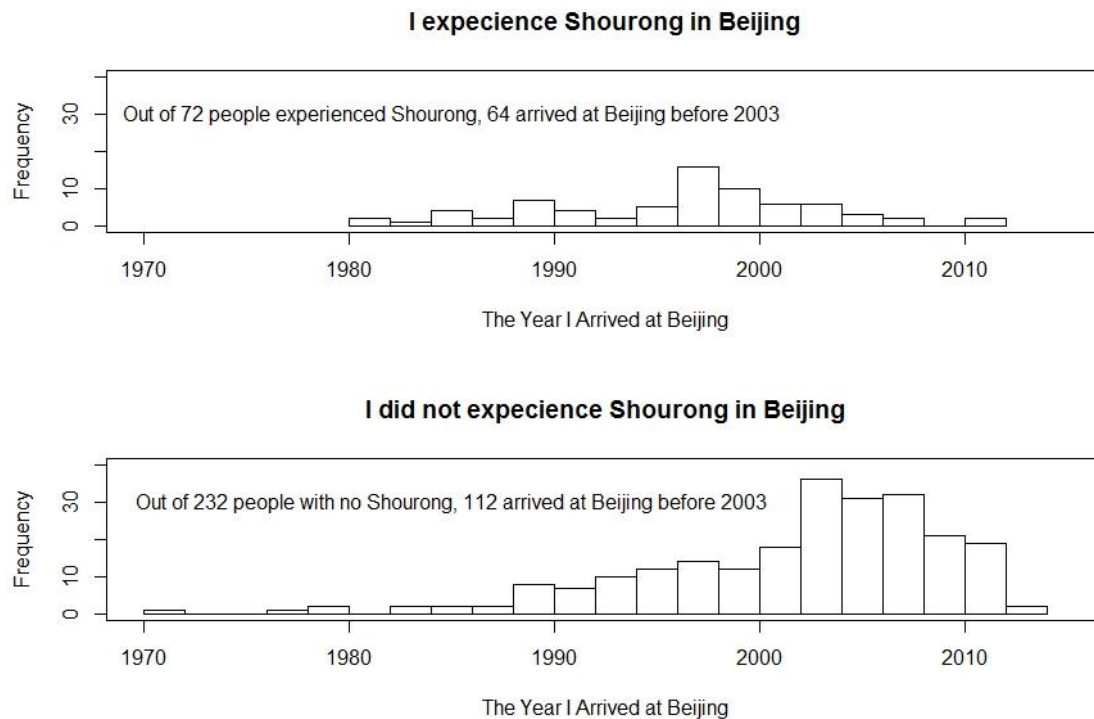


Figure 41: Chart: Have you experienced *Shourong* in Beijing?⁶²

All the migrant recyclers who experienced *Shourong* in my interviews condemned the policy as being brutal, inhumane and absurd in that it functioned more like a money

⁶¹ Three-No People: means people without legal documentation, stable residence or stable income, which means no ID, temporary living permit or working permit in cities.

⁶² See Appendix F. Q1.22 *SHOURONG* & Q1.1 FYINBJ.

collecting method for the contract-based *public order joint defense team* (治安联防队⁶³) instead of the police in the city. When *Shourong* was in place, migrants had to use different ways to escape the *Shourong* policy. It was exactly under this situation, *Henancun*'s emergence became one of the most important coping strategies against *Shourong* for recycling migrants, in Beijing.

In addition to the controversy of the connection between recycling and illegal activities and the negative image of migrants through the *Shourong* practice, stigmatization of *Henan* migrants has been spreading so heavily that it impacts both the recycling business and migrants' way of living in Beijing. During my interviews with some itinerant recyclers and yard buyers, two stories caught my attention. Although the stories are stand-alone cases they have encountered in Beijing, it shows the extent to which migrants are taking discrimination as part of the social and economic context in Beijing when they are running their business and living the city life.

Mr. Zhao (Case 1, itinerant recycler by car) is an itinerant recycler in *Picun* of *Chaoyang* district. *Picun* located almost at the boulder between *Chaoyang* district and *Tongzhou* County and is far out of the fifth ring road of Beijing. Since the places outside the fifth ring road in *Chaoyang* is still yet to be developed, there are not many residents in that region and many places are still considered as rural villages. Thus, the *PC Henancun* are quite different from the ones in *Dongxiaokou* in that they are not aiming at residential recyclable materials. Many yard buyers in these companies have contracts with industries, large commercial companies, supermarkets, shopping centers, airports or even some large periodic events through contracts. Meanwhile, the residents in the housing section in

⁶³ This is a community resident team organized by the local police to assist police in maintaining public order. They normally work under temporary contracts.

Henancun are also different from ones in *Dongxiaokou* in that they must use cars to travel into and out of the city, while the location is also not economic for community recyclers to commute from the city. So, the residents in the housing sections of *PC Henancun* are the ones who specialize in high-profit items such as electronic appliances, computers and furniture mostly from small businesses.

The housing section is one section inside a large yard in the recycling company. The space is a combination of several yards with one-story houses surrounding an empty yard. In the housing section, there is a total of about 25 one-story houses next to each other constructed in a “U” shape with a gate on the opening side. The surrounded yard is used to store all the recycled items for each recycling family before they reach a certain volume to sell as a bulk. (Figure 42) Recycling is still family based, but in many cases, several houses would host one business together and share their recycling resources together. Either one or a couple of families would have a car, which is more like a small van in that the trunk size is what they need to transport all the items they bought from the city.



Figure 42: Photograph: Mr. Zhao's electric appliance recycling and rental house

Mr. Zhao is in his 40s and focuses on electronics, especially parts from computers. While he does not have any contract with any companies, he needs to drive his van around the

city and sends out his name cards to other “local” recyclers (community/itinerant recyclers in particular locations) in order to buy those specific items from them or their customers. In addition, like what all other young people do, he uses internet to advertise his recycling business as well. As he told me, most of the recyclers like him would take internet cafes as very promising customers because the computers wear off very fast and computer upgrades are so common that they always need to sell their old computers. When I asked him to what extent his *Henan* identity affects his business, he bitterly smiled and gave me a simple answer.

“Everywhere, for example, one time I got a phone call from someone who probably saw my ads online. He was an owner of an internet cafe and wanted to sell some computer screens and asked me about the price I could offer. After setting up a time to collect the computer screens, I drove over with my friend and parked at their back door. All the screens were already left outside. When I approached to get them, he asked me ‘where are you from?’ I told him I was from *Henan* province. He said ‘then I don’t want to sell anymore.’ I asked him why and he told me that he heard that *Henan* people are not trustworthy. We talked for hours about this, and I told him, there are bad guys and good guys everywhere, you cannot judge based on where people are from. Well, after all, he became a friend of mine. But what I want to tell you is these kinds of cases are everywhere. While this guy sold me all the materials, many will not and trust me many will not even talk with you. Are there liars and thieves from *Henan*? Sure,

I cannot deny there are. But you cannot take everyone from *Henan* as bad people.”

In my interviews, this reflection is very common among *Henan* recyclers. In Beijing, even in China, *Henan* people have related to illegal activities many times. One time, even a police station in *Shenzhen* city posted banners saying “heavily striking on the extortion and blackmailing gangs from *Henan* province 坚决打击河南籍敲诈勒索团伙,” and “500yuan award for reporting extortion and blackmailing gangs from *Henan* province 凡举报河南籍团伙敲诈勒索犯罪、破获案件的, 奖励500元⁶⁴” in March 2005 without any evidence backing up their statements. The police station sent official apology after a court rule. There are also many cases of job advertisement that specifically excluding people from *Henan* province as well. These cases reflect the social condition many *Henan* migrants are facing in the society. The police actions, stigmatization, and discrimination have significantly affected migrants’ business and livelihood in Beijing. However, at the same time, this situation has further pushed the emergence and development of *Henancun* as stand-alone enclaves in Beijing as well.

5.3 Structural/Institutional Barriers for Recyclers at Different Levels

Based on my fieldwork, I have concluded these five factors, *Hukou*, housing, education, demolition and relocation, and *Shourong*, stigmatization and discrimination as important structural/institutional barriers almost all migrant recyclers are facing in Beijing.

However, while migrants working at different levels in the recycling structure face different people and use different business style, they are facing more specific barriers in

⁶⁴ Sohu News. <http://news.sohu.com/20060209/n241734731.shtml>

both their business and livelihood as well. I will explain some of the most important specific factors that have significantly shaped the everyday life of migrant recyclers at different levels of the recycling structure.

5.3.1 The Itinerant Recyclers, *Xing Shang* (行商)

The roving recyclers represent the group that has existed in recycling for the longest period. Before the economic reform, they are organized by the recycling companies to purchase residential recyclables from local residents, while industrial/office wastes are normally collected directly by the recycling companies. After the reform, the local itinerant recyclers are gradually replaced by the newly arrived migrants because this job does not require specific skill set or investment other than the willingness to ride a flat-back tricycle on the streets. Since this job was highly mobile and hard to regulate, they remained untaxed and unregistered even today, which gave them the advantage to maximize profit directly by cutting out the additional charges recycling companies needed to keep the business running for the whole company. Since then, itinerant recycling has been serving as very important entry level market niche for migrants who came to the city “with [only] a shoulder on the head.”

As an entry-level recycling job, it has the advantage of avoiding all potential charges from subcontracting fees, overheads for business utilities, cleaning fees for fixed-location recyclers to salaries yard buyers pay for sorting recyclables. They represent a low-cost, low-income group of recyclers who typically choose to ride flat-back tricycles or electrically motorized tricycles every day and commute from their rented flats to different residential communities in the city. Itinerant recyclers are the biggest group of house renters in *Henancun*. Spatially, *Henancun* are comprised mainly of different recycling

companies. But on the side of those companies, there are normally residential areas either owned by different local landlords or the recycling companies themselves. These residential areas are predominantly one-story houses built in several rows with narrow pathways in between. These houses host almost exclusively itinerant recyclers, community recyclers, migrant temporary workers⁶⁵, and some furniture recyclers⁶⁶. Itinerant recyclers normally ride their tricycles to the city at dawn, come back to sell in different yards, and leave the empty tricycle by their rented house at night. They also use the pathway as a place to disassemble electrical appliances, such as electrical washer, air conditioner and fridge, and sell disassembled materials based on elements if the items are not fixable. Itinerant recyclers take advantage of staying close to the recycling yards while paying low rent because of their location out of the main city. Also, itinerant recyclers are the group that experienced most *Shourong* cases in Beijing. When *Shourong* policy was still in place around 2000, *public order joint defense team* members would check the required documents of almost everyone who “looked” or “acted” like a migrant in the city. Because itinerant recyclers have to ride tricycles on the streets for their business, they face a lot of risk being exposed to *Shourong* in their everyday life. Although we do not have quantitative data to understand how migrants reacted to *Shourong* policy, many migrant recyclers have indicated that they chose to leave Beijing during those years only because *Shourong* has great impact on their business and lives.

⁶⁵ Migrant temporary workers are groups that wait at certain areas for day hire to load/unload trucks.

⁶⁶ Furniture recyclers are a very particular group of recyclers from *Hebei* province. They live in the housing sections in *Henancun*, but only buy used furniture from the itinerant/community recyclers. At dusk, they will come out in groups to different entrances to *Henancun* and negotiate with recyclers to purchase furniture directly there. Because their hometown in *Hebei* province is relatively close to Beijing, they ship all the furniture back home to fix and resell in markets at second/third tier cities, towns and villages.

After *Shourong* police ended in 2003, migrants gradually returned to Beijing to restart their recycling business again. In figure 43 showing migrants' first year of arrival in Beijing, a clear peak appeared in 2003 when *Shourong* was officially terminated. While recycling on the street no longer face the discriminatory *Shourong* policy, itinerant recycling has flourished again. However, itinerant recyclers still face very unstable economic situation as day-by-day income still serves as the sole income for them to go through their livelihood in Beijing.

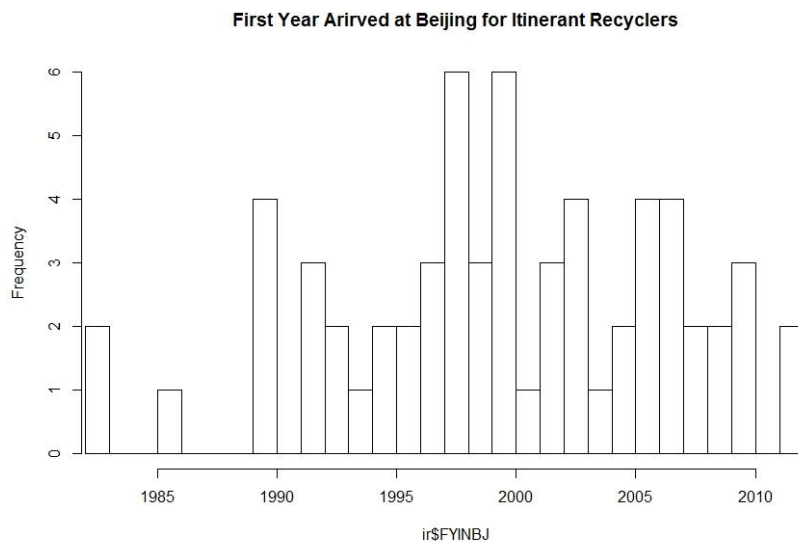


Figure 43: Chart: First year arriving at Beijing for all itinerant recyclers⁶⁷

Among all the recyclers I interviewed, although only a few are working as itinerant recyclers, many community recyclers and yard buyers have previous experience being one. Here, I include two cases of interviews to illustrate further how their business and lives appear to be in Beijing.

Mr. Qian (Case 2, itinerant recycler) is an itinerant recycler I met in the residential area of *DXK Henancun*. I initially met with him at dusk of a sunny day after my interview with

⁶⁷ See Appendix F. Q1.1 FYINBJ, Q1.5.1 TYPERCY

the owner of the rental houses. After arrangement, I scheduled to interview him at 7:30am in the following morning because he has an AC to dissemble before he heads over to the city. (Figure 44)

Mr. Qian is 42 years old (in 2012) and came from a rural township right next to *Huai* River on the north end of *Gushi* County, *Henan* province. After trying different jobs in making bricks, construction, carpenter, raising fish in *Changzhou* of *Jiangsu* province at the age 15 or 16, he was introduced to come to Beijing by his *dantiao* (担挑⁶⁸) in 1995 without knowing anything about jobs. He bought a flat-back tricycle immediately and started working as an itinerant recycler.



Figure 44: Photograph: Mr. Qian as an itinerant recycler in Beijing

He initially stayed in *Wali* in 1995, but moved to *Chenying* after 3, 4 years when *Wali* was demolished for the 2008 Olympic Games. After a few years in *Chenying*, the land was developed for something he did not know – “you know, we don’t know, it’s all national things.” Then he came to *Dongxiaokou* and had been living here since. Based on his answers, demolition does not affect his business much except for riding a longer distance, but “I’m still pulling everything back to sell no matter where I live.”

5.3.1.1 Renters in Henancun

⁶⁸ *Dantiao*: the husband of one’s wife’s sister.

While most migrant recyclers live in the housing section of *Henancun*, many indicated that their living condition has not changed in the past 15 to 20 years. Mr. Qian's response is very typical as an itinerant recycler who has been in Beijing since the 1990s. As a renter in *Henancun*, he talked about his housing situation between now and in 1995.

“How can it change? I can't make more money although I want to. The living situation is about the same as during that time. I think it's already quite good, no better than before; they are about the same. We have running water, and you can tell that we are all using the same hose here (shared hose in the pathway). We also have electricity. Everyone is using the same restroom, just the one outside. For bathing, we put together this hut for it (using used wood board) and we don't have public bathing facilities. We have an AC at home and you can tell by the part outside the window. I am going to take it away and sell because it's getting cold now and we don't need it any more. Also, the electricity is not very stable and it's hard to use the AC. Electricity is very expensive too. One degree (1000wh) costs more than one *yuan*. This thing cost one degree an hour. Now [the society] is promoting reducing energy and environmental protection, right? The energy saving ACs saves on electricity, but they don't work well when electricity voltage is low.”

The house has one kitchen and one bedroom with about 20m² of total area, but he turned the kitchen to a temporary bedroom as well. He has all kinds of used electrical appliances such as a TV, an air conditioner, a fridge, a desktop computer and a washer inside the house as well. His rent is only 240*yuan/m*.

5.3.1.2 Shourong policy in the 1990s

Throughout my interviews with *Henan* migrants, people in their 40s or older almost have the exact reaction to my question on *Shourong*: shaking their head, waving their hands and told me in a very serious tone: “that was a dark history and nobody wants to remember” before they silently looked down and continued smoking. Almost all of the veteran migrant recyclers in Beijing experienced *Shourong* policy until 2003 when the policy came to an end. As a veteran itinerant recycler, Mr. Qian experienced *Shourong* himself for several times. His case is quite typical among the responses I have gained in my study. The first time was in *Wali*, 2000.

“I was in *Wali* in 2000 when I recycled around *Changqiao* in the city.

When you are in the street recycling, they [the defense team members] don’t care whatever you say, they just take you and send you to your hometown, *Henan* for me. If you have money, they’ll let you go. It’s just brutal. At that time I was riding my tricycle, but it doesn’t matter whether you are walking or riding. They can easily tell that you are not local, and they’ll just take you without explanation. They’ll send you to the police to register, then send you away.

In 2000, we need to pay 300 *yuan*. If you have money, give them 300, [they’ll let you go], then 200, then 100. If you don’t have any money, they’ll take you to *Henan* and let you go. So, if you pay, they don’t care about you anymore and will let you go from the train at the cargo stations. I was let away at somewhere close to *Baoding* or *Shijiazhuang*, still more than 1000km from *Henan*. Then they just don’t care anymore, no matter

you choose to walk or whatever. If you know someone who they know of, you can go too. Otherwise you have to be sent out of Beijing. At that time, my wife couldn't get hold of me and worried a lot. What she knew was that I simply disappeared and nobody knew where I went. When I was released, I was able to buy a ticket and came back [to Beijing]. But many times, they don't send you away immediately because they need to accumulate enough people to fill the train. Sometimes, I was locked in *Qiliqu* (七里渠) for two or three days. But luckily, since there are lots of *Henan* migrants in Beijing, it's easy to fill the train to *Henan*. [bitterly smile] Only our trains go very frequently because we have many people in Beijing.”

When I asked him about the temporary living permit, he said,

“Temporary living permit is useless. [When they check] if you have it, they'll simply tear it up then put you away. At that time, nobody cares about any documents. If you have a temporary living permit, they'll tear it up. Do you have it now? No? Then they lock you up. I was taken for *Shourong* for about five or six times. Pay every time but the amount is different. The minimum to pay during this period was about 100yuan then they'll send you to *Baoding* before they let you go. Almost all of the *Shourong* cases were around 1999 or 2000 and just those two or three years.”

Did you stay in Beijing after *Shourong*?

“No. I got taken away several times for *Shourong*. Then I went back, back home. And at about 2002, it [*Shourong*] was all over. You know I can’t stay at home, because what are you going to eat while staying home? Then I came back to my *dantiao* in Beijing again.”

5.3.1.3 Unstable income

Mr. Qian’s business and livelihood are maintained daily just like thousands of other itinerant recyclers in Beijing. When I started my interview with Mr. Qian in the pathway in front of his house, several items were in front of him while he was working on an air conditioner. There is also a pile of items stored at the corner of the wall and the constructed bathing hut including used shoes, coats and pants as he explained that those are collected because he wants to sell them to construction workers to make some extra money.

“The business is OK. Well, I don’t know about other businesses anyway. Income is OK, but not very stable. If lucky, I can make several thousand *yuan* [per month]. But if not, I can’t even make 2000. It all depends on buy-and-sell, how could one be sure about it? Sometimes I can make one or two hundred, but sometimes I can’t even make 30 [a day]. [when asked if he wants to become a community recycler] It’s hard to find one [opportunity]. If you don’t know anyone there, they won’t give you the job. But if you get one, that’ll be very stable, at least 30 or 50 a day. [when asked whether he could become a yard buyer] A sitting businessman? I don’t have that kind of brain, not enough money or investment. My life stays about the same all these years. People like us don’t have a good

education or the business brain, so just here to hold our living based on this income. We really just can't make more. If you want to make the business big, you have to have the business brain. Without that brain, you can never make it big. Who doesn't want to make big money? But you have to have the opportunity and relatives to pull you up. I don't have a relative who has money, then who's gonna pull you up?"

During the interview, Mr. Qian is disassembling the recycled AC at the same time. He explained to me how it works for the AC recycling:

"This one will sell for more than 300 *yuan*, close to 400. I lose money because I spent more than 400 on it. After disassembling it, I can only sell it a little more than 300. The most expensive part is the motor, compression engine, copper and aluminum. Without these, you'll lose more money. So, I am disassembling it to pieces, like plastics, copper and so on. How would you sell it without disassembling it? The whole disassembling would take about half to one hour. Then I'll go to the city. If you come here late, I would be gone. I go out every day then came back around dusk. [when asked whether he sells everything every day] No, I sell when I have sometime. If it rains, I can't go out. If it rains for days, we will be staying home all time without any income, no security. But even when you go out, your income is still not stable. [Making money] is like gambling, you can't be sure. Going out doesn't mean making money. Sometimes if you go out and can't buy anything, you can't have a business. Even buying this AC, if the motor is made of copper, I can make some money. If it is steel, I won't

make any. It's not like others with a formal job, we don't have stable income. [asked whether he has stable resources] I'm familiar with the city. Maybe they count as stable resources, just friends, we call each other. But this is still not sure. I don't buy from the local residents, but more like a trader. He [friend] purchases it, then sells to us. They are community recyclers. They are just watching there, then sell to us because they don't travel as far as we do. We make money by traveling far. They don't sell those materials to us because they keep them to sell by themselves. And they only sell big furniture or electrical appliances to us. I know all of them. If you don't know them, they won't sell it to you."

Although different itinerant recyclers have different experiences in Beijing, Mr. Qian shows a general condition how this group of migrant recyclers makes their living in the city. Thus, we can generally understand that other than the five common factors that shape the livelihood and business for all recycling participants in Beijing, itinerant recyclers need to deal with the unchanging living conditions, *Shourong* and unstable income as extra burden in their everyday lives as well.

5.3.2 The Community Recyclers, *Xiao Zuo Shang* (小坐商)

In Beijing, community recyclers are considered more stable than itinerant recyclers for the following several reasons: (1) stable resources for materials; (2) being able to avoid police check on the street; (3) protected by formal contract with the local government. In Beijing, one community would normally have one recycler by the gate (or two by two gates depending on the size of the community). By signing a contract with the local district government or community office, they have the space as his recycling territory by

paying monthly/seasonal payment and a cleaning fee. Because the recycler is inside the community, he does not need to face any situation such as *Shourong* on the street.

Besides, because of the rarity of a community recycler position, it is widely viewed as a much more stable position than itinerant recycling because a community recycler is locally connected rather than floating in the city by oneself. However, although this job is more stable than the itinerant recycler in resources, it faces a very similar situation in making a living daily and also income is highly related to daily exercises. Also, because of the overhead fee they need to pay for their contract, they normally have to commit more to the job than their itinerant counterparts.

Meanwhile, because they do not need to remove their inventory every day due to their assigned space in the community as storage, they exercise a little bit of price control during a good season (when the price is going up) to make a bit more profit. Because of this, they have the freedom to live a little farther from the recycling companies or yard buyers for nicer and larger housing conditions. But their migrant status still puts restrictions on their access to social facilities or other resources in the city as well.

Mr. Sun (Case 3, community recycler) was my first interview respondent. I met him in the summer of 2009 in one residential community just north of the fifth ring road in Beijing. He has his recycling depot, about 500 sqft, by the gate inside a gated community. All he has around his recycling depot are one truck for transportation, one trash can hold recyclable materials, one floor-scale and many sack bags stacked together by the scale. While he was organizing the collected recyclable materials, he agreed to take my interview request. He didn't stop working when answering my questions and insisted several times trying to persuade me that this research topic is quite useless and "you

should focus on the good side of China." When I ask him about the "good side," he gave me some examples such as the economic development, urban development, industry and so on. He kept referring to his work as "collecting garbage" and told me that his work is something nobody would do in the city. (Figure 45)



Figure 45: Photograph: Mr. Sun works as a community recycler

5.3.2.1 Mr. Sun's migration journey

Mr. Sun was born in 1966 and came from *Gushi* county of *Henan* province. Similar to many of his hometown neighbors, his family had a hard time before the early 1980s. The average farmland per person at his house and neighboring region is about six *fen*⁶⁹, which was just enough for growing food for the family without any savings. After the household responsibility policy was in place in his rural hometown in the early 1980s, farmers could sell their agricultural products in the market to make extra money for the family and they started to have the choice of leaving agriculture to work at other places too⁷⁰.

Mr. Sun decided to come out to *dagong*⁷¹ in 1986 when he was 20 years old under pressure from the need to get married and to make a living to support his family. In the 1980s, going out to *dagong* was not only new to the rural families but also viewed as a

⁶⁹ six *fen*: 0.6 *mu*, which is about 400m², or 4300ft².

⁷⁰ Rural-to-urban migration was not feasible because of the ration system limited by *Hukou* policy.

⁷¹ *dagong* is a term used specifically to describe "working under contract for somebody else," which is entirely different from farming which is self-employed.

sign to indicate the impotency of the family in supporting family members in their culture.

Mr. Sun said he chose to come to Beijing simply because some friends from his

hometown have come to Beijing already and asked him to go with them.

Mr. Sun arrived in Beijing in 1986 and started to work under contract as a painter for

Sinopec. He continued to work as a painter in Beijing Forestry University in 1990, then

in a furniture store close to Beijing Normal University in 1991. In the late 1980s, the job

opportunities open for rural-to-urban migrants were almost all temporary and contract

based manual labor jobs, including loading/unloading trucks, painter, carpenter, flooring,

or construction. Including Mr. Sun, many migrants in the recycling sector who migrated

in the 1980s indicate that they had the experience of waiting for jobs under the *Lishuiqiao*

Bridge. *Lishuiqiao* Bridge over *Qing* River on the north side of Beijing served as an

important location of migrant clustering center as well as an open job market. Migrants,

some holding signs showing what they can do⁷², would line up under the bridge and wait

for the “boss⁷³” to show up and pick the people to work a day work or contract work.

With a lot of construction projects around the *Lishuiqiao* region in the 1990s, it also

became an important urban-rural transitional zone to provide affordable housing,

restaurants, and social services for rural migrants as well as a cheap labor market for

locals to hire temporary workers.

5.3.2.2 Mr. Sun in the recycling business

In 1993, Mr. Sun saved up enough money and got married with a hometown girl who was

introduced to him by one of his relatives. After having their first baby boy in the same

year, he stayed home for two more years. At that time, more and more people from *Gushi*

⁷² Many migrants stood or squat on one side of the street holding interlinked signs saying Carpenter, Painter, Welder and so on.

⁷³ Boss is what migrants normally call an employer who has money to hire people for certain work.

County has joined the recycling business in Beijing and stories about “successful” businessman in recycling started to spread among *Gushi* people. In 1995, Mr. Sun spent 500 *yuan* on a tricycle and began to join the recycling business in Beijing because almost all of the people from his hometown, *Gushi* county of *Henan* province, worked in recycling by then. He rented a small local village house to live, which was close to the largest recycling market in Beijing at *Datun* Rd. and *Wali* village on the north side of Beijing. Then, he rode his tricycles and roved around Beijing every day to collect and buy recyclable materials from local residents during the daytime and rode back to the market at dusk to sell them at a slightly higher price to yard buyers then went home to sleep and prepare for another trip on the following morning. Between 1995 and 2000, he was in Beijing alone while his wife was taking care of both their first son and his mom in his hometown. In 2000, because the local defense team was tightening up their control in Beijing and several of their fellow migrant friends were locked up by *Shourong*, Mr. Sun went back to his hometown to escape the *Shourong* policy for a year.

With a few tens of thousand *yuan*s of saving from the roving recycling business between 1995 and 2000, Mr. Sun upgraded his roving recycling business to become a yard buyer for paper when he and his wife came back from *Gushi* County together to Beijing in 2001. He moved into Beijing’s biggest recycling center and rented a small yard at *Datun* Rd. and *Wali* village. The recycling center at that time was operated mostly by local residents in Beijing, who would divide an open bare land into many 400-sqft yards, build one one-story house in the yard and keep the rest open for storage. Mr. Sun added that staying inside a recycling company felt much safer than riding a tricycle on the street and they felt protected from the local defense team by the company owner as well.

Mr. Sun and his wife were running the recycling yard from 2001 to 2003. When SARS became prevalent in Beijing in 2003, they and many other rural migrants escaped Beijing and went home. During the same year, Beijing's largest recycling center, which was an empty, rural, bare land before recycling took over, became the location for building a series of infrastructure and public parks to host the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, such as Beijing National Stadium (Bird Nest), Beijing National Aquatics Center, Beijing Olympic Park, and Beijing Olympic Village. After Mr. Sun and his wife came back from *Gushi* County in search of a place to start their business again later in 2003, they found that everyone who previously worked at the recycling center on *Datun* Rd. and *Wali* village moved north to a place called *Dongxiaokou*. Mr. Sun and his wife then followed their hometown people and rented a small village temporary house in the *Dongxiaokou* region as well.

However, this time Mr. Sun and his wife decided to take a more stable recycling job. Through one of his older brother's friend, who knew someone in *Haidian* District Material Recycling Company, Mr. Sun was introduced to the local street office⁷⁴ which was in charge of the gated community he is in now. He signed a contract with the street office and started to recycle in the gated community by paying 800 *yuan* per month to the street office. The contract did not specify the time range they were allowed to carry out recycling in the community but served as a permit to exclude others from recycling inside the community. Mr. Sun and his wife lived in *Dongxiaokou* and started to have this "stable" job under a contract at a gated community in Beijing.

Mr. Sun's moving path in Beijing

1986

Great Wall oil company, Painter

⁷⁴ Street office is the lowest level of government office.

1990	Beijing Forestry University, Painter
1991	Beijing Normal University, Painter
1995	Roving recycler, 500 ¥ for a tricycle
2001	Datun, <i>Wali</i> Village, Buyer
2003	Back to Rural hometown
End of 2003	Recycling in a residential community

When I asked Mr. Sun why he preferred this work to other contract jobs, he told me that the most attractive character of this fixed-location recycling work is its flexibility. He did not like other contract jobs or office jobs because they have a very rigid working schedule, which is too different from his farming experience at home. In agriculture, Mr. Sun could have a very flexible schedule, and nobody told him what to do or when to do it. He said, "a farmer is almost only busy during planting, fertilizing and harvesting time of the year but working in an office is too rigid for me." This is also a very typical feeling for most migrant recyclers from *Henan*. In the 1980s, many migrants tried various job opportunities, such as janitors, painters, carpenters, fixing TVs and washers and even sales work. The reason for them to join recycling is mostly for the flexible working hours recycling business could offer. For Mr. Sun, the contract only gave him the permit he needed to work in the community without too much regulation except for keeping the recycling depot in order and clean. Thus, he could have his own working schedule and freedom to work just like being a farmer at home.

5.3.2.3 Daily business

Mr. Sun normally would come to his recycling depot at around 8 am at summertime or 9 am during winter and leave at about 8 pm in summer or 5 pm in winter, which goes with

dawn and dusk. He worked every day except for rain or heavy snow when no one would come out to sell their materials. During his working hours, he has a very flexible work style. Sometimes, he would join other local residents to play some Mahjong or Poker after most local residents go to work; then take a nap after lunch, which is either something he brings from home or a quick, easy meal outside the community; in the afternoon, he would start to organize his materials into different categories depending on the categories yard buyers would purchase them. After putting the sorted materials in different general categories into different sack bags, he stacks them in the trunk of his truck and makes a decision whether he should drive it to the recycling center to sell them or leave it for another day or two to make a full load. Then he locks the truck and goes home on his electric bicycle.

After Mr. Sun started to recycle in the gated community, the business and income become more stable than before. Mr. Sun indicates that what he makes is the profit from “buy low, sell high” and specifically by purchasing in retail and selling in bulk. What he pays as overhead every month now is a much smaller commitment than being a specialized yard buyer. Being a yard buyer, he needs to pay about 3000 *yuan* per month to the recycling company as rent and electricity depending on how much he uses it. But as a community fixed location recycler, he is paying 800 *yuan* to the street office and 200 *yuan* as rent for housing. By reducing the monthly overhead from 3000 to 1000 *yuan*, Mr. Sun is enjoying less pressure in making money. In his words, now if he makes 50 *yuan* every day, it would be enough to make his living in Beijing. But the concern is that with no savings, he cannot take the chance to get sick or go to the hospital.

Meanwhile, community recyclers' income is highly dependent on seasonal effect too. While itinerant recyclers focus on certain high-value items, community recyclers have their focus on daily residential materials, such as bottles, cans, paper box, packaging and general plastic. Among these wastes, water bottles and cans are the most valuable items and the most "seasonal" items. Thus, their more reliable income as a community recycler depends on how hot the weather happens to be. Another community recycler Mr. Li (Case 4) indicates that because his location is very close to Bird Nest (The National Stadium for Beijing 2008 Olympic Games), his income is highly related to the volume of water bottles and cans from the tourists visiting the site. At the day of my interview with him (Oct. 29, 2012), he filled his 4.2m long close-back truck with recyclable materials and told me that for that day, he bought about 3000 water bottles, 1 ton of waste paper, around 100kg scrap steel, 200kg plastics. And in general, he and his brother-in-law could make about 300yuan as profit for that day in Beijing. (Figure 46)



Figure 46: Photograph: Mr. Li (down) and his cousin working with their truck ready to go

5.3.2.4 Working in a gated community

During the interview, Mr. Sun was organizing the collected materials and trying to put them into different piles of plastics, plastic bottles, metal cans, newspapers, books, metal, etc. His cell phone started to ring when he was explaining his payment to the Street Office. After a short conversation over the phone, he said sorry to me and asked me if I could wait while he needs to go to some apartment to fetch some materials. Instead of waiting, I got his permission to go with him to get the materials. The apartment is at Rm.629 of one of the residential buildings, and since the buildings do not have elevators in them, we walked the stairs to the sixth floor. In my memory, when I try to recycle at my home or university, I always need to bring everything over to the depot to sell. But Mr. Sun told me asking the recycler to get recyclables at their door becomes very common especially for some ladies who are not willing to take them out. And all recyclers, no matter fixed-location or itinerant ones now all have business cards. Thus, with the business cards, local residents could call them to sell materials instead of walk to the recycling depots. To secure access to recyclable materials from all residents in the community, he tries hard to satisfy local residents' requests like this. When we walked to the door of Rm.629, a lady opened the anti-theft door and pointed to a pile of newspapers, glass bottles and pop cans. Mr. Sun counted the bottles and cans, weighed the newspapers and told the lady that they worth three *yuan* and *three jiao*⁷⁵. The lady said how about 3.5. Then, he pulled out three *yuan* and *five jiao* and handed over. She didn't say anything else during the trade and closed the door after receiving the money. In the dark hallway, Mr. Sun pulled a plastic bag out of his pocket to put all cans and bottles in and tightened the string around the newspapers. On our way back, Mr. Sun sighed and told me, "did

⁷⁵ ten *jiao*=one *yuan*.

you see this? For a little more than three *yuan* materials, I need to climb to the sixth floor and grab it. Business is hard to run, and they [the locals] take our legs and feet (腿脚) as granted.” He also said that he normally would give a little more than the actual price to keep them happy so they would come to him again.

In between buying the materials, Mr. Sun would light a cigarette and slowly organize those materials into different sacks by their general types. He told me, “I don’t need to sort them in details, but the more detail I can separate them, the more money I could ask for in the market....the yard buyers will hire people to sort them into different detailed categories. For example, they would sort plastics not only by their types but also by colors. And paper buyers will sort papers into books, cardboard, boxboard, etc. I just need to sort by their types, then go to the market and sell them to different yard buyers.”

In Mr. Sun’s explanation, he told me that although recycling business is run mostly by rural-to-urban migrants in Beijing, it had its golden time from the 1990s to 2008.

“In the 90s, local people had no idea how much recyclable materials were worth, so they just gave them away for free. Recyclers during that time earned a lot of easy money because they got them like that. In the 2000s, when more people started to buy recyclable materials, locals stopped giving them for free anymore. The local people were so lazy and became jealous of what we were making. They would say ‘a trash picker can make that much money? I won’t give them anything for free.’ But in the 2000s, although making money is not as easy as before, we have a lot of materials to recycle in Beijing because of the various urban development projects and the price is quite stable too. So, in

general, I can save up about 1000yuan per month easily [in the early 2000s].

But in 2008, everything changed.”

In 2008, recyclers experienced a sharp price drop in recyclable materials especially after the Summer Olympic Games in Beijing. During the Olympic Games, no trucks were allowed to go inside the fifth ring road, so no recyclable materials were able to be shipped out of Beijing. Besides, during the soaring price time before the Olympics, many recyclers started to stock up their materials expecting for a continuing price increase. However, when the price began to drop after the Games, it walloped recyclers in their cash flow, and many quit the business altogether.

Although community recyclers are considered more stable than itinerant recyclers, they face similar situations as making their living daily, and their income is highly influenced by price change as well. The community recyclers are also well registered with the local government and serve as the group of recyclers to interact with the local residents in their business as well.

5.3.3 The Yard Buyers, *Da Zuo Shang* (大坐商)

The yard buyers are widely referred to as “bosses” in the recycling realm because these yard buyers are the *de facto* entrepreneurs in the society. While itinerant recyclers and community recyclers are the ones to buy materials directly from local residents, yard buyers are the recycling operators in the recycling companies of *Henancun*. While we talk about *Henancun*, in general one *Henancun* would consist of several recycling companies which have their space. Inside each of these companies, they subdivide their space into smaller yards (about 400m² each) and connect every yard with shared roads as truck passages. The company would also build empty houses for each yard as housing for

the recycling family. Then, based on preference for location and the size of their business, different families would rent one or two yard(s) from the recycling companies and conduct their recycling operation for one or two specific type(s) of material(s), which need to be specified in their contract as well.

The main job for yard buyers is to sort the specific materials into their detailed types.

Taking paper recycling yard as an example, community recyclers normally come to sell their recycled paper in the very early morning or after dark by unloading them to the yard; then during the daytime, few local residents would come to sell small amount of paper products they have collected. At dusk, itinerant and community recyclers would come in to sell their materials one after another. The day normally ends at midnight, but some latecomers might also knock on the door to sell as well. So, these yard buyers do not have an official open time for their business, and they are considered open at any time.

Thus, in the morning, the paper recycling yard is filled with purchased materials from the previous night. Several long-term or temporary workers hired by the yard would sort the purchased paper into newspapers, books, mixed office paper, corrugated boxes and paper boxes. In general plastic recycling, the scale is much smaller because the volume of recyclable plastic is much smaller than recyclable paper. And in a plastic yard, there are usually no workers while the family members would sort plastics into about 15 to 20 different kinds based on type and color by themselves. The more detailed they can sort them into, the more valuable those plastics would become. In metal recycling, the yard buyer would either hire someone or DIY to cut and squeeze the metal into cubes for sale. And PET and HDPE recycling took a huge space because the materials are for everyone's everyday use and the PET and HDPE bottles are hollow inside. Workers in the

PET/HDPE yard would process them by cutting them into pieces then washing those pieces to rid of the labels on the bottle before the materials could be packaged. Thus, we can see that recycling different materials does need specific knowledge and experience in the business and the keywords in yard buyers' everyday life is to sort, to package and to load onto the trucks. Their business exercise is on a daily cycle, and the goal for many yard buyers is simply to clear out the yard by sorting during the daytime and fill the yard by purchasing more at night.

After sorting materials in the yard, the yard buyers would normally sell the materials to either the packaging companies for certain materials or directly to the factories who would use the recyclables as raw materials. So, yard buyers are at the last step in the recycling cycle of "buying in retail, selling in bulk" as well. Because they have completely different business style and running styles from the itinerant or community recyclers, they face different structural and institutional barriers in Beijing as well. What threatens them the most might not concern other recyclers and what threatens other recyclers the most might not be their concern as well.

Mr. Zhou (Case 5, yard buyer) is a yard buyer to recycle foams in *Dongxiaokou*. At the time of the interview (Sept. 4th, 2012), *Dongxiaokou* was in the middle of demolition and redevelopment, but because the compensation price is not agreed between the village committee and the recycling company, the recycling company remains open. Since the first notification for redevelopment sent by the township government in October 2011, the recycling company has notified every yard buyer about the order and requested that everyone might need to find a new place to continue his or her recycling business. While most of the over 100 yards have left, Mr. Zhou and his foaming yard stayed open because

they want to show their support of the company in the negotiation process by remaining inside the company to stop government's possible forcible demolition. (Figure 47)



Figure 47: Photograph: Mr. Zhou's foam recycling yard

Mr. Zhou was 41 years old and born in 1972. He has graduated from junior high school and started working at about 15 or 16 years' age. Mr. Zhou first went to *Zhengzhou*, which is the capital of *Henan* province, as a construction worker. However, the workload was too heavy for a teenager, so he went back home again after a little over one month. But too many people at home meant too many hungry bellies, which forced him to come out again. While a lot of people from his hometown were in Beijing, he joined them by loading and unloading trucks with sand and stones for the fast-paced urban construction projects. At that time, the work is never long term, and everyone was waiting under the *Lishuiqiao Bridge*, which is considered completely outside Beijing while the 3rd ring road was not even constructed yet. *Lishuiqiao* was famous for its sand and stone extraction from the river which further became almost every migrant's job in the late 1980s and the early 1990s in Beijing.

His hometown in *Hezhai* (合寨村) village of *Hongbu* (洪埠), *Gushi* County also contributes to his out-migration in the 1980s, just like most rural migrants from *Gushi*.

“My home village has a large population and little land. There are two types of land, hill-top (岗地) or river-side (湾地). If you live at hill top, you have more land; but if you live on the riverside, you only have very little. That is because of the Great Chinese Famine in the early 1960s. At that time, tax is paid by crops and the more land you have, the more crop you need to turn in. But if you have more land, you also need to work more; however, the more work you do means nothing for your family since you need to turn in all of the products anyway. So, a lot of people choose to live on the river side. While nothing could grow on the hilltop in the wintertime, the land at riverside is never frozen. So, living on hilltop means, you will turn in a lot while working a lot and in the winter it would be impossible to grow anything. However, you don’t need to turn in a lot if you live on the riverside. During the Great Famine, the riverside people were able to stay alive because of the vegetable during the winter time which we simply added to the little flour we had to make meals. During those three years, a lot of people died in China, but few in our riverside areas. Then later, riverside became a place with a lot of population on top of only little land. That makes our living hard when I was a teenager in the 1980s so many came out, and almost every family in my village had people outside to work for food.”

So as Mr. Zhou illustrated, poverty serves as a very important reason for migrants to come out in the 1980s. This situation is very typical for migrants who arrived at Beijing in the 1980s and the early 1990s. Many migrants then have several

siblings but the limited amount of land assigned for each family is too little to support everyone at home. However, migrants who arrived in Beijing in the mid-to late-2000s show different situations as most of them indicate that it is quite natural for people in their 15 or 16 years old to come to Beijing and join the recycling business. Instead of coming out of poverty, they would start working in their relatives' yard in Beijing when they first joined the recycling business.

5.3.3.1 Stigmatization and Shourong

Mr. Zhou arrived in Beijing right after the Beijing Asian Game in 1990 when *Shourong* was heavily enforced on the street. After arriving in Beijing, Mr. Zhou lived at one village of Beijing on the outskirts and rode tricycles to buy recyclables in the city as well. As an itinerant recycler, he experienced several times of *Shourong* which had great impact on his business and life decisions. His experiences show similarities as Mr. Qian but his decisions after experiencing *Shourong* has led him to become a yard buyer inside *Henancun*.

“That was in either 1990 or 1991 when I started recycling. There were already established recyclers in all of the residential communities. So, we couldn't really go directly to compete with them. That was just not right. So, we tried to find something they didn't do to avoid competition. I was young at that time and liked to do something clean. At that point, beer and soda are sold by cases because all the beverages were in glass bottles. Many rich families would buy those in cases and left some deposits at the retail store for the case. If the locals forgot to give back the cases, the retailers would keep the deposit for themselves and the cases became

waste. Well, they will be sold to our people for recycling. So recycling those beverage cases seemed like a good and clean job for me. If we collected a lot of cases, we could sell in bulk to make some extra money. For example, one case was worth 5 *yuan*, if I have 20 of them, they will raise the price to 5.5 *yuan*. So just like that, I collected three tricycle load worth of cases. Then I went to the yard buyer and asked him to pick them up because we didn't even have a tricycle at that time. We were living at *Laohumiao*, which is about 1km from the *Wohuqiao* Market. I knew the buyer really well because we were all from *Gushi* and had been working on bottle case recycling for quite a while.

So, the yard buyer came for the cases. The trade was just like before, but after the trade, he was caught by the defense team. After locking up his tricycle, they accused him of stealing the bottle cases and beat him up for denying their accusation. Then, he was forced to find my friend and me. They accused us of stealing all the bottle cases and beat us up heavily that day. I told them that we bought the cases one by one on the street and saved them up because we wanted to sell them for a better price. But they just kept beating and forced us to admit that we stole them. It's really hard for me to recall what happened that day and if I describe it now, I will cry out today. I didn't admit in the end, and they took me to the *Datun Rd.*

Police Station. I was locked up with many people there. After arriving at the police station, the police needed to log me in and asked me where I stole those cases. Well, even if I wanted to admit the stealing, there had to

be some places that lost those cases, right? I had no idea what to write, and there's nowhere I could steal them at all. So that night they just beat us up hard. When they hit us, there was no way they could do it physically for every one of us simply because there were so many people being locked up. So they would force you to stand on the bricks, then they beat whoever that could not stand straight on the brick any more. Eventually, they forced us to beat each other. I was very little at that time and had a small body size too. Then the police forced me to beat other people. If I didn't do it, they would let them beat me. There were many familiar faces in the crowd and others from *Hebei*, *Shandong*, or other places. Because I didn't admit the stealing case and nobody reported any loss, they couldn't keep me there anymore. But even like that, I was forced to find someone who knew them and bought them two cases of cigarettes and fruits to the head of the defense team before they let us go.

The night I was let free, I ran back to my hometown immediately. I was so scared the people I beat inside would come to me for revenge. I had spent about one year before I came back to Beijing again. After I had come back, I stayed close to *Wohuqiao* simply because they [the defense team] couldn't go inside the market to arrest people. At that time, *Wohuqiao* Market was an official market organized by Beijing Recycling Company. Because the city was growing very fast and the previous company didn't have enough space to hold those increased amounts of plastics and other materials, they set up this new market at *Wohuqiao*. That was similar to

the recycling market and yard buyers now, and people leased yards from the company and specialized in different materials. Because I knew someone who is running a big plastic bottle recycling yard, I started a smaller recycling yard for those bottles. So, what we did was to buy bottles at a lower price from another recycling yard far away then ship them to sell at *Wohuqiao* market. In the beginning, before we had a truck, we rode tricycles at about 4 am or 5 am in the morning before dawn to *You'an market*, filled up our sacks with those bottles and rode back to *Wohuqiao* which is 20-30 km away. So essentially, we are making money on transportation.

At that time, we have three people working together. One morning when we were riding tricycles to *You'anmen* Market, we were stopped at *Niujie*. They asked us where we stole those sack bags. We told them where we bought them and they were for our business. We even showed our recycling license since we were part of the recycling company at that time. I told them here were just 100 bags, and I had 500 more at home. Also, at that point, you could simply buy those sack bags everywhere. They took us to their defense team office, which was a small room on the side of every street in Beijing. We three were beaten up very hard before they sent us to *Niujie* police station. People in the police station used my belt to beat me. Because I was still young at that time and my clothes didn't fit well, I had to hold my pants up, and there was even a woman police officer by the

side, and I only wore my underpants in that winter time. They were so used to it, but I was so (cursing) disgusted.

I told the police that we were businessmen and had to use sack bags for the business. We have a lot at home as well. If you want me to admit stealing, there need to be someone who lost those items, right? What the police told me was that “this is not illegal. You just admit it; we lock you up for two days; then you can go home.” No, I didn’t admit it. Then they told me that my other two friends already admitted that I was the one who stole the bags. I told them, that was fine, and they could say it. So they let go them two. I was heavily beaten up after they left, but I didn’t admit even in the end. They also told me that ‘you see, your friends left because they admitted but thank goodness I didn’t admit, or I would be *Shourong* away.

They two ran back to our market because our market was protecting us at that time. The market wrote a note and put their stamp on it to prove that I was part of their business, and the sack bags were not stolen. They took the note over to the police station, and I was then let go finally. During those years, whenever there were some events in Beijing, for example, some big conferences, they would start locking people up. And they only focused on us poor migrants who rode tricycles and who bought trash on streets.

So, during those years, when we started to save up some money, we also started to build our connections in Beijing. Gradually when we were

locked up by *Shourong*, we would contact those people who knew someone in the defense team or the police to get us out. But nobody had cell phones in the 90s, so if you are caught alone, you won't be able to come out since you couldn't contact the people who could get you out. So, during those years, nobody would go out alone. When we had to go onto the street, we had to have at least two people going together. For example, when we two needed to go out, we had to go separately, as I walk about 50m ahead of you. If I got caught, you could go back to seek help to get me out. But you also needed to pay the one to get people too. And this catalyzed the emergence of a particular type of job to get people out from the defense team, *Shourong* or the police station. They consisted of people who knew someone or had their connection with someone from the inside, and they can get people out for some money.

I have experienced several times of things like this, and I'm telling you that it is very rare for people at my age or older not to have experienced things like this. I had those experiences for 6 or 8 years, until the time when we apply for hosting the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics."

The experience is quite typical for a migrant recycler in his 40s in Beijing. Thus, we could see that *Shourong*, as a social policy, has significantly influenced rural migrants' business and livelihood in cities. Because it has so severely threatened people's living in Beijing, migrants took different ways to protect themselves from being *Shourong* away. During the interview, Mr. Zhou showed his finger to me and told me to notice the

differences on fingers from two hands. “That was from the beating during *Shourong*, and it will never go away.” (Figure 48)



Figure 48: Photograph: Mr. Zhou’s fingernail was broken during *Shourong*

While migrant yard buyers are technically entrepreneurs in the society, they are not protected by the local policies merely because they are under a non-local *Hukou* status.

While this situation is even taken by migrants as an existing social context, it represents the conflicts between the local and the outside, the top-down urbanization and the bottom-up one and the state and the society.

5.3.3.2 Demolition and relocation in Beijing

While demolition and relocation do not impact itinerant and community recyclers that much, they have a significant influence on yard buyers because yard buyers have to rely on steady resource inflow to support their business. Mr. Zhou has also indicated his experience with demolition and relocation in Beijing while working as a yard buyer. His moving trajectory in Beijing is as follows:

1990 *Laohumiao*, 1km from *Wohuqiao* Went home after *Shourong*

1991	a place close to <i>Wohuqiao</i> Market	Joined <i>Wohuqiao</i> after <i>Shourong</i>
1993/94	<i>Wali</i> village	<i>Wohuqiao</i> demolished for ^{fourth} ring
rd. 2002/03	<i>Qinghe</i> (<i>Qing River</i>)	<i>Wali</i> demolished for Olympics
2004	<i>Dongxiaokou</i>	<i>Qinghe</i> demolished for ^{fifth} ring rd.
2013	<i>Dongxiaokou</i> was demolished.	

Using his own words, the following explains how demolition and relocation affect the yard buyers' business in Beijing.

“When we set up a recycling yard, our customers are the same group of people who you know very well. Every time of demolition and relocation, we lost a lot in the transition. When you move to a new location, your material sources are going to change. In our hometown, there is a saying, ‘moving means three years in poverty.’ For example, when you start over at a new place, you don’t have access to the recyclable materials any more. Because when you move to a new location, others already have their stable customers. So, if you want to run your business, you have to raise your price to attract people to sell to your yard. When you move, basically you will lose at least a whole year's profit to build your connection at a new location. So, every time you move, you must create a new customer network from ground. While we are recycling in Beijing, we always need to move every two to three years. We have stayed in *Dongxiaokou* for eight years. That is something we have never experienced before.”

This situation is quite common for almost all yard buyers in *Henancun*. Although their location is built and provided by the recycling company, an easy-to-access and stable

location with few other competitors is ideal for all yard buyers. However, during demolition, they are also the ones that face the most loss in terms of business network, transporting materials and less ideal location relative to the central city.

Therefore, we can see that yard buyers are a group that faces entirely different structural/institutional barriers than the itinerant/community recyclers as they bear the most burden from demolition and relocation with *Henancun*'s spatial movement. As "bosses," not only do they carry the burden to keep a recycling yard running, they also serve as important cash payers to maintain the itinerant/community recyclers' recycling activities rolling in Beijing.

5.3.4 Recycling Companies, Sometimes Known as the *Henancun*

Organizer

Among all the recycling players in Beijing, recycling companies are the largest organization that set the structure and organization of all recycling activities. Different from the previously mentioned recyclers whose "migrant" identity is generally the reason to trigger the structural/institutional barriers; recycling companies face different set of variables as their "recycling" business is the factor that faces all the barriers for the companies' existence, growth, and demolition in Beijing.

Under the planned economy, district level recycling companies are organized into different departments such as general office, sales, transportation, and operation. And the operation part is further divided into sorting facilities for steel, copper, paper, plastics and so on. So, despite recycling companies' similarity as district level recycling company in the planned economy era, most recycling companies nowadays have abandoned the operational function. Instead, the recycling companies carry out its function to organize

recycling activities into various specialized recycling yards. We might consider the recycling companies as simple as landlords, who only manage the land and run its business on rent collecting while providing supporting services and facilities to ease the recycling operation carried out by the yard buyer families. However, the recycling companies still need proper license to register as a recycling company in the city. Different from all three types of recycling activities—itinerant/community recycling and yard buyers—we have already discussed, the recycling companies we see nowadays, in general, do not directly involve in the recycling activities at all. However, they are crucial in managing the recycling operation through proper registration and formal contract with different departments of the local government. The recycling companies also need to work through all different regulations that are imposed on recycling as a business. Because recycling is considered “informal” by government which emphasizes a pathological interpretation of the recycling activities, little room is there for recycling companies to maneuver in their operations. And accordingly, the recycling companies face a whole different set of regulations/barriers from various aspects as well.

5.3.4.1 Land leasing, demolition, relocation

In the development of recycling business in Beijing, land for recycling has always been an important factor because of the large space the recycling business needs for sorting the materials. Under the planned economy, recycling companies are considered SOEs as supported by the city and district governments of Beijing. Their land was assigned by the government to use for recycling activities specifically. Inside the recycling companies, large open space was reserved for metal, plastic, and paper storage and sorting activities. After China’s market turn, recycling business licenses were still not open for application

to the public while only someone affiliated with the recycling company could use the company's license to carry out recycling activities. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, although many migrants started to work as recyclers, they were not able to run recycling yards without subcontracting from a local person who was associated with the city or district recycling company.

This situation started to change after China also opened its land and housing market in the mid- to late-1990s. When commodity housing began to emerge in the market, many locals began to have the opportunity to move to new commodity apartments while left their traditional one-story houses with yard for rent. These one-story houses with yards were perfect for carrying out recycling activities due to the large open yard next to the house. Gradually, locals with recycling licenses started to rent these houses for recycling and later migrants began to subcontract from these license holders for their recycling activities as well. These yards broke the land control by the state-owned recycling companies and provided the opportunity for migrants to become recycling yard buyers. While these types of recycling yards have gradually disappeared in Beijing today, they were widely referred to as "small yard buyers" at that time. At about the same time, people affiliated with the recycling companies and several rich migrants started to lease larger spaces to open recycling markets as well. Meanwhile, *Shourong* was in its peak in Beijing which further increased the need for an enclosed and protected space for migrants in the city. It was at this time and the particular socio-political circumstance when large recycling companies, other than the state-owned ones, started to emerge in the city. Gradually, while the SOE recycling companies lost their land to urban development and retreated from the recycling business, the newly emerged individually owned recycling

companies became the main player and organizer of the recycling business in Beijing. Because they are market players instead of government owned companies, their business space is not endorsed by the local government. In Beijing, almost all individually owned recycling companies are leasing land from Beijing's rural villages on the fringe of Beijing, and the land is usually neither housing nor agricultural land at the moment of leasing.

At the village level, there is no village government, and instead, villages are still organized by a structure adopted from the planned economy period. Everything in the village is considered collectively owned by all the local villagers, and there is a community board to represent the village community in signing contracts and making development decisions. Also, the income from land leasing and economic activities is shared by all the village members as well, which makes the economic activities very beneficial for everyone who is locally and rurally registered in terms of *Hukou*. While the leasing contract was signed by the village community board and the company, it specifies the years the land lease will last. However, in the signed contract, it also specified that the lease cannot guarantee the recycling company to operate all the time until the end of the lease due to "unforeseeable urban development or urban renewal projects" which might happen on the leased land. So, in the land lease, in addition to the time, price, and types of business operations, it also indicates that facing those urban renewal projects or new development that are designed and planned by the district or city government, the recycling companies would have to accompany with the project plan and the company will be compensated for its investment in construction and profit loss during the demolition period of time.

Mrs. Wu (Case 6, recycling company board head) is the company owner's wife in *DXK*. *FYXY* is one of the six recycling companies in the *Dongxiaokou* village. Five of the six companies leased land from the village community while the other one leased land from a Beijing construction company which had the title for that specific part of the land. As one of the earliest companies that started recycling in the region, *FYXY* has the privilege to choose where to build its company, so it chose the east-most location in the *Dongxiaokou* village. When the construction for Beijing Summer Olympics demolished the largest recycling center in *Datun Rd.* and *Wali* village around the year 2003, most recyclers in this region were in seek of the next closest-to-city location for recycling. In 2003, *Dongxiaokou* village was entirely rural, and only villagers were living in the area. The land, which was later leased to different recycling companies, remained empty as high voltage electricity pathways. *FYXY* recycling company officially registered with the government department in August 2003 and signed their land leasing contract with *Dongxiaokou* village for eight years initially and renewed for another two years. The recycling company has leased a total of 133.2mu land, which was further divided into 167 yards for recycling operations. The company also leased additional land to provide housing for recycling workers, itinerant and community recyclers, and furniture recyclers as well.

While the government has been criticizing recycling for being “dirty, messy, backward 脏乱差” for years and promoting the development of large-scale recycling centers in its most current official documents from the Commerce Bureau, the boss, Mr. Li, of *FYXY* company decided to start a paper packaging center inside *FYXY*. The boss organized 14 paper recycling families as shareholders to start this project and the paper packaging

company opened in 2007, which took up about two rows of recycling yards from inside the *FYXY* Company (Figure 49). Therefore, rather than being only the landlord for yard buyers, *FYXY* started its own recycling business as well.



Figure 49: Photograph: *FYXY*'s paper packaging center

When recycling companies began to lease land from the village around the year 2003, Beijing's urban planning and *Changping* district urban planning has considered *Dongxiaokou* village as allowed for future construction and specifically, the land *FYXY* company leased was designed for high-rise residential buildings to compensate for the local farmers who lost their land due to urban renewal project, or *Old Village Reconstruction* (旧村改造) project in this case. To promote the urban renewal project, *Changping* District set up a deconstruction team, "*Dongxiaokou township on-site demolition headquarter 东小口镇拆迁指挥部*," to promote the compensation negotiation between the village community and the recycling companies. In October 2011, *FYXY* received the first notice for demolition from the demolition team, and it required the company to stop recycling activities immediately and indicated that the

village committee would compensate for the business loss during the time after it stops recycling till the demolition date.

The second and third notices came in May 2012 together with a group of people from *Dongxiaokou Township Comprehensive Management Office* 东小口镇综合治理办公室, who went inside the recycling market and told every yard buyer to leave. During my interview with Mrs. Wu, she told me,

“At that time, since the government said so and came twice trying to drive away everyone working inside the company, we as a recycling company have to cooperate with the government. So, we talked to every yard buyer and told them that (1) the township government wants us to stop all recycling activities and (2) our company happens to be at the location for the compensation residential building of two nearby villages. Then we told everyone to take some time to figure out where they want to go to reduce their business loss. The yard buyers are not happy, but I told them that the company happens to be at this position and we just happen to be the first company that is going to be demolished in this whole demolition process. Over 100 yard-buyer families left and about 15 or 20 are still here with us. I do not know where they went but heard that quite a few of them went to some other recycling companies in the west part of *Dongxiaokou*.”

Also, the negotiation was also a tough process for the recycling company when the demolition team tried to depress the total price for compensation. While the recycling company has officially registered with the commerce department and has all legal documentations required to carry out its business activities, the land leasing is also

backed up by the required leasing contract as well. In the land leasing contract with the local village office, the risk for being demolished was clearly understood by both parties. And almost all recycling companies understood and expected that the demolition for urban renewal/redevelopment project would be the end of the business one day and compensation was the only hope that would pay back their investment and even provide potential money for continuing to build new recycling locations in the future.

Throughout my interviews with all recycling company business owners/board members at different locations, “land” is the most important factor all companies are craving for. Because recycling activities in Beijing are completely profit driven and cash-trade based, transportation cost has always the biggest concern for all the migrant recyclers. While recycling companies have gradually moved from the 3rd ring road to the 4th ring road and now outside the 5th ring road, an available open-for-lease location that is close to the main city is nearly impossible to find in Beijing. Interestingly, all the recycling company owners in my interviews indicated that they have already reserved some land far outside Beijing as potential locations for building a new recycling market in the future in case that their current one is facing demolition. Some of the land reservation has already extended to the 6th ring road or even outside the administrative boundary of Beijing as well.

Meanwhile, although a couple of traditional state-owned recycling companies are still exercising recycling activities, most have lost their land in urban redevelopment or urban sprawl processes as well. Since they are well registered and are under guidance from the local city and district government, they normally do not have the opportunity or intention in seeking new locations for recycling. Some of the recycling stations that were set up by

district level recycling companies have already lost all their lands and became landlord. Their business now solely relies on the collected rent to support the cost of the company as social welfares for its registered company workers. However, even after the state-owned recycling companies gradually retreated from the recycling business after losing their designated land, the recycling activities carried out by other individually owned recycling companies are still considered as “informal” activities, for which the local government has not even considered to reserve land for their business at all.

In November 2012, when the demolition team threatened to forcibly demolish the *FYXY* Company, the *FYXY* Company immediately restarted its recycling business and leased its empty yards to recyclers at a very low price to have a group of recyclers to protect the land from being demolished. The recycling yard business ended later in December along the negotiation process, and a deal was finally reached in spring 2013, and the *FYXY* Company was demolished in April/May 2013. When I visited the place again in 2015, the site is already replaced by several high-rise residential buildings under construction. After the demolition, public media has labeled the *FYXY* Company as illegal constructions and cited the demolition as a *Changping* District government achievement to demolish about 300 illegally built houses, dismiss over 5000 people in recycling business and release 133.2mu land for urban development. Further, it also praised the demolition to “promote the construction for the local villagers, effectively protect the ecological environment and maintain social order for the villages⁷⁶.”

⁷⁶ <http://news.sina.com.cn/o/2013-08-28/033428064634.shtml>;
http://esf.fang.com/newsecond/news/10880559_999.htm

5.3.4.2 Regulations from different government aspects

While land has become a life-death issue for the recycling business in Beijing, recycling as a business has always been facing attention from many government departments. One example is a government document, Beijing City Government [2011]78⁷⁷ which is “Beijing City People’s Government’s Notification on Publishing ‘Development Opinions of speeding up the Promotion of Reusable Material Recycling System Development and Scaling-up of Recycling Structure’ 北京市人民政府关于印发北京市加快推进再生资源回收体系建设促进产业化发展意见的通知⁷⁸.” In this document, the government has set up developing goal as developing 1) better recycling station distribution; 2) high-level sorting centers; 3) more efficient recycling network organization; 4) model recycling companies; 5) more effective reuse rate of the recyclable materials. At the end of the Notification, it also indicates the details about the job assignments for each relevant government department as in Figure 50.

⁷⁷ 京政发

⁷⁸ <http://govfile.beijing.gov.cn/Govfile/ShowNewPageServlet?id=5969>

Appendix: Detailed job for Constructing the Reusable Materials Recycling System

Municipal Development and Reform Commission:

Policy making; project distribution and policy; Making Recycling company list with Municipal Commission of Economy and Informatization and Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau

Municipal Commission of Economy and Informatization

Guide recycling company in skill levels, cooperate to promote the connection between recycling companies and reuse companies.

Municipal Public Security Bureau

Watch and guide the security work for recycling; enhance checking and examination of recycling company illegal recycling activities

Municipal Bureau of Urban Planning; Municipal Bureau of State Land and Resources

Planning and Land Provision for recycling land use and sorting centers

Municipal Commission of City Administration and Environment

Testing on residential community trash sorting; developing certain closed trash station as recycling site; building connection between the recycling economic park development and recyclable sorting centers; being in charge of building the professional collection, transporting and reutilization system for kitchen waste oil; managing the quality of companies in collecting, transporting and reusing companies for kitchen oils; developing standards and guidance policies for collecting, transporting and reusing kitchen oil.

Municipal Traffic Committee

Being in charge of checking and examining illegal recycling materials transporting vehicles

Municipal Bureau of Commerce

Managing recycling business; designing business development policies; designing recycling system construction planning; guiding districts and counties in developing recycling system; guiding contracted restaurant units in allocating oil-water separator and collection devices

Municipal Industry and Commerce Administration

In charge of recycling company registration, investigating on unregistered recycling activities; cooperating with other relevant parties in recording municipal kitchen waste and waste oil in Beijing company credit information system

Municipal Bureau of Health

In charge of revising the detailed management for setting quantitative scales for restaurants; including the kitchen waste oil in the management system

Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau

In charge of managing the protection on environmental pollution during transporting recyclable materials and kitchen waste oil; fining on illegal activities, including restaurant kitchen waste oil into daily routine monitoring

Municipal Bureau of Work Safety

Monitoring, managing and guiding work safety for recycling activities

Municipal Statistics Bureau

Cooperate with relevant department in building recycling statistics system; building recycling data work

Capital Civic Enhancement Committee Office

In charge of propagating work and activities for the theme of recycling

Public security traffic administration of the Beijing municipal public security bureau

Easing the passing of registered specialized recycling transportation vehicles; investigating and monitoring the illegal activities of transporting kitchen waste oil

Municipal Fire Department

In charge of monitoring and examining on fire prevention work

Municipal Law Enforcing Bureau of City Comprehensive Administration

In charge of monitoring, managing the dirty and messy environment and relevant activities around recycling stations, sorting centers and recycling markets; investigating and regulating unregistered itinerant recycling activities.

Municipal Bureau of Finance, Municipal Human Resources and Social Security Bureau, Municipal Commission of Housing and Rural and Urban Construction, Municipal Agriculture Municipal, City Social Office

Based on each administration's responsibility, working with other bureaus to promote city recycling system development

Figure 50: Photograph: Government Document on Recycling System Development in 2011 (See Appendix A)

In Figure 50, 21 administrative bureaus, departments or offices at the municipal levels are requested to cooperate in developing the recycling system in Beijing. This illustrates one example of the social and political contexts recycling companies are facing in their business exercises. As complained by Mr. Zheng (Case 7, one manager for *FYXY* Paper Packaging Company) during my interview with him,

“so, this is how it works, when we tried to set up the recycling business, everyone told us that he or she is in charge of something or some aspect of the recycling activities; now when it comes to demolition, no one could tell us what we should do, and none of them is actually in charge of anything.”

In Beijing, recycling was considered a “special industry” as I illustrated in the previous chapter until 2003 when the government published the *JingZhengFa[2003]#8* “Notice on Beijing People’s Government Publication of the Third Round of Canceling and Adjusting Administrative Review Project List in Beijing.”⁷⁹ In this document the government has stopped the requirement for recycling companies to register with the police office for the special industry permit while they can directly register with the Municipal Industry and Commerce Administration. After 2003, since almost everyone could start an officially registered recycling business, the number of recycling companies increased rapidly in Beijing. However, since there was no guidance or planning on recycling locations, recycling companies developed in a spatially random pattern following wherever yard and housing were available. This situation lasted until 2006 when one designated government watchwoman suggested to the Bureau of Commerce that they should stop reviewing the recycling company’s application and rectify the existing recycling companies⁸⁰. Later in 2006, the Beijing government has gathered 11 administrative bureaus in Beijing and released the “advice about testing on promoting the development of Beijing’s large-scale company based recycling system”⁸¹.

This “advice” has been the main guidance document for Beijing’s recycling system development. And in the guidance, it specifies that in recycling, it asks the government to guide the development, community to be the recycling agents, the market mechanism to lead the process. And it also specified four working guidance as formalizing recycling stations, market-based transporting system, professional sorting and reusing, directly

⁷⁹ 北京市人民政府文件 京政发[2003]8号 北京市人民政府关于印发北京市第三批取消和调整行政审批项目目录的通知 <http://govfile.beijing.gov.cn/Govfile/ShowNewPageServlet?id=2263>

⁸⁰ <http://www.bjxfb.gov.cn/xfgzdt-qzdt/c23-old851.html>

⁸¹ 关于推进北京市再生资源回收体系产业化发展试点方案的实施意见 www.bjmbc.gov.cn/download/ad/1069516645.doc

linking sorting companies with factories⁸². In this advice, the government specifies that Beijing will not develop the yard-buyer based market-style recycling companies, but instead, all recycling company development should follow the “Beijing recycling facility location spatial plan”⁸³,” which has specifically chosen one or two large-scale and professional recycling companies in each district, as designated city-level or district-level key recycling and sorting centers, to gradually replace the yard-buyer based recycling companies with professional recycling and sorting centers.

Since the document was published in 2006, it stopped the flourishing number of recycling company after 2003 when the “Notice” was issued to ease the registration process for them. Since 2003, there has been a working style change in the urban management in Beijing. Regulations on the recycling companies focused more on what should be checked or not allowed instead of guidance on how to build a standardized or formal business. Governance has changed from a pre-event guidance 前置管理 to a post-event regulation 后置管理 style, which not only reduced the rules that recycling companies could follow but also increased the probability that a recycling company might step into an unknown violation of certain rules from different government departments. This situation further makes recycling companies more vulnerable in that while there is no guidance to follow to operate it the “right” way, they could only know what is wrong when they receive a fine or notice from various administrations or government departments.

This governance style change has serious outcome for recycling companies that struggle for their legal status in the city. Although many companies have gained their “city-level”

⁸² 规范站点，物流配送，专业分拣，厂商直挂。

⁸³ 北京市再生资源回收设施布局专项规划

or “district-level” formal recycling company title, my interviews with recycling company managers imply that the “advice” is not helpful for guiding them about how to build a formal recycling company. Mrs. Wu illustrated that she is very proud of the fact that the two recycling companies she is running are both key companies in the list. While FYXY is a district level key company, GLFY is a city level key recycling company. However, she also indicated that

“We tried to follow all government documents to build the company to a high standard and sought to convert the traditional yard-buyer based market to a recycling company based running model. You know that’s what’s suggested in the government documents, but they never tell us what a high standard means or what a recycling and sorting center should look like. As key companies, we are government designated recycling companies in the actual plan, so we should have some benefit or privilege for location or company space, right? But when demolition comes, it does not give us any protection at all, and now they even want to say that we are all illegal construction. Currently, our land lease still has another year on it, but they don’t want to pay us the compensation. So now we are still negotiating, and although everyone from different government departments seems like they could have some power in the demolition case, nobody is responsible for making the decision.

Also, since we are the designated company in Beijing, we need to follow the guidance to register well with the Commerce Administration and follow the rules from every government department. What this does for us

is that whenever the city wants to make sure everything is in line for those big events or conferences, the first company they check is always us, simply because we are registered in their book. Like the *Daxing* fire case⁸⁴ in 2011, almost immediately the fire departments sent people over to check our equipment and facilities. That is a good thing, but it also costs us money to prepare more equipment just in case. But you see, there are many recycling companies which are not registered and even running without license. Since they are not registered, all those government departments don't check on them at all. So, in the recycling business, they could make more money and stay in a better position in competition against us all the time.”

This situation is also confirmed by a state-owned district-level recycling company manager Mr. Wang (Case 8 Business manager of one recycling station in *Chaoyang* district). When I arrived at the location he told me to go to; there is no recycling yards or market at all; instead, the place looks like a residential one-story house in a gated double-yard area. I interviewed Mr. Wang in one of the rooms in the house, and he explained to me that the recycling station now has completely lost its land to urban development and the company has become a landlord and live on rents only.

“This place used to be one of the eight recycling stations of the *Chaoyang* District Recycling Company which is part of the Beijing City Recycling Company. In about 1995, we subcontracted all our recycling depots and

⁸⁴, a four-story building was on fire in *Daxing* district on April 25th, 2011. The building was considered as illegal construction used as a combination of market, garment factory and residential uses. The fire led to 18 deaths and 24 injured. The building did not have fire exit or other equipment at the event. After the event, the *Daxing* district

even recycling stations to *Henan* migrants, and we became rent collectors, or “*tile eaters* 吃瓦片儿的” as what the Beijing locals call us. In 2006, the government tried to move all recycling companies out of the 5th ring road, and they came almost every day at that time. Because we were the state-owned company, they knew exactly who I was and where to find us. But those migrant recyclers, they can just run like guerrillas, so the government simply couldn’t find them. So, that’s how they survived, but we lost our land.”

This situation sets quite a good example in illustrating the process how informal businesses out-competed the formal businesses in recycling. Profit-wise, some informal businesses have the advantage that they do not have the burden of paying government dues or welfares to their employees. And, facing demolition, formal companies have nowhere to hide, and the informal ones were able to survive rounds after rounds of demolition simply because they tried hard to stay under the radar in the city. The competition between formal and informal recycling businesses is never fair, and ironically, various local government bodies have focused and can only concentrate on the formal companies that have well registered with them to achieve their formal business status in the city.

While this is one of the structural barriers that the local government has wrongly set specifically on the formal recycling companies, I will continue to show another structural barrier established by different uncoordinated departments of the local government.

5.3.4.3 Tricky taxation on recycling activities

Since 2006 when Beijing published the “advice” to regulate the development of recycling companies, this advice has become the key document in shaping the recycling landscape in Beijing. The advice regulates that all recycling companies are not allowed inside the 5th ring road. Besides, it says that “Beijing will **no longer develop ‘open-market type and yard buyer based’ recycling markets**, meanwhile also **restrict the development of new sorting centers**. All of Beijing’s recycling sorting centers should follow the Beijing recycling facility location spatial plan, and **the key is to upgrade and reform the existing markets that are designated in the “plan” and gradually turn them into professional sorting centers**. Although it does not specify the standard for building a recycling company, it does point to a direction for what the city is after.

Both Mrs. Wu and her husband, as the two owners of *FYXY* recycling company, are Beijing local residents, which is relatively rare in Beijing’s recycling scene. Mrs. Wu’s husband⁸⁵ followed the government guidance closely and realized that the yard-buyer style recycling market was not an ideal type to continue in Beijing, as indicated in the “advice.” So, in 2006 and 2007, he was trying to organize and operate the recycling company in a new way to follow the “advice” and to hold onto *FYXY* and *GLFY*’s formal status in Beijing. He cleared up two rows of recycling yards and started a covered paper packaging company inside *FYXY*, trying to set a model of building a “professional sorting center” in Beijing. At the end of 2007, he has organized 14 different paper yard buyer families as investors and shareholders, who not only specialize on paper recycling but also joined with paper resources from their own businesses. In addition to the rent

⁸⁵ Mrs. Wu’s husband was the owner of the company till about 2010 (unsure) when he was locked up in prison for a crime charge.

collector identity, *FYXY* Company started to have the recycling operation business for itself as well. However, what the paper packaging company ran into was quite unexpected.

Paper packaging technique was non-existent in China before 2007, when all different types of recycled paper were shipped out on covered/open trucks to the paper companies most of which are 10 hours away in *Shandong* Province. This situation created a lot of critiques for pollution as recycled paper flying all over the place during transporting. In 2007, some companies in China started to make the paper packaging machines, and *FYXY* started its own paper packaging company to (1) change its open market type and yard buyer based recycling market; and (2) set a model to build a “professional sorting center.” The paper packaging business flourished until about 2010. And taxation has suddenly become almost a throat cut for this locally registered formal paper packaging company.

Taxation on recycling has been quite tricky. As a business, the profit of recycling companies in China are based on: first, buying low from various parties; second, adding values through bulking, sorting, packaging, cubing and loading onto trucks; and finally selling at a higher price. In China’s taxation, it should follow the value added tax (VAT) and the tax should be paid based on the value added in the process by subtracting the purchasing price from the selling price. So, the usage of VAT involves two parts: the purchasing receipt received from the party that sells the recyclable materials and the sales receipt given out to the party that buys the finished recyclable products. While the sales receipt, in the form of tax receipt books, could be directly purchased from the China State

Administration Taxation or local taxation bureaus, there has never been such a thing as receipts for buying recyclable materials in China.

First, the residential recyclable materials are not taxable. People consider recyclables as part of the waste and since recycling income has always been viewed as a little bonus for taking the recycling activities, this part of the revenue has always been nontaxable for local residents. Second, for many factories, commercial companies or institutions, the recyclables are also considered as part of the trash. While cleaning work is usually contract based, recyclables are typically taken as part of the salary, or bonus to the salary of the cleaning companies or individuals. Obviously, this kind of trash is also not taxable. Third, for state-owned or large companies that involve products, such as metal, paper, electronic devices, wood and plastic products, and services such as conferences, construction, infrastructure, news media and filming industry, the entity might have a department to be in charge of selling the recyclable materials. These formal entities would consider waste sales as part of the income so that they might involve offering formal receipt to the party they sign contract with. Only this third kind of recycling involves using of formal tax receipt, which could be utilized by the recycling company as proof for buying the recyclable materials.

While the VAT is quite tricky for recycling companies, taxation policy has taken this into account, together with the consideration that recycling activities are unique..... for a while.

China started to use VAT in 1979, but it started to standardize and formalize after the “Temporary Ordinance of the People’s Republic of China’s Value Added Taxation⁸⁶”

⁸⁶ 中华人民共和国增值税暂行条例 国务院令第 134 号 1993.

under the 134th documentation of State Council of the People's Republic of China in 1993.

In 1995, *Cai Shui Zi*⁸⁷ [1995]24 ordered that after 1995, 70% of the VAT paid by the recycling companies will be returned by both the central finance and local finance.

Basically, after 1995, the central and local finance will refund the company 70% of the tax the recycling companies have paid for that specific year.

Later in 2001, the government assigned further benefits for recycling companies through *Cai Shui*⁸⁸[2001]78 in that after May 1st, 2001, recycling companies are free from paying VAT for all the sales of recyclable materials, which was a tax-free policy for the recycling companies. Also, this order also indicates that businesses that buy recyclable materials from the recycling companies could use 10% of the tax receipt from recycling companies to be counted as part of their purchasing tax. So, this is not only a boosted benefit for recycling companies, but also a promotion for other companies to purchase recyclable materials for them to save on their VAT. However, the fact that the tax paid by recycling companies is calculated by the tax receipt book, which recycling companies purchase during that year, makes tricky the carrying out of this new tax order.

In 2005, China State Administration of Taxation released a new order *Guo Shui Han*[2005]544 “Notice on enhancing the management over VAT for recycling companies⁸⁹,” which required that the taxation administration should verify the qualification of the recycling companies and that recycling businesses that use other

⁸⁷ By the Department of the Treasury and State Administration of Taxation [1995]24 http://baichengtax.com/ps_5816.html

⁸⁸ By the Department of the Treasury and State Administration of Taxation [2001]78 http://www.mof.gov.cn/zhengwuxinxi/caizhengwengao/caizhengbuwengao2001/caizhengbuwengao20019/200805/t20080519_21403.html

⁸⁹ 国税函[2005]544 国家税务总局关于加强废旧物资增值税管理有关问题的通知 <http://www.chinatax.gov.cn/n810341/n810765/n812188/n812925/c1200187/content.html>

company's license should be locally registered at their business operation location. It also requested the recycling companies to use the tax-free VAT only for the qualified items. The new order was due to the situation that many recycling companies have abused the tax-free VAT to overuse recycling company VAT for other activities, companies also use the tax-free VAT for raw materials other than recyclable items and even a black market to trade recycling company VAT receipt book has emerged as well. This served as a warning to the recycling companies for some of the illegal activities in using their VAT tax-free privilege.

2008 was the turning year for all the recycling companies. *Cai Shui [2008]157*⁹⁰ released the new order "Notice about the recycling companies' VAT policy," which nullify the recycling company VAT tax-free policy and the 10% usage of the recycling materials towards tax deduction. The tax-free policy was allowed to last until the end of 2008. Then in 2009, the taxation administration returns 70% of the VAT to recycling companies; in 2010, the taxation administration returns 50% of the VAT to recycling companies. Although the notice did not specify what would happen after 2010, the Department of Treasury and State Administration of Taxation did not publish new policies on the tax issue for recycling companies. Therefore, after 2011, the recycling companies started to pay full VAT as their taxes.

However, because recycling companies have the problem of lacking the official purchasing receipt from local residents, itinerant/community recyclers or yard buyers, the taxable income for recycling companies are not the added value but the total sales instead. Although China adopted the plan to change from Business Tax to Value Added Tax in

⁹⁰ 财税[2008]157 关于再生资源增值税政策的通知
<http://www.chinatax.gov.cn/n810341/n810765/n812171/n812675/c1190499/content.html>

2011, ironically recycling companies started to pay their VAT based on their total business income. Because VAT has largely reduced the proportion of taxable income compared to Business Tax, VAT rate is at 17%⁹¹. As Mrs. Feng (Case 9, FYXY company accountant) showed me,

“For example, I bought some recyclable paper from various itinerant recyclers or yard buyers for our paper packaging company. I paid them 100,000 *yuan* for the paper, but they don’t have any receipt. After I pack the paper and load it on the trucks for sale, I might sell them at 150,000 *yuan*. So, what I make is 50,000 *yuan* in the trade. And this 50,000 should be the added value or taxable income for us; thus, the VAT should be $50,000 \times 17\%$. Because we don’t have the purchase receipt, there is nothing I could use to prove that I spent 100,000 *yuan* for the materials. Now the 150,000 becomes the taxable income. What we are paying now actually becomes $150,000 \times 17\%$. Do we have a profit margin of 17%? There’s no way.

But before 2008, everything was fine because no matter how much we pay for tax, they returned almost all of them to us, except for about 6% as additional tax items. That was how the paper packaging company was profitable then. Later in 2009, they only returned 70% [close to 63% because the tax for other items is not returned] of the tax we paid, but we were still somewhat profitable then. The tax refund became 50% when we barely made it even. After 2011, we still paid the 17% tax and about 6% for other items, but there was no refund any more. As we have to pay for

⁹¹ There are different levels of VAT rate, and 17% is set for general businesses.

labor, transportation, impurity, we would just lose money. Now without the tax refund, who would dare to do this business? Doesn't this simply mean throwing money away?"

Then Mrs. Wu [company board head] added that,

"During those years [tax-free years], recycling tax receipt was very popular because people could make money out of these tax receipt. Then the government worried about the abusive use of this receipt so they canceled it. Last year during the government meeting, they have the intention of doing the tax refund again, but they are still discussing it because they need to make sure that the receipt traders won't mess up the market again. I think the government consideration is very good, but they might still be discussing it... But you see, our case is just such a small case, right? But on a country scale, there are a lot of big things the government needs to consider. So, it just moves step by step. That's it."

Therefore, we can see that the recycling companies face completely different structural/institutional barriers than other recycling actors. While other recyclers face more of a barrier associated with the *Hukou* status, the recycling company is dealing with forces that correlate with the informal status of the recycling business. Although so many parties are the actual stakeholders in monitoring and managing the recycling business, there still lacks strict guideline about how to formalize or standardize the business operation. What is even worse is that different government bodies have different opinions towards recycling. As what was illustrated here, when the Commerce Administration is

trying to limit illegal recycling activities and to promote certain registered formal recycling companies, different parties such as urban development, fire stations and police all took advantage of the full registration of those formal companies and actually led informal businesses to have a better chance to survive in Beijing. Meanwhile, the tax policy from the Administration of Taxation almost wipes out the recycling companies who want to be as formal as they can in the city and what the Administration of Taxation reformed in the policy has further impacted the formal and locally registered recycling companies rather than their informal counterparts.

So, there has been an interesting dispute between the Commerce department's willingness to promote the development of formal, large-scale recycling companies and various other government bodies' easy action to focus on only the formal, large-scale and well-registered recycling companies instead. While the plan is to eradicate the informal recycling activities, formal ones became the *de facto* target every time during the routine checks and investigations. Ironically, no department cares about the future of these recycling companies or the recycling activities; instead, every and each one of the stakeholder government bodies simply needs to confirm that nothing would go wrong within their responsibility.

Maybe Mrs. Wu is right. China is still too big for the government to pay attention to recycling companies and their associated recyclers.

Next, we will continue to examine how migrant recyclers and the recycling companies cope with these structural and institutional barriers in Beijing.

CHAPTER 6

MIGRANTS' COPING STRATEGIES IN BEIJING

Beijing is never our long-term plan, and we will go back to our hometown... one day.

--- almost everyone considers their stay in Beijing as temporary

While we have discussed the structural/institutional barriers in the previous chapter, we could categorize them into targeting two main factors: *migrant status* and *recycling activities*. The development of recycling enclaves or *Henancun* has witnessed the barriers that were set up by the local government to gradually squeezing the social and economic space migrants, and recycling companies need to survive in Beijing. As illustrated in the previous chapter, many migrant recyclers, including itinerant and community recyclers and yard buyers, have experienced a widespread stigmatization or discrimination against them through not only the administrative policies but also public media as well.

Meanwhile, the recycling business itself also faces bureaucratic barriers, such as land acquirement, fire department regulations, urban planning and even taxation, in their operation as well. These two factors, the migrant identity and the informal status of recycling in Beijing, have gradually catalyzed the emergence and flourishing of the recycling enclaves, or *Henancun* in Beijing. The development of *Henancun*, on the one hand, has helped migrants to strengthen their economic opportunity by offering protection from discriminatory socio-political policies, but on the other hand, has also limited their economic and social space into an unstable and enclosed space on the fringe

of Beijing. To keep their livelihood and business stable and profitable, migrants have taken various coping strategies against the barriers they are facing.

Thus, gradually an intriguing paradox has emerged in the recycling business and *Henancun* in that local government's intention to formalize recycling is the *de facto* reason for recycling to informalize. Because there are so many regulations against recycling and so few protections for recycling, recycling companies, recyclers, and buyers have to seek alternative ways to stabilize their business and stay profitable. Meanwhile, since the government is so enthusiastic in ensuring that the well-registered companies follow regulations; informal recycling companies could easily survive and out-compete their formal counterparts. In some sense, the government has catalyzed the development of informal recycling through active and heavy regulations to formalize the business.

The situation is well illustrated by a random glurge I ran into on the internet. "*Kids without an umbrella would have to run fast.*" This saying is perfect to illustrate the coping strategies migrants and recycling companies are taking in the city. Raining here represents the structural barriers or institutional forces that are constructing the social circumstances. To deal with this unfavorable social context, migrants, and recycling companies have two routes of strategies they can take. On the one hand, umbrella not only represents the protection, stability or safety migrants, and recycling companies are seeking in the city but also represents a legitimate role migrants are running their businesses; and on the other hand, "running fast" acts as a "have-to" strategy for migrants and recycling businesses to stay alive and profitable by trying to avoid the structural forces as much as they can. These two strategies are examples of the formal and informal

strategies migrants and recycling companies normally take in their exercises. And this chapter will try to examine both their formal and informal coping strategies.

6.1 Revisiting the Structural Barriers

6.1.1 *Hukou* Remains a Strong Structural Barrier for Rural-to-Urban Migrants

In migration studies, China's internal migration resembles the international immigration situation (Robert, 1997) as shown by various researchers in the ecological schools of migration studies (Park, 1926; Massey, 1985, 1998) and the enclave development studies as well (Portes, 1987; Wilson and Portes, 1980; Light and Bonacich, 1988). But the social and political contexts in these studies are a little different since China's urban context is not as welcoming or tolerating as the situation faced by international immigrants in the countries in those studies. In the international immigration research in the U.S., Park (1926) has illustrated the connection between the ethnic enclave development and the language, culture and race factors when immigrants first arrive in the country. Massey (1985) has further pointed out that the immigration involves a two-step process: residential segregation and spatial assimilation. Following chain migration, immigrants are channeled into already segregated areas of cities, and even the "cultural division of labor" (Hechter, 1978) might appear to solve the employment issue for the newly arrived immigrants. After immigrants surpass the cultural and economic barriers, they start to assimilate into the receiving society through residential relocation (Gordon 1964). Massey (1985) further illustrated that the residential location is related to immigrants' level of cultural and economic assimilation while their socioeconomic status can lead to desegregation and integration with the majority group in the society. Therefore, the ethnic

immigration situation in the U.S. is generally based on a socioeconomic status related melting-pot process in that the barrier immigrants face in the society is believed to be related to cultural, economic and social differences they have between their home and the destination society, while structural forces are not as significant in determining immigrants' spatial location and socioeconomic status.

But meanwhile, racial ghetto studies have challenged this theory in that researchers (Darden 1987; Darden and Kamel 2000a, 2000b; Taeuber and Taeuber 1964, 1965) have found that socioeconomic status is not the determinant factor for the spatial distribution of certain “minority⁹²” groups’ (African Americans or Hispanic immigrants). Darden (1985) has indicated that spatial segregation is present in all socioeconomic levels in Chicago between the blacks and whites. Racial discrimination is believed to be present in many aspects of the society such as occupational discrimination (Porter, J.1985), educational discrimination (Darden and Parsons, 1981) and housing discrimination (Darden 1982, 1995; Gotham 2000). Therefore, we can see that while the structural barriers are not present in ethnic immigrants from the Europe in the early 1900s, immigration is represented through “segregation” and “assimilation.” However, while some structural forces, such as race or ethnicity based discrimination, function like a doorkeeper for segregation, assimilation is in fact restricted to the “minority” groups. In China, since *Hukou* no longer restricts people’s movement from rural to urban areas like the pre-reform era, China’s rapid urban economic development has attracted rural migrants to cities for various job opportunities. While the rural-to-urban migration looks very similar to international immigration in terms of chain migration, segregated migrant enclave and cultural division of labor when migrants arrive in the cities, the channel for

⁹² Minority indicates other racial or ethnic group other than white Americans.

migrants to assimilate locally as described in the Ecological School theory remains shut mainly because *Hukou*, being an “internal passport” system (Fan, 2002) between rural and urban China, is associated with a series of limitations on migrants’ access to various urban social welfare and facilities. While the social welfare related to migrants’ education opportunities and medical services is still officially assigned to their hometown as defined by their *Hukou* status, rural-to-urban migration always remains tied to their hometown administratively. Therefore, while migrants are living and working completely in the city, their “security” measures, regarding social facilities and welfares, remain in their rural hometowns. In another word, migrants’ economic gain or even their economic upward mobility in the city remains solely “economic” and cannot be translated to cultural, spatial or social assimilation. *Hukou* remains a strong source of structural/institutional barriers to rural-to-urban migration. The force of *Hukou* on migrant enclaves functions very similar to the structural force of racial discrimination in racial ghettos in the U.S. Migrants, on the other hand, are compelled to carry out various coping strategies to deal with this inevitable and unfavorable structural barrier in the city.

6.1.2 Pathological View against the Recycling Business

In Beijing, recycling is needed by the city while the way recycling is carried out has been heavily criticized by the government. However, the criticism from the government is not very clear and further there still lacks detailed guidance on how to develop a standard and formal recycling business in Beijing.

Recycling was organized by the government before China’s market turn through state-owned recycling companies in Beijing. After migrants gradually arrived at Beijing and started to use recycling as a way to make their living, recycling has become a unofficial,

or informal business due to the fact that before 2006, almost everyone could rent some local resident's yard to recycle with or without license by using the yard as storing and sorting area and the houses as their residential space. Before 2003, the recycling license for official or formal recycling companies has to be under the name of someone with a Beijing *Hukou*, but after 2003, this rule was no longer in effect, and everyone could register with the Ministry of Commerce to obtain a recycling license officially. In 2006, 11 administrative bureaus in Beijing together released the “advice” to stop all recycling company applications and proposed four working guidance as for the developing objectives of the recycling business as formalizing recycling stations, market-based transporting system, professional sorting and reusing, directly linking sorting companies with factories. The “advice” also indicated that following the “Beijing recycling facility location spatial plan,” Beijing will use “professional sorting centers” to replace the “recycling-yard based recycling companies” in the future.

The “Plan” has proposed to develop comprehensive sorting centers⁹³: the eight city-level comprehensive sorting centers will have a radius of 30km as service area to serve several districts/counties; while the eight district-level comprehensive sorting centers will have a radius of 20km as service area to serve one specific district/county (See Appendix B & C). The proposed comprehensive sorting centers will cover used paper, used or old plastics, used or old iron and steel and used or old electric appliances and have functioned as storage, collecting, sorting and selling, preliminary processing. All in all, the “advice” and the “plan” have theoretically proposed a radical change to the whole recycling business in Beijing: unregistered informal recycling companies are on the edge of being canceled and demolished, while the registered formal recycling businesses that are yard-

⁹³ 再生资源综合处理中心

buyer, and market-based will also be gradually canceled by the government. So, what the documents are promoting is that recycling business should be operated instead of managed by recycling companies; in another word, the recycling companies should not have the identity of a land leaser by transferring the “recycling operations” to the yard buyers who lease yards from the company.

Table 14: Official documents about the development of recycling business

Year	Name	Content
2001	JingShangFaJiao(2001)#30 京商发交(2001)30 号 ⁹⁴ Implementation of promoting and standardizing Beijing community recycling system. 北京市商业委员会等九部门印发关于促进和规范北京市社区再生资源回收体系建设的实施方案的通知	Build standardized community recycling network One recycling station/1000-1500 families; 1800 recycling stations in 8 districts of Beijing; Build 6-8 recycling markets at the end of 2002; Build 10 recycling markets at the end of 2003; Recycling markets should be accordance with urban service function and environment protection. Recycling markets should be built with easy access to transportation and are better to be between the 4th and fifth ring road . Rectify unlicensed itinerant/community recycling, recycling stations' subcontract situation, and unlicensed recycling markets.
2003	JingShangFa(2003)#28 京商发(2003)28 号 ⁹⁵ Beijing Ministry of Commerce's notice on strengthening the management of recycling business during SARS prevention 北京市商业委员会关于在防止非典期间加强再生资源回收行业管理的通知	During SARS prevalence period, community recycling should continue its recycling function; Government bodies should check the sanitary situation of community recycling stations to avoid SARS prevalence through recycling.

⁹⁴ http://www.34law.com/lawfg/law/1797/3021/law_892443434309.shtml

⁹⁵ http://www.34law.com/lawfg/law/1797/3021/law_8989178924.shtml

Table 14: (cont'd)

2006	<p>JingShangJiaoZi(2006)#52 京商交字(2006)52 号96 advice about testing on promoting the development of Beijing's large-scale company based recycling system 北京市商务局、北京市发展和改革委员会、北京市规划委员会等关于印发《关于推进北京市再生资源回收体系产业化发展试点方案的实施意见》的通知</p>	<p>Promote several recycling companies through government contract as major business body to gradually replace dispersed and individual recycling; Formalizing recycling stations, market-based transporting system, professional sorting and reusing, directly linking sorting companies with factories; One recycling station/1000-1500 families; 2000 recycling stations in eight districts of Beijing; Build ten professional sorting centers; Build "professional sorting centers" to replace the "recycling markets;" Sorting centers site location should follow Beijing City Master Plan, the Beijing 11th Five Year Plan, and Land Use Plan. Use close-back recycling trucks and stop recyclers from using tricycles for transporting recyclable materials; Three uniformity: uniform trucks and signs, uniform uniforms for recyclers, uniform scales; Professional sorting centers should be built outside the 5th ring road.</p>
2007	<p>JingShangJiaozi(2007)#80 京商交字(2007)80 号⁹⁷ Beijing Ministry of Commerce's notice on continuing to strengthen the power in closing illegal recycling sites (markets) 北京市商务局关于进一步加大对非法再生资源回收站点(集散市场)取缔工作力度的通知</p>	<p>Closing illegal recycling stations and illegal recycling markets in making sure the success of "Good Luck Beijing" test game and the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games.</p>

Through Table 14, a series of notice from Ministry of Commerce in Beijing has shown a policy change about the recycling business.

⁹⁶ http://www.34law.com/lawfg/law/1797/3021/law_894634248934.shtml

⁹⁷ http://www.34law.com/lawfg/law/1797/3021/law_178938384325.shtml

1. Recycling markets or centers are pushed out from **between 4th and fifth ring roads** to **outside the 5th ring road**;
2. Recycling markets are no longer the preferred way of operating the recycling business. Instead, the city is promoting the development of **professional sorting centers**;
3. Recycling is considered as **a valuable social service** by the Ministry of Commerce through planning;
4. Recycling is standardized through uniform trucks, clothes, and scales in residential communities.

Besides, while the government has always been considering recycling as an important social service to the residents and an important way to reduce waste, it has gradually taken a pathological view of recycling business and tried to rectify and formalize it. First, the Ministry of Commerce in Beijing has sought to rectify the unlicensed recycling activities and continue to use recycling markets as the main business type for recycling in 2001. So, during that time, only unlicensed recycling is viewed as informal recycling while the typical yard-buyer based recycling market was considered as an acceptable business type. But in 2006, the government tried to standardize the recycling business at both the itinerant/community recycling level and the recycling company level. At the itinerant/community recycling level, the government still focuses on the situation along proper licensing; while at the recycling company level, the government started to question the yard-buyer based recycling market and promote the development of “professional sorting centers” instead.

Thus, how do migrant recyclers and recycling companies cope with these more and more hostile policies in the city? This chapter will further this discussion along both the *Hukou* divide and the informal recycling status to understand migrants' formal and informal coping strategies with the structural/institutional barriers in Beijing.

6.2 Coping Strategies in Recycling

By the structural/institutional barriers which form along *Hukou* and informal recycling, the subjects to cope with this situation involve two parties: the migrants in recycling and recycling companies. However, no matter what kinds of barriers they are dealing with, the key indicators for successfully coping with the structural barriers are continuing the business and staying profitable.

While *Hukou* has predefined the legal boundary for migrants' temporality in the city, migrants have long lost their interests in fighting for their long-term stay in the city while practically they have, almost unanimously, viewed recycling as a temporary way to make a living for their return to their hometowns in the future. Migrants need to cope with all different kinds of barriers since their initial migration, and there are two defining factors in migrants' mind: to seek security/stability and to stay profitable. In this sense, security/stability means their stay needs to be legal, their business needs to be sound, and their lives should be supported with social facilities and social institutions, in another word, to make sure that both their business and their lives to stay under the searching radar for "illegal" or "improper" activities from various administrative departments. Meanwhile, to maximize profits in recycling means, they need to "buy lower" and "sell higher."

For recycling companies, we have already reviewed the government documentations and understood that the government had changed their attitudes towards recycling companies several times in the early 2000s. What the government is promoting is formal, standardized and professional recycling companies that could replace the traditional informal yard buyer based recycling markets. While we all know that informality is one way to achieve profitability, the chance that the formal, standardized and professional recycling companies could financially win in competition with their informal counterparts without government's support is very slim. Inevitably, recycling companies need to choose their routes in this profitability vs. formality war as well.

All in all, all coping strategies are taken by recycling migrants and recycling companies could be summarized into two routes: to formalize or to informalize. These two guiding routes on coping strategies are not mutually exclusive, and they are well intertwined in migrants' coping strategies in the city. More interestingly, while the government has always taken a pathological understanding towards the recycling business and tried so hard to formalize and standardize them, it is right this force from the government that has pushed recycling to become more and more informal.

6.3 Migrant Recyclers' Coping Strategies in Beijing

For migrant recyclers in Beijing, the emergence and development of *Henancun* mean much more than a secured residential and business location. Rather, *Henancun* has become their second hometown in their lives and redefined the socio-political situation in their migration. Fundamentally, as outsiders in the city, migrants have redefined their living and business space—*Henancun*—to become a new “local” for themselves inside an unfriendly and unwelcoming urban society. What *Henancun* has brought them is more

than safety or security; rather it has become their new hometown in Beijing as a stand-alone and fragmented space from the urban environment. It has become a small self-sustaining society where migrants could escape both their hometown villages and their migration destination city. Figure 44 shows that only the community recyclers need to interact with Beijing residents while both itinerant recyclers and yard buyers do not normally interact with residents in Beijing at all. Meanwhile, most itinerant buyers have very specific items to recycle, and they normally buy directly from community recyclers instead of the residents. Meanwhile, most yard buyers do not need to interact with Beijing residents at all since they purchase materials directly from the itinerant and community recyclers. However, some yard buyers do have to communicate with local people in Beijing because their business relies on contract instead of itinerant and community recyclers. I will address this issue in a later section. But what we could see from figure 51 and 52 is that *Henancun* must have the ability to provide all necessary services so that migrants do not need to go out for their livelihood or business at all.

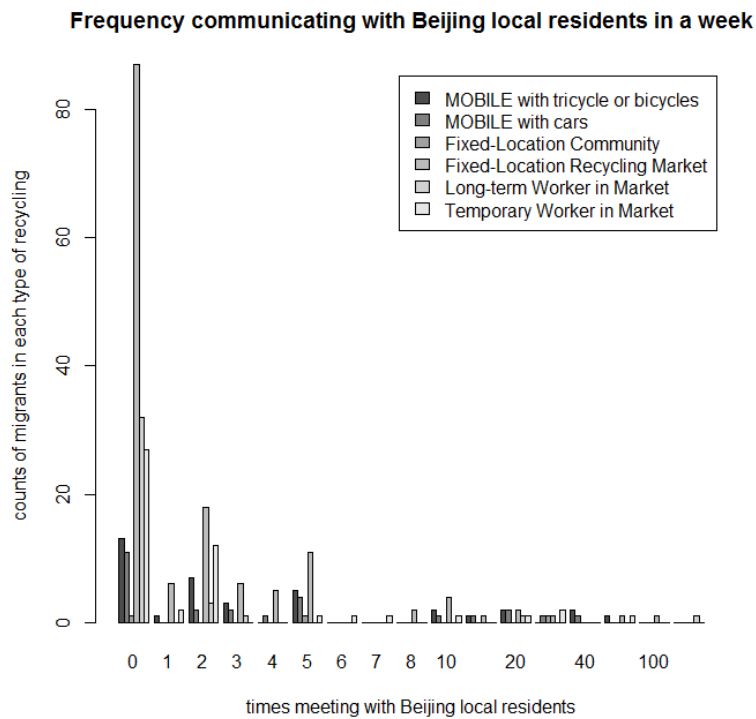


Figure 51: Chart: Frequency communicating with Beijing residents in a week⁹⁸

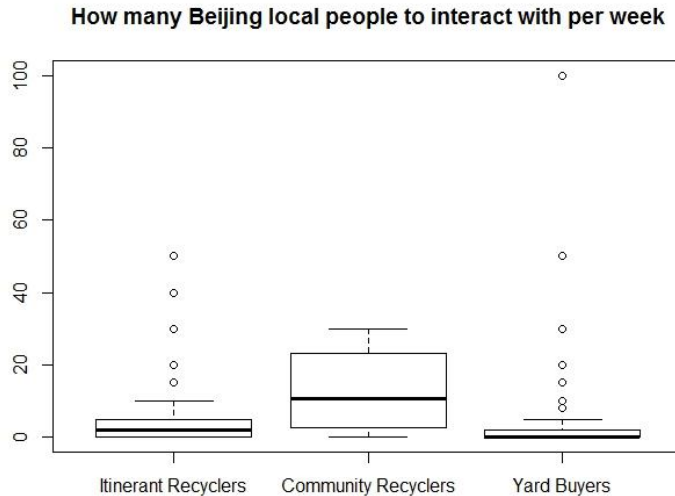


Figure 52: Chart: How many Beijing residents to interact with per week

For migrant recyclers in Beijing, the most important structural barrier is their non-local *Hukou* status, which sets many constraints on their access to local opportunities and

⁹⁸ See Appendix F. Q2.4 INTOUCHBJ.

services. The migrants are forced to take various coping strategies to secure their migration and business in Beijing. They need to find a way (1) to migrate, (2) to live in a stable environment, (3) to have a livable environment, (4) to have social facilities to support the family and (5) to secure a profitable business. We will discuss these coping strategies here to understand how migrants deal with these barriers in the city.

6.3.1 Chain Migration to Achieve a Successful Migration

When migrants decide to migrate, there are several choices in front of them. Especially for rural migrants from *Gushi* county, *Henan* province whose location is almost in the middle of the eastern part of China, migrants have the choice to migrate to all first-tier cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou. But for the migrants who are in the recycling business, many followed chain migrations led by early explorers in Beijing. As Massey (1998) has stated that through cumulative causation, migratory movements become self-sustaining after the initial migration. Migrants in recycling have well used the chain migration strategy to increase the probability to succeed in Beijing.

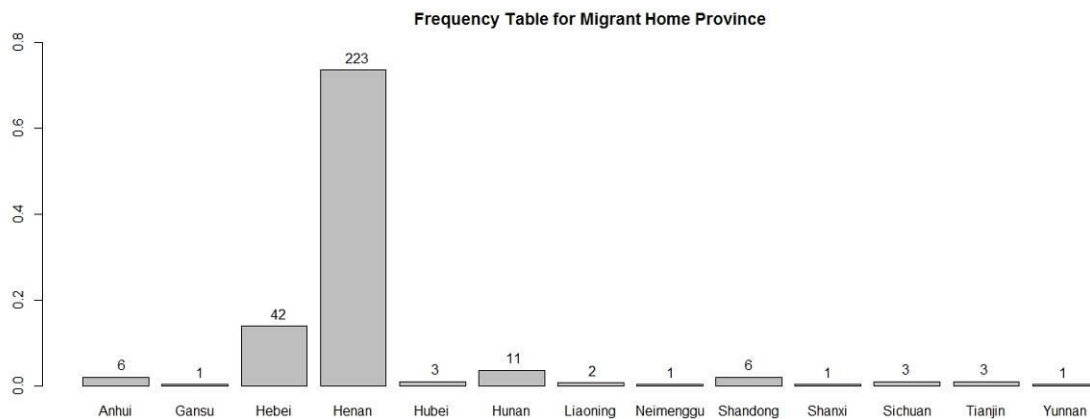


Figure 53: Chart: Migrant home provinces⁹⁹

⁹⁹ See Appendix F. Q1.4 PHUKOU.

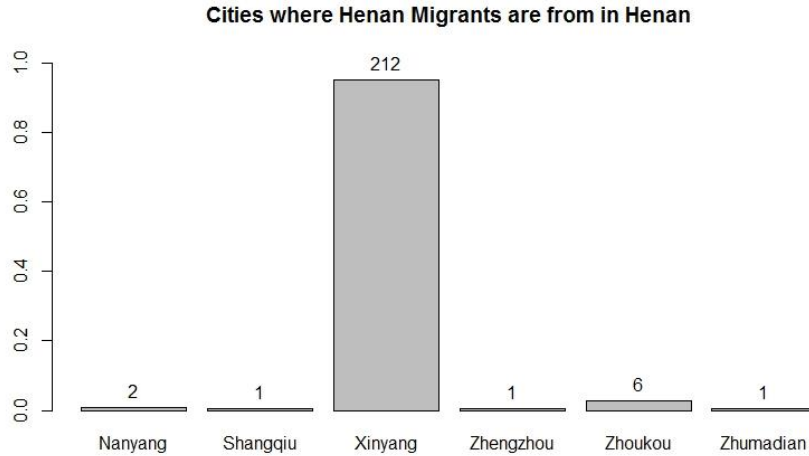


Figure 54: Chart: The cities where *Henan* migrants are from¹⁰⁰

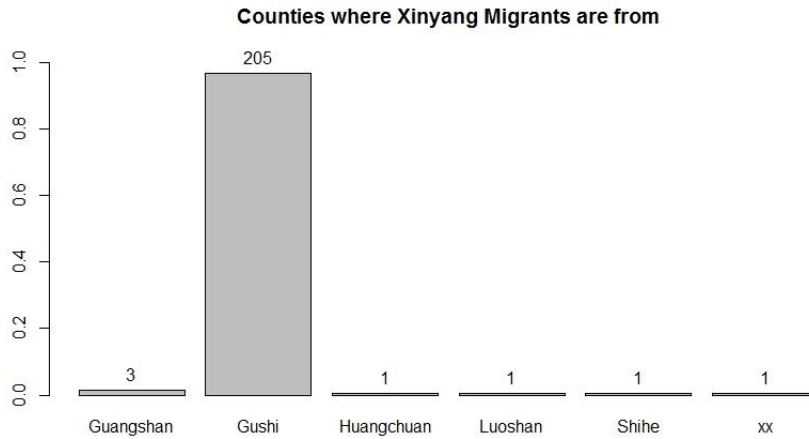


Figure 55: Chart: The counties where *Xinyang* migrants are from (xx represents no answer)¹⁰¹

From Figure 53, 54 and 55, we can see that the questionnaire participants have shown that 73.6% (223/303) of the migrants are from *Henan* province; among *Henan* migrants, 95.1% (212/223) are from the city of *Xinyang*; 96.7% (205/212) of the people from *Xinyang* are from *Gushi* County. We can see that migrants' hometowns are highly concentrated. For the *Henan* migrants, which are the majority migrant group in recycling,

¹⁰⁰ See Appendix F. Q1.4 *CHUKOU*.

¹⁰¹ See Appendix F. Q1.4 *COHUKOU*

over 90% are from *Gushi* County. This concentration has further indicated that there has been an association between the recycling business in Beijing and the *Gushi* County of *Henan* province.

Furthermore, the *Gushi* County Department of Labor has indicated in its “*Gushi* County Labor Export Situation Report¹⁰²” in 2009 that

“*Gushi* emigrants choose *Guangdong*, *Zhejiang*, *Jiangsu* and *Beijing* as their primary destinations.”

“The purpose of working outside is to take money back for building houses, supporting the old, and letting children take education.”

“Despite the Labor Agency introduced by the Labor Department, 90% of emigrants rely on “Three Relationships¹⁰³” in their migration. Most migrant workers are not seeking job opportunities based on market need-supply relationship, but concentrate at places where their relatives and friends are working to form concentrated working situation, which not only loses the opportunity cost but also decreases their income.”

We can also see chain migration situation through a survey that was conducted by the labor department in 2009. Table 15 (details in Appendix D) has shown that migration destinations are not random. Migrants in the 33 townships in *Gushi* County have their preference for where to go. Close to 15-20% of the migrants in *Gushi* County choose *Beijing*, *Guangdong*, *Jiangsu* and *Zhejiang* as their migration destination. However, the distribution is not uniform spatially in that two counties have over 50% while five

¹⁰² 固始县劳务输出工作情况汇报

¹⁰³ 三缘: 血缘, 地缘, 业缘。Three relationships mean the blood relationship, location relationship, and work relationship. Blood relationship includes the relationship between relatives; location relationship means neighborhood or village/county relationships; work relationship means classmates, teachers or other social ties.

counties have over 30% of their out migrants to choose Beijing as their destination. This situation is similar for migrants in other counties to choose *Guangdong*, *Jiangsu* or *Zhejiang* as their destination as well. Thus a clear trend of chain migration is also visible at the township level in addition to province, city and county levels as shown before.

Table 15: Emigration destination percentage for different townships in *Gushi* County

	Beijing	Guangdong	Jiangsu	Zhejiang
Duangji	5.19	16.53	26.97	14.85
Magang	22.90	25.51	11.01	24.47
Nandaqiao	15.18	13.59	15.83	12.80
Huzu	12.36	30.92	12.66	13.14
Shifo	2.49	6.62	22.82	30.66
Yangji	21.40	21.90	7.49	25.71
Chenlin	9.59	4.51	53.75	19.60
Wumiao	12.27	14.87	20.81	19.19
Wangliu	32.76	28.12	14.98	10.03
Xuji	26.66	18.44	16.30	11.81
Guolutan	9.40	54.46	6.28	10.33
Chenji	15.59	12.95	30.40	8.97
Quanhe	12.08	8.01	18.71	6.88
Wangpeng	14.15	32.35	4.75	18.37
Guantang	31.70	16.05	11.61	11.67
Zhangguang	14.37	17.84	28.32	21.73
Liushu	3.66	6.26	32.76	19.96
Fangji	8.63	14.20	11.26	13.98
Lidian	65.20	8.70	7.24	6.18
Shahe	4.45	9.70	33.26	16.83
Fenshui	18.28	15.60	20.74	18.40
Sanhejian	5.53	33.20	11.74	5.94
Caomiao	30.45	36.51	2.09	3.05
Zushi	12.53	14.95	20.71	19.18
Liji	10.35	8.84	39.60	32.66
Hongbu	50.53	23.48	6.70	5.68
Zhanglaobu	3.77	10.28	52.66	21.88
Zhaogang	3.71	11.54	34.37	6.89
Jiangji	44.49	12.57	12.57	8.12
Fenggang	21.17	14.55	6.53	5.31
Chengjiao	34.14	20.71	8.41	5.96
Chengguanzhen	21.97	17.92	12.43	2.02
Chengguan Community	20.04	18.05	13.49	16.01
Total	20.70	17.93	18.39	14.95

*Data obtained from the Labor Department in *Gushi* County

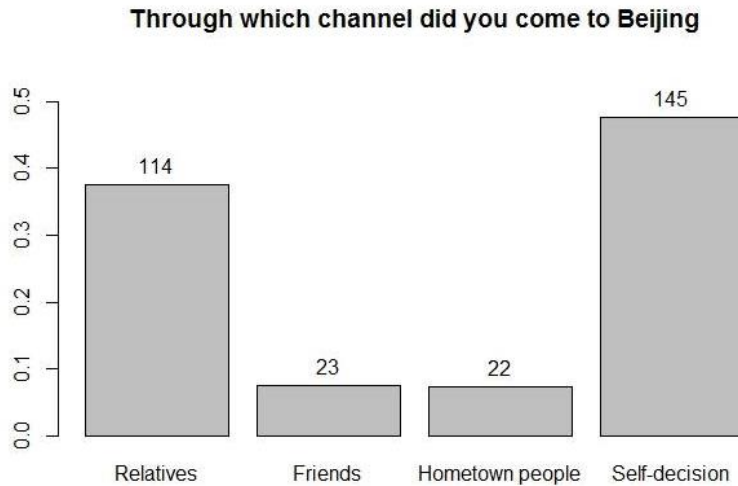


Figure 56: Chart: Through which channel migrants come to Beijing?¹⁰⁴

Figure 56 has further shown that 114/304 people in the questionnaire came to Beijing through their relatives, while 45/304 people came through their friends or unknown hometown people, and close to 50%, 145/304 people came by their self-decision.

Interestingly, in the questionnaire, no single migrant arrived in Beijing through a job agency¹⁰⁵. With the majority people from the same hometown, the "self-decision" represents a well-established migration culture that has developed in migrants' hometowns, which is not against our assumption of the chain migration.

In addition to following a chain migration to the city, the business is also well maintained through this chain. Mr. Chen (Case 10, a recycling market & used market owner in *Daxing* district) has shown his experience in Beijing:

"I recycled paper in the very beginning because that didn't need much money to start...when I had enough money, I left the paper business to my brothers and sisters, and I began to recycle steel... then in 1998 I gave the steel business to them too while I started a recycling and used appliance

¹⁰⁴ See Appendix F. Q1.3 HOWBJ.

¹⁰⁵ We also have a choice as "job agency" while nobody chose that one as his or her answer.

market. By then, all the relatives I knew had come to Beijing, and they took over those paper and steel recycling businesses I started.”

This situation is very common for migrant recyclers in Beijing, especially for the young generation who recently joined the business. They would normally work at a recycling yard for their parents, uncles, father-in-law or other relatives for a couple of years to accumulate experience, then take over to operate it while the parents could start new businesses or go home to take care of their grandchildren for their education.

Thus, we can see that chain migration has paved quite a stable migration path. Also, because recycling has become a “hometown” business, migrants following chain migration have the advantage of accessible information and market resources. Although recycling is still informal, the yard buyer business is, in fact, an entrepreneurship with or without a license. Relative based chain migration provides the recycling families the opportunity to continue this family entrepreneurship, and we can also see a cross-generation migration that starts to emerge in the recycling business today as well.

6.3.2 Coping with Hostile Urban Policies, Especially *Shourong*

While *Shourong* was in place, recycling activities were not safe on streets in Beijing. However, in the late 1990s, recycling was still operated by itinerant/community recyclers with small-scale individual-yard based buyers. Since obtaining an official license was nearly impossible, some migrants rent individual yard in the city to run their businesses. They were referred to as small-scale yard buyers because not like the organized yard buyers today, they still needed to either buy materials on the streets by themselves or transport goods from some sellers. While traveling on streets was nearly inevitable for most recyclers these small-scale yard buyers still faced threats from the *Shourong* policy.

While many recyclers have experienced the *Shourong* lock up, they started to look for various ways to deal with the extremely insecure situation in Beijing.

The most commonly used temporary solution was to return to their hometowns to avoid *Shourong*, but the lack of income from giving up their recycling activities became a serious issue after a while at home. Thus, after the temporary retreat from Beijing's street, they needed a longer-term strategy to cope with this situation. The goal at that time was to avoid the street activities while remaining in the recycling business. Thus, under such a political and economic context, some yard based recycling markets started to emerge and serve as a safe harbor for migrant recyclers who could afford a recycling yard inside the recycling markets. It was at that time when recycling companies started to transform from a recycling operator to a market organizer, or in another word, landlord. They began to lease large pieces of land from various village community boards to start their recycling business. While some of them have the recycling company license (either by themselves or subcontracted from a local license owner), some do not have a permit at all. Since recycling companies started to become the landlord, what they are operating is no longer the recycling business, but instead, they are operating recycling markets through leasing out individual business space to yard buyers. So technically, the business license these recycling companies should use is a market license instead of a business license, which I will discuss in section 6.4.

There are two ways for recycling migrants to cope with this unfriendly political situation: to formalize or to informalize.

6.3.2.1 To formalize

During the *Shourong* period, recycling companies offered a feasible way to solve the “street” issue for recyclers by letting them hide inside a walled recycling company. These companies became the prototype of *Henancun* in Beijing. This transformation of business operation and migration situation represent a form of “formalization” strategy. While the social, political and economic space in Chinese cities was organized by walled work unit (*danwei*) until the late 1990s, a walled recycling company represented a formal and recognized social, political and economic space that is, or at least seems to be, accepted by the city. Besides, while the company is locally registered with a recycling license, the company has the legality to provide work proof to protect its employees (although they are renters in fact). Also, the background of a recycling company’s owner also became an important factor for recycling migrants to think about when they seek protections.

While I was conducting my interviews in *Henancun*, several potential interviewees have responded to my interview request with answers such as “you know, I am a friend of XXX” or “what do you need? I know XXX in the district.” With their doubts about my intention, their response was trying to prove their legitimacy by showing: first, they are well connected with the formal system and second, they are legitimate with the right credentials. While this is quite trivial in my fieldwork, it shows how unstable a status their business is at and how often they need to prove their formal status in the city. This was also the case in the late 1990s when *Shourong* was in place. Migrant recyclers would exchange their information about a recycling company owner with friends and relatives to judge which recycling company is reliable to follow in the long term. And for migrants without local connections, the company, its owner and their social connection became

part of migrants' assets to use as their umbrella to prove their legitimacy in the city before they "run." In some sense, the emergence of *Henancun* represents the divide between the migrant and the local, the informal and the formal, the outside and the inside in the city.

If formality or to be close to formality provides partial protection to migrant recyclers in the society, the physical walled-up recycling company offers a spatial haven for migrants to hide from the potential *Shourong* threats on the streets. While this seems to be a "retreat" plan for migrants to escape those discriminatory policies, it has interesting outcomes for migrant recyclers.

6.3.2.2 To informalize

While some of the relatively affluent recyclers started to gather inside the recycling companies, the streets were still not safe for itinerant or community recyclers. Because *Shourong* practice had turned out to be a monetary business, it became extremely tricky for migrant recyclers who needed cash to purchase the recyclable materials. Since it was not safe for recyclers to carry cash with them while they still need cash at any moment for potential usage, yard buyers' home became a possible safe house for itinerant recyclers to store their money. Mr. Zhou (Case 5) was one of those yard buyers around 2002. After he went home several times following *Shourong*, he finally decided to invest in one yard inside a recycling company. After talking with several friends and relatives, he decided to follow one boss Mr. L, the husband of Mrs. Wu. From what he had heard, Mr. L was a local businessman who had the close relationship with the local government and could smooth things out when in conflict with the local government. After Mr. Zhou had become a yard buyer for bottles in *Wali*,

“we became yard buyers and had some money. That was our money-saving time. *Shourong* was still going on outside, so I didn’t dare to go out and just made some small money inside the yard. What’s funny and unexpected was that while I didn’t go out, somebody was still out on the street, right? They saved all the money they made every day at our home because our home was safe. Nobody would come over to mess up at our yard. The tricycle itinerant buyers who I was familiar with all left their money at our home, and I made a note for each of them to record their savings. At that time, there were not many people who purchased materials, but instead, most are garbage pickers. The pickers are not usually from our hometown *Gushi*, but more from somewhere like *Zhumadian*. These people didn’t have tricycles. What they had were those flat push carts. Wherever they went, they dragged it with them and picked through garbage there. That thing [the flat push cart] was even more unsafe [facing *Shourong*]. In the beginning, they didn’t know each other and were not familiar with us at all. What they did for their money was to put the cash inside a glass bottle then buried it somewhere in the vegetable field or open field next to their rental house. For example, like he made ten today, twenty tomorrow, then he buried it underground. Many stored their money like this. And some would put their money in some wall cracks too, because if you were locked up by *Shourong*, they just took your money. So, after they sold their stuff to me several times, they started to know me and use our yard as a bank.

That helped our business a lot because the more money we had to purchase materials, the more stuff we could sell to earn the difference. At that time, whatever significantly bought, you could make money. There was no way people would lose money in recycling. During this period, I had around tens of thousands of *yuan*¹⁰⁶ through their savings. Well, I had such a hard time whenever we were close to Spring Festival¹⁰⁷ because everybody came over to take their savings back to go home. I didn't even have money to go to my own Spring Festival at home during those years.”

Mr. Zhou decided to join a recycling company and became a yard buyer because he was tired of the “strict” or “discriminatory” policy on the streets. While his attempt to formalize his business inside a recycling company did not bring him the extra profit, he made an unexpected fortune through an unexpected informal financial service he was able to provide. Technically, the unexpected profit was created by the security and stability from the formality of being inside a “well-connected” recycling company. The stability and security embedded in the formality have then materialized as a banking service to further protect the extra profit made by itinerant recyclers who bore the risk by running on the streets. In fact, this has illustrated the interesting relationship between the formality and informality. To some extent, being close to formal is always a way of making profits comparing to the informal activities.

From this case, what we could see is that while Mr. Zhou could afford the cost to become a yard buyer to formalize his business and to provide security and stability to his

¹⁰⁶. This is a big amount of money in the early 2000s when people who have 10,000 *yuan* in their bank account are called as “big money” 大款.

¹⁰⁷ Spring Festival is Chinese New Year. In Chinese culture, people need to clear their debts to welcome a new year.

operation, itinerant recyclers were also trying their best to seek protection by someone who has the connection to the formality. The reason for everyone trying to formalize their activities was that the cost of *Shourong* was too high to bear in Beijing. We can see that the most secure way to cope with the unfavorable social circumstance is always to seek an umbrella or a reference to prove migrants' legitimacy. However, there are cases whereby umbrella simply does not exist at all, for example, migrants' access to social facilities in Beijing.

6.3.3 Coping with the Lack of Social Facilities in Beijing

As shown in the last section, there are usually two ways to deal with a "situation:" the formal way (umbrella) and the informal way (run). Both have their advantages and disadvantages, but the key is to get over the situation and stay stable and vigorous.

While *Shourong* officially became history in 2003, migrants' lives and businesses started to stabilize and flourish. Recycling companies, which organized the yard-buyer based recycling market, became a form of recycling operation condoned by the government. However, although *Shourong* became history, the discriminatory social condition lingers in the society and migrants have adapted to the lifestyle of staying together around the recycling companies for mutual care and protection. With the development of recycling companies and further flourished recycling enclaves, recyclers started to enjoy the best time of business in recycling. In my fieldwork, various recyclers and business managers have indicated that the time between around 2002 and 2008 was the best time for recycling, economically, socially and politically. And this situation is due to several reasons.

First, in 2003 Beijing city government has allowed everybody to freely register their recycling company with the Ministry of Commerce in Beijing, which made various recycling companies be able to register officially. Migrants were also allowed to be owners of recycling companies in Beijing. Second, China experienced a fast economic development at a rate of over 10% during those years, and Beijing has also experienced a rapid urban expansion. All the infrastructure construction, commodity housing construction, urban renewal and all of the associated interior decoration projects have created unprecedentedly vast amount of waste for recycling. While local residents became wealthy, they also cared less about the money gained from recycling and a lot of recyclable materials were given away to recyclers for free. Third, tax wise, Beijing offered a promotional free VAT (value added tax) policy for recycling companies since 2001 but later tightened up this policy in 2008. The free tax policy has helped enormously for recycling businesses. However, the turn in 2008 has significantly struck the recycling companies because the recycling companies could not provide their purchasing receipt in their VAT calculation. This has suddenly added a huge burden to the companies in that they are paying consumption tax at an astonishing 17% VAT rate. Last but not least, in 2001, the local government accepted the form of a “recycling market” as the primary way of recycling in their document (shown in 5.1.2). And it was until 2006 when the government started to criticize the form of recycling markets and promoted the replacement of these markets by a list of planned professional sorting centers in each district. Therefore, we can see that between 2002 and 2008, various government bodies and the demand-supply markets both contributed to the flourishing recycling business.

While recycling markets were quite stable during this period and the migrant recyclers also made a fortune, many of the young rural migrants were able to get married during this time as well. Then there came the family need for various social facilities, such as markets, kindergartens, schools, transportation between Beijing and hometowns, and also their hometown-flavored restaurants. Because of the relative stability associated with recycling companies and *Henancun* during this time, various services started to emerge around these places as well. In all the three recycling enclaves in my fieldwork, *DXK* has fully developed to have almost every service provided by migrants themselves. Although some of the functions such as grocery store, hometown flavor restaurants, and a couple of printing stores rent their house from the recycling market, most of other businesses emerged solely on market demand such as kindergartens, primary and middle schools, public bathing facilities, long distance transportation system, truck rental, spots for hiring daily manual work, truck service, barber shop, hotels, and even an afternoon street market.

6.3.3.1 Open market and grocery stores organized by recycling companies

In *DXK*, there is an afternoon street market on the main transportation road. Starting around 4 pm, vendors would come by trucks, tricycles or bicycles to sell all the necessities such as vegetables, fruits, raw meat, fish, live animals, deli food, clothes, hats, scarf, socks, shoes, books, toys, shampoos and soap to migrant recyclers and surrounding residents. All the items have the same feature—like a typical street market—they are cheap. To some extent, they are even cheaper in that vegetable, fruits, and meat products are mostly the leftovers from a morning street market, which is very popular in China to sell the freshest agricultural products harvested on the exact same day. And the clothes,

shoes, and other garment products are also on the cheap end of the spectrum in that they are purposely sold to recycling and other manual workers who normally do not invest much in their clothes because of the manual job they are working. Also, all different kinds of shampoos and soaps are sold on the street as well, and the vendor would kindly tell the customers which one is the “real” one and which is a “fake” product but cheap.



Figure 57: Photograph: Afternoon market outside *DXK Henancun*

The vendors normally have their regular space from their daily practices and they simply park their “wheels” on one side of the street and start selling immediately. While the vendors are operating their business on both sides of the road, the street is usually very crowded and filled with recycling trucks, buses, tricycles/vans which came back from their daily itinerant/community recycling work, parents who push their bicycles with their kid(s) sitting on the bike and some of the residents who live nearby and want to pick up some food on their way back home. The market would continue until around 7 pm or 8

pm depending on the seasonal sunset time. When the number of customers seems to decline, vendors start to leave by themselves. (Figure 57)

While the street market appears to be self-organized and as informal as it could be, there are also formal grocery stores and small retailers organized by different recycling companies. While recycling companies normally leased out the divided yard space inside the company to recycling yard buyers, the roadside houses are open for leasing to all kinds of businesses. The most popular businesses include grocery stores, small markets, restaurants, deli shop and truck services. Different from the afternoon street market, these businesses are more likely to be locally registered and operated formally with strict open hours and facilities like fridge and freezer inside. Because these stores are right outside the company gate, they are very convenient for migrant recyclers to buy grocery and other necessities. Since many migrants tend to buy grocery right before their meals, these stores with extended opening hours provide very customer-friendly services.

So the informal street market and formal roadside stores have well covered almost all the necessities for migrants who live in the *Henancun* region. Nor only do they offer convenience, but these services provide both a stable supply and an economic choice of the everyday necessities for the people who are nearby. In fact, they have made possible for the *Henancun* dwellers to sustain their living inside *Henancun* without going out to

the city at all.

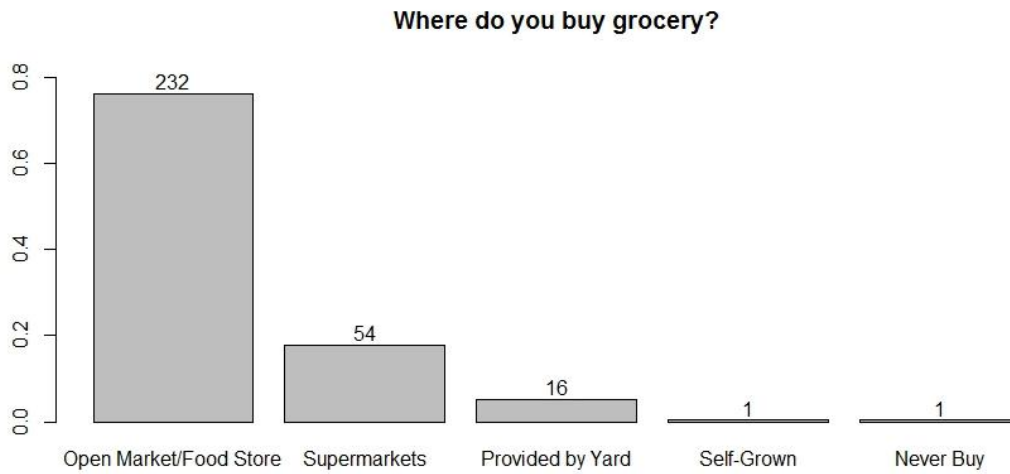


Figure 58: Chart: Where migrants buy groceries¹⁰⁸

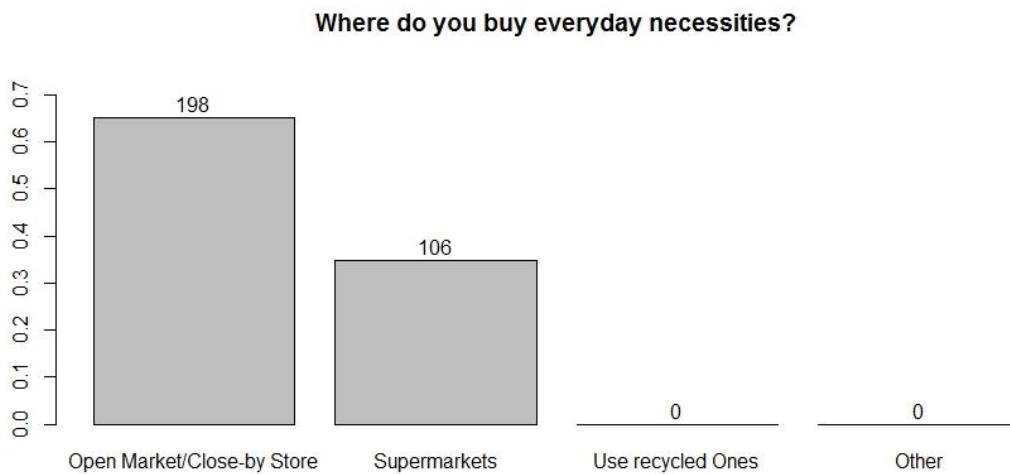


Figure 59: Chart: Where migrants buy other necessities¹⁰⁹

In continuation of the discussion above, Figure 58 and 59 have illustrated that majority of the migrants in the survey would purchase their everyday items, including grocery and other necessities at the open market and close-by food stores. About 20% would buy food from supermarkets which are considered not in the immediate range of *Henancun* and about 35% would buy everyday necessities from supermarkets. Thus, open market and

¹⁰⁸ See Appendix F. Q2.1 BUYFOOD.

¹⁰⁹ See Appendix F. Q.2.2 BUYOTHER

food stores along the street inside *Henancun* provided important sources for migrants to have the opportunity to stay exclusively inside *Henancun* for their living.

6.3.3.2 Education



Figure 60: Photograph: *Zhenhua* primary school at DXK area

As we have discussed in 5.2 (3), migrants do not have access to Beijing's local education and thus *Henancun* has created a vast educational need. Many migrant-run primary and middle schools emerged to provide education for migrants' children in and around *Henancun* areas. In addition, these schools are mostly initiated by the migrants themselves. For example, two popular schools around DXK area, *Zhiquan* and *Zhenhua*, which provide both primary and middle school education to nearby migrants' children, are both owned and operated by migrants from *Gushi* County. During demolition and relocation of *Henancun* and recycling companies, these schools also move with the migrants because their essential goal is to provide affordable and accessible education to

migrants' family. But these schools are referred to generally as “migrant schools¹¹⁰”.

(Figure 60)

6.3.3.2.1 Hometown schools vs. migrant schools in cities

Mr. Wan from *Zhenhua* has indicated that if nobody out migrates, there should be around 500 students (primary school) in his home township, but now there is only about 100 students. While most children are with their parents in cities, others are having education at the central town of *Gushi* County instead of their home township schools.

“There are so few students in our rural hometowns. When I was in our hometown ‘Central School,’ the school is a combination of high school, middle school, and primary school and there were several hundred students then. Later, high school is canceled, then the middle school is gone too and now only the primary school is still there. For my own child, I rented an apartment in the central town of *Gushi* county and my mom is taking care of my children for their education. Education resources, like in our school, are not as good as back home. At least teachers at hometown are formally registered teachers. Our teachers here are pretty good but not comparable with hometown teachers. 95% of our teachers have teaching certificate and the few without have taught for quite a long time so they have experience.”

Because *Hukou* has restricted the location to take the college entrance exam to be students' hometown, most children would go back to their hometown to take middle school and high school education because they need to get used to the fierce exam competition in the college entrance exam at their hometowns. Thus, this created an

¹¹⁰ 移民子弟学校

interesting dilemma that migrant schools are losing children while they grow up because the older they become, the more their parents want them to go home for an official and formal education. Like Mr. Wan has further indicated that

“Our primary school and ^{seventh} or 8th-grade middle school children won several awards and even top the competition in those Olympic math matches. But in their 9th grade, many children would go back to their hometown, especially the ones who have a good performance at school. There’s no hope to go to college if they continue their education here. But if they go back home, they could go to college. You can’t take the exam if you don’t have local *Hukou*, which is why many children went home in their 9th grade. We have two classes for each of the 7th and 8th grade, but only one class for 9th grade. At the end of their 9th grade, for the children who want to continue their education but have nowhere to go, I have contacted a *Dachang Shiyan* Boarding High School in *Sanhe* County of *Hebei* province. We sent them there. They can live there at the school, and because it’s not far, they can also come back to Beijing once a month to see their parents. We sent quite a few students there, and for students who perform well, we also send them to good schools such as *Changping* professional schools to learn some skills as well.”

Thus, we can see that migrant schools in *Henancun* serve as valuable educational opportunities for migrant workers nearby. However, they are in an awkward position in that they cannot provide as good an education as the hometown schools while in fact, they function as a temporary solution for migrants to keep their children with them in

their migration. With the college entrance exam linked with the *Hukou* status in China, students almost have to receive education at their hometown in order to get used to the educational system and learning style they need to use for taking the exam.

6.3.3.2.2 Instability

Schools are also very unstable. First, they also face similar demolition and relocation situation as the recycling companies. The reasons are almost the same because their land is also through leasing while there is no protection or guarantee on how long the lease would last before the next urban project that requests the land. Table 16 has shown the location changes for both *Zhenhua* and *Zhiquan* schools in *Dongxiaokou*. We can see that their migration path is very similar to the recycling companies. However, the locational instability is a much more severe problem for schools than for recycling businesses in that they need to build more houses for classrooms and set up a playground and other facilities as well.

Table 16: Location changes for the two schools in *DXK*

Year	<i>Zhenhua</i> school	Year	<i>Zhiquan</i> school
1997-99	<i>Datun Rd</i>	2000-2000	<i>Tongzhou</i>
1999-2001	<i>Wali west Village</i>	2000-2002	<i>Wali village</i>
2001-2002	<i>Hebei village</i>	2002-	<i>Dongxiaokou village</i>
2002-2004	<i>Xiejia village</i>	2004-	2 nd location: <i>Dongsanqi village, Beiqijia town</i>
2004-	<i>Dongxiaokou village</i>		

In addition, the Principal from *Zhenhua* School has further illustrated that students are not stable as well.

“The students are highly mobile. In our school, from the day we started a semester until the day before the summer/winter vacation, there are always students who come and go. It is almost too frequent. For those official and formal schools, which are based on school districts, the students are stable,

and their homes are right here. But for us, humans are floating around. If they move today, they won't live here anymore, then their child just move away. Every semester, we have about 300-400 students leaving and about 300-400 coming in. This situation is quite common, and the total number remains about the same.”

6.3.3.2.3 Informality

While the government has regulated that every child should take the nine-year compulsory education, migrant schools follow this rule as well. However, because official and formal schools are subsidized by the government to provide the “almost-free” education, migrant schools which are privately owned have to rely more on the money paid by parents to run the schools. While the local government also provides subsidies for students during the “school-year” ages, each student would receive 80 *yuan*/semester in primary schools or 130 *yuan*/semester in middle schools (in 2011). Migrant schools would return this money to students but they also charge students for education and books. For example, *Zhenhua* is charging each student 600 *yuan*/semester in total, while *Zhiquan* is charging 570 (education) +80 (books) *yuan*/semester. However, although this is not much money, migrant families sometimes still have difficulties in paying in full. The day I conducted my interview with the principal of *Zhiquan* school happened to be the day the school was collecting education and book fees and during the interview, one father came in and wanted to talk to the principal.

Because I did not explain to him about my research and IRB approval, I will not quote him here. But the principal said the situation is quite typical every semester, so I will repeat the situation in general. It was a hot day in August, and the father had sweat all

over his T-shirt. He said he needed some extra time in paying the money and explained that he was working as a construction worker nearby. Normally, he started working at 6am but today he took two hours off to come to school for the fees. He is about 50yuan short now, but his work will pay him in a couple of days. After receiving the permission to pay later in full, the father almost cried and said that he was just making money here and the child's mom is in their hometown. While he was taking care of his child by himself and working in construction, he did not know what to do. He cannot read and that was the exact reason why he wanted to make sure his child would not be like himself to be illiterate so that the child could avoid all the trouble like he was having. The principal nodded almost the whole time during the conversation and told me,

“There are not many parents like this, but this is not uncommon either. I just need to talk to him to see what is happening in his life. There are cases quite absurd, like last time someone couldn't pay the fee in full. He drank quite a bit and came to school and told us he was going to crash down the whole school. I just couldn't communicate with some parents like that.”

Thus, we can see that migrant schools not only provide accessible education, but also function informally to accommodate various situations faced by migrants. While many migrants think that the migrant schools serve more like a daycare center for their children, they also indicate that without those schools they would have no way to keep their children by their side in Beijing. On the one hand, migrant schools do partially satisfy the education demand from migrants; but on the other hand, they could not provide the high-quality education as what children would receive at hometowns either. However, in most migrants' view, the migrant schools function more like a daycare than a school because if

their children want to go to college, they have to go back home to receive better education.

6.3.3.3 Other services

There are also other services offered to accommodate migrants' need in the city such as transportation, truck rental, truck and car service, restaurants, and even hotels. These services mostly emerged by the market need. While most business runners are migrants, very occasionally one or two local village residents would also operate a small-scale business close to *Henancun*. I will not discuss these services one by one but together with the previously mentioned market and educational services, they make possible that *Henancun* becomes self-sustained. (Figure 61)



Figure 61: Chart: Other services (Top left: everyday market; Top right: car services; Bottom left: hometown restaurant; Bottom right: kindergarten)

6.3.4 Coping with Poor Housing in Beijing

In addition to the self-organized social facilities, housing has been an essential issue in migrants' life because one of the primary functions of *Henancun* is to provide residential locations for migrants in Beijing. However, housing situation inside *Henancun* is quite poor. Generally speaking, there are three primary sources of housing in *Henancun* area. The first ones are the yard buyers' houses. The recycling company built these houses inside each designated yard. Depending on the size of the yard, there are in general one or two one-story flat house(s) inside each yard when the yards are open for leasing. These houses are provided to the yard buyer families as part of their contract. The second type is the residential sections built by the recycling companies. These housing sections serve as important residential housing rental to accommodate either recycling workers or itinerant recyclers. (Figure 62) By living directly in or right next to the recycling companies, not only could itinerant recyclers save on transportation, but they become stable recycling materials sources for the yard buyers too. Also, the temporary or long-term recycling workers, who are conducting the sorting, truck loading and unloading work in different yards, also enjoy walking to their work in the morning as well. The third type of housing is in the residential areas of the village. These houses are either the housing provided by the local villagers or a stand-alone residential housing section built by either Beijing residents or migrants. These houses are usually in a better condition and targeting the families of construction workers in the region or the community recyclers who do not need to live by the recycling company and would like a quieter place to live. However, although these different housings are a little different in their sources, their

condition is quite similar. As figure 37 has shown, most of the houses are 10-20m² in size and per person housing area is lower than 10m².



Figure 62: Photograph: Various housing in *Henancun* (Top left: housing section of recycling companies; Top right: housing for electric appliance recyclers; Bottom left: housing section for workers and community recyclers; Bottom right: Yard buyer's house)

In fact, the housing situation has not changed much in the last 15-20 years, but migrants are quite content with the housing situation because the condition is already much better than their hometown rural housing. Meanwhile, there are several ways migrants cope with this situation to make their living better as well.

6.3.4.1 Investment?

Since the second and third types of houses are provided as rows of one-story flat houses migrants cannot change the housing structure at all. Any investment in the housing is nearly impossible. For the yard houses, in migrants' leasing contract with the recycling

company, the company requires that the provided homes not be allowed to be changed or reconstructed. Meanwhile, migrants are allowed to build additional one-story houses inside their yard for residential use, but the built houses will belong to the recycling company, which means in demolition, migrants' investment on additional houses are not compensatable. Thus, it further restricted migrants' willingness to build better houses for themselves. Thus, most migrants choose not to modify their rental houses or build additional houses for their stay in Beijing.

At the same time, because recycling companies are facing unstable urban political and social policies on their business, they are trying to minimize their investment in building the houses in the recycling yards as well because of the uncertainty of future compensation in unpredictable upcoming demolition events. Thus, the housing condition left almost unchanged since about 15-20 years ago.

However, although migrants are reluctant at investing in better housing, they are trying to make the rental houses as comfortable as possible. Since they could take all the appliances with them during relocation, they typically put serious considerations on purchasing all necessary electric appliance for their stay in Beijing. No matter which kind of houses they are living in, their houses normally have all appliances as a typical commodity houses in Beijing: TV, washing machine, fridge, electric fans, cooking stove, air conditioner, desktop computer and sometimes laptops because they have access to all different used items when they recycle. When recyclers purchase a used electric appliance from a local resident, they will test whether it works. After renovating and making sure it works, migrants would keep the machines in good shape before they make further decisions to sell to specialized recyclers or a second-hand used market. But all in

all, there is a huge second-hand used market in Beijing for the huge temporary migrant population. As Mr. Qian (Case 2) shows,

“Used items are perfect for us migrants because nobody is certain about where we will be next month. For example, I can buy a used fridge for 200 *yuan* just from my friend. Then when I need to move after three months, I can sell it directly back to him for about 170. I only lose 30 for using the fridge for three months. But if I buy a new one, the price dropped too much. They are not worth that much if you count the price of all the materials inside. There’s a big market for these used items because everyone here is a migrant and not sure about future.”

In the recycling market, all the items are evaluated for their recycling value instead of commodity value. For example, for Mr. Qian, a used air conditioner’s price only means the recycling price for the metal cover, plastic back cover, copper or steel wire, an electric motor, copper wires and the plastics that hold everything in place. He also told me that different brands of air conditioners cost differently and sell differently. Many companies nowadays started to use steels in their wires and electric motors simply because the material is much cheaper¹¹¹. But they are supposed to use copper in the motor because it can last longer than steel. Thus, although the price for those electric appliances such as washer, fridge, and air conditioners are similar, the recyclers almost immediately know their “real” value based on their brand, year of make and models.

Therefore, rather than investing in their housing, migrants tend to keep their investment at minimum. But interestingly, although the housing condition is not excellent, their

¹¹¹ Steel price is about 1-2*yuan*/kilogram, while copper is close to 50*yuan*/kilogram

living condition is well established through the recycling and used market, which gave migrants access to all used and affordable electric appliances.

6.3.4.2 Self-construction

Although migrants keep their investment on housing at a minimum, many are still willing to improve their living condition through various “clever” and “creative” self-constructions. These activities are considered “informal” because what they are building are “temporary” structures which could be easily removed any time when they need to. Among all the self-constructed structures, several are very common and make a difference in migrants’ lives.

6.3.4.2.1 Bathing room and restroom

A typical migrant rental house has two rooms: the living room right connected to the door and an inner bedroom. In many migrants’ home, they normally have the living room as a place for cooking, eating, washer machine and indoor hanging place to dry the washed clothes. And the bedroom would normally have one or two bed(s), a TV, a computer and sometimes an air conditioner partially fixed onto the window. However, two important necessary and standard rooms that are in commodity apartments are missing: the restroom and the bathing room.

Interestingly, public restrooms are built by the housing manager—either the recycling company or the housing section owner. The toilets, typically built in a traditional way by digging a hole and building squatting places on top of it, are built to serve about 10 to 15 houses right next to it. They are part of the public facilities that are provided to migrants. However, while migrants in rental houses cannot build or change their houses, the yard buyers sometimes would make a temporary restroom to get themselves through cold

winter nights in Beijing. This is not very common but still a self-construction that helps them in their stay in Beijing.

Meanwhile, bathing room is not provided in any of the rental houses in *Henancun*; instead, there are public bathing facilities that operate on the streets. But, since bathing does not need much space, many migrants choose to build their bathing shed by only putting together several used plastic or steel board together. This is very convenient for migrants' lives because they could have easy access to bathing right next to their house. During the summertime, almost all migrants use solar heated water as their source of hot water by putting up a black plastic bag or steel barrel on top of their bathing "construction." While these black plastic bags and steel barrels are specifically designed to become solar water tank, migrants only need to fill the bag or the tank in the morning then hot water would be available at night by receiving solar energy directly from the sun. Although these constructions are not allowed by the company or the housing managers, because they only take a small space for one person to take a bath and it also does not increase potential fire risks, the self-constructed bathing rooms have become a common tolerated practice among migrants. (Figure 63)



Figure 63: Photograph: Bathing facilities and public restroom

6.3.4.2.2 Temporary furnace

In the winter time, while the commodity apartments or houses are connected to the public heating system in the city, migrants do not have the luxury of receiving public heating service in *Henancun*. While most migrants in the housing sections would rely on putting more covers to bed at night with a little assistance from an air conditioner, yard buyers would normally have the option to install an external coal furnace to provide heating to their rooms. However, the use of coal furnace also depends on the weather condition in specific years. (Figure 64) For example, during my interview with a wood recycler, who was installing a removable furnace in *PC*, he told me that

“I would usually wait for the temperature to drop. Some years are fine for us. But it’s getting too cold now, so we decided to have furnace this year... You can buy furnace right in the village center. Several companies are making these specifically for us during the wintertime. And the furnace is designed to burn coal pieces, which are much cheaper than the honeycomb briquette. So, we install the burning part outside the house, then connecting the heating portion through a hole to the inside of the house. We will have this until spring; then we would take it off and save it for next year or resell as scrap.”



Figure 64: Photograph: Temporary furnace outside a yard buyer's house

6.3.4.2.3 Moveable house

One of the biggest self-built projects is to install a temporary removable house in the yards of the recycling companies. While migrants are restricted from building their housing inside a recycling yard, many would choose to install a temporary housing for themselves. As there are so many styles of houses available, migrants would either purchase an already-built container house or build their own by using recycled materials from various yard buyers in the recycling companies. While some make a temporary kitchen or temporary bathing room, some use the container/self-built housing as their actual house to reside in. While they enjoy the extra space provided by this temporary accommodation, the construction is not considered a waste of investment at all because the houses could be easily moved by either taking it apart or moving it as a whole during demolition. This is very convenient for the yard buyers who in general have more income but face serious demolition and relocation issues in their stay in Beijing. By using an easily built mobile house, they could improve their living condition a little by both avoiding the restrictions in their leasing contract and investing in a movable property they own forever.

While some of the mobile houses are well constructed like the shipping container houses, some self-built ones are in a relatively poor condition. For example, one house I visited has slightly tilted paperboard floors while the roofs and sidewalls are from scrap steels from construction wastes. However, no matter what condition they are in, they serve migrants' needs pretty well by both preserving their investment and increase their floor areas of their home in Beijing. (Figure 65)



Figure 65: Photograph: Various self-constructed housing

6.3.5 Coping with Unstable Income

Last but not least, while the migration is unstable, what migrants' business can bring them is almost all through income. While migrant-run recycling out-compete their official counterparts through informal activities which cut out all the unnecessary spending for the migrant business, the informal activities are always the way to keep

recycling alive in Beijing. As informality could help migrants win their competition against the formal recycling, the competition among migrants themselves has harmed the profitability in recycling activities. Thus, although profitability is not directly hurt by the structural barriers we mentioned earlier, it is the most important issue for migrants to sustain their living in Beijing. Migrants have developed several coping strategies to strengthen their profitability in their business, and again we can consider them to be either formal or informal way in coping with the over-competition issue.

6.3.5.1 Formal strategies

6.3.5.1.1 Specialization

Since community recyclers' income is relatively stable because their materials resource is from the community they are assigned to, itinerant recyclers and yard buyers have several ways to cope with the issue of over-competition. For itinerant recyclers, the most typical and formal method to increase their profit is to specialize in certain types of items and become an expert in trading. As Mr. Qian told me "to make money in this itinerant recycling business, the most important thing is a good eye," by which he is referring to the experience to be able to tell the price by a simple glance at the item. For example, by recycling electric appliances for over 15 years, he can tell the price of an item by brand, year, and model of a particular item. Basically, the money is made on the accumulated experiences but as he said, "we make mistakes all the time because you thought you knew some brand; suddenly they just changed their materials."

In *Henancun*, in addition to the specialized yard buyers, many recyclers choose to specialize in certain materials as well. For example, as *Henan* recyclers are in every recycling business, many *Hebei* recyclers focus on furniture, appliance, steel, plastic and

PET recycling as their strategies to take advantage of their hometown land availability which is very close to Beijing. While steel, plastics, and PET are recycled inside the recycling yards, furniture and appliances are recycled in a different manner. At about dusk, the furniture and appliance recyclers would group up at the several entrances of *Henancun* to buy their interested items directly from itinerant and community recyclers before they enter the recycling market. Then when they have a full truckload, they sent them directly back to their hometown factories. In those factories, carpenters and workers would try to fix and renovate the recycled furniture and appliances before they sell them in the used market in their hometown towns or county centers.

Similarly, the steel scraps are usually shipped back to migrants' hometowns after they reached a truckload. Then based on the market, they would keep the steel scraps for a while to wait for a better market price. For plastics, the major plastics recycling center of northern China is at *Wen'an* County of *Hebei* province. And most of the plastic recyclers are associated with specific family factories in *Wen'an* to process the recycled plastic materials. PET recyclers are also mostly from *Hebei* province. Since PET plastics are an expensive material for the garment industry, the demand for PET plastics has been increasing since China is becoming a world's factory for all kinds of clothes. Thus, after they have purchased PET plastics as bottles from the itinerant and community recyclers, they normally have a processing line inside their yard first to separate the bottle from the caps; then to shatter them into pieces, and further to rinse them through hot water for three times to separate the PET from the cover. After packing them into large sack bags, they can be sold to the factories directly as a raw material. (Figure 66)

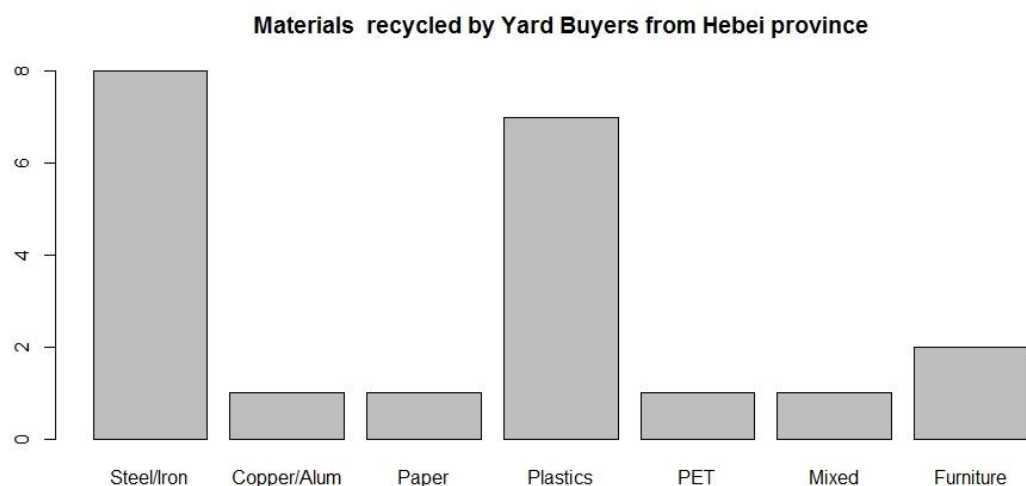


Figure 66: Chart: Materials recycled by *Hebei* yard buyers

The specialization has provided migrant recyclers the opportunity to accumulate materials to large quantities. With the constant offering of large amounts of certain materials, the buyers and factories would usually offer a better price for building long term trading relationships with them. All in all, recycling is a buy-in-retail and sell-in-bulk business. By specializing in a particular item or materials, migrant yard buyers can build a better reputation for providing a stable purchasing yard for the community and itinerant recyclers while also build trust with their customers by offering a stable flow of the materials in bulk. This strategy is quite commonly used in recycling and still serves as an important business strategy.

6.3.5.1.2 Contract

In addition to specializing in certain items/materials, many recyclers also manage to secure their recycling materials inflow by signing a contract with various parties such as factories, construction sites, commercial business, government departments, and various large-scale conferences. Through these contracts, migrants are able to run their yard

buyer recycling business at a farther location from the central city to avoid the relatively high cost of leasing space close to the city.

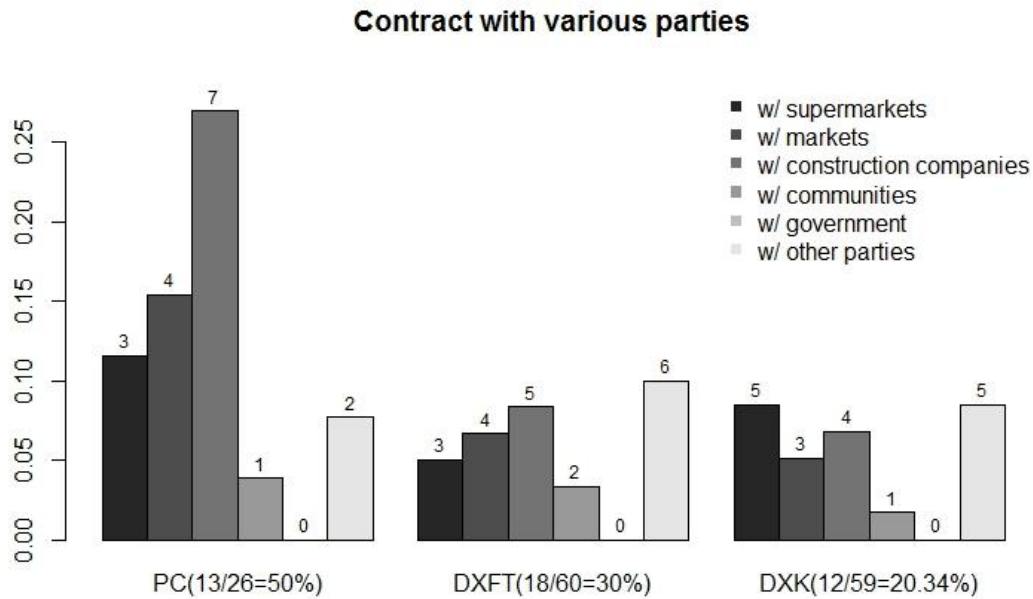


Figure 67: Chart: Yard buyers sign contract with various parties for their business¹¹²

Figure 67 has shown that out of the total of 145 yard buyers in our questionnaire, 43 yards (29.66%) have signed contracts with various parties to collect their recyclable materials. But the situation is quite different from place to place. *DXK* and *DXFT* are relatively closer to the central city, and their yard buyers focus mainly on the residential recyclable materials. Meanwhile, *PC* is far from the central city, so the yard buyers' business in *PC* relies more on contacts with various parties in Beijing. As shown in Figure 60, while about 20% and 30% of yard buyers have contracts in *DXK* and *DXFT*, exactly half of the recycling yard buyers in *PC* are relying on recycling contracts with various parties. Also, recycling yards in *PC* has more contracts with construction sites. This is because many recycling yards in *PC* are steel recyclers to take advantage of the relatively cheap rent for leasing larger operating spaces. Interestingly, none of the

¹¹² See Appendix. Q1.18 CT_SM, CT_OM, CT_CSTRCT, CT_COMMUNITY, CT_GOV, CT_OTHER

recycling yards are associated with any government department. However, although contracts could provide a secured commodity inflow for yard buyers, it is not a guarantee for making more money in their recycling business.

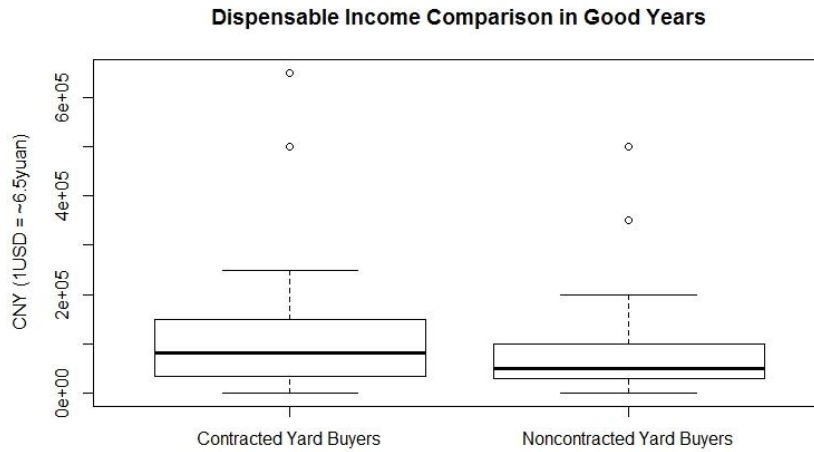


Figure 68: Chart: Disposable income comparisons in good years for yard buyers¹¹³

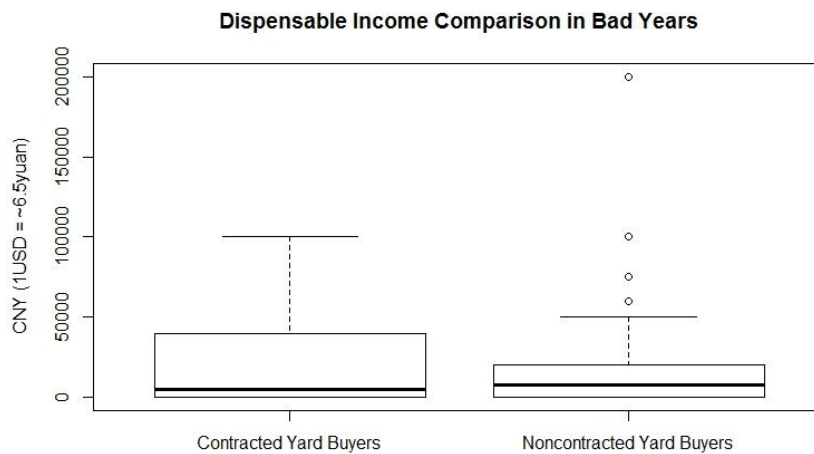


Figure 69: Chart: Disposable income comparisons in bad years for yard buyers¹¹⁴

Figure 68 and 69 have additionally illustrated the disposable income distribution for contracted and non-contracted yard buyers during good years and bad years. Figure 68 shows that during a good year, contracted yard buyers have higher incomes than their

¹¹³ See Appendix F. Q3.5 DISPINCH.

¹¹⁴ See Appendix F. Q3.5 DISPINCL.

non-contracted counterparts. This further confirms our assumption that a formal contract would help migrants to have a better income. However, figure 69 further demonstrates that during a bad year, the median of contracted yard buyers' income is lower than the non-contracted yard buyers. Interestingly, this is also understandable in that contracts are mostly signed as a fixed price to buy all the materials from the company. During a bad year, the price would drop significantly. However, since the contract price was decided when the price was high, the recycling yard buyers would inevitably lose the profit margin to the pre-set high contract price. Meanwhile, the non-contracted yard buyers could adjust their purchasing price at any time according to the market change, which could prevent them from losing too much money during a bad year.

Therefore, the commonly used formal strategies to stabilize and secure migrants' recycling business are specialization and contract. These two strategies have also made recycling a highly competitive and professional business. In addition to these formal strategies to stabilize the business and increase profits, migrants also take various informal ways to accomplish the same goal.

6.3.5.2 Informal strategies

The informal economy is widely understood as a business that is "unregulated by the institutions of society, in a legal and social environment in which similar activities are regulated (Castells and Portes, 1989:12)." Further, Roberts (1994) explains that informal economy is not referring to the inherently illegal activities, but instead, it is "legal activities that are carried out illegally by avoiding one or more applicable state regulations (Roberts, 1994:7)." The recycling activities in Beijing fall well into this category. Migrants in recycling also take various informal strategies to cope with

different structural barriers and to make an additional profit in their recycling business.

The strategies I will discuss here only cover a small portion of the different mild "informal" ways migrants take in their business, but their strategies are not limited to these methods.

6.3.5.2.1 Make extra money from becoming familiar

Because most migrants in recycling business came through chain migration, hometown familiarity became a natural bond to ease the business in trading. Gradually, the hometown relationships expand to include other migrants in the business as well.

However, being familiar with each other could lead to a smooth trading process and this network is reformed through repetitive visits to the same vendors as well. While this relationship exists between community and itinerant recyclers, the most significantly affected relationship in recycling is between the yard buyers and the itinerant/community recyclers.

Since itinerant/community recyclers are working directly with the local residents, they determine the inflow volume of recyclable materials. Thus, the non-contracted yard buyers normally tend to build a long-term relationship with itinerant/community buyers to secure their materials inflow. For certain recyclers who could bring long-term and large-volume materials, yard buyers would pay them a bit more than the market price to secure their relationship and encourage their next visit. During my interview with Mr. Zhu (Case 11) as a paper yard buyer, he told me that he knew almost all the itinerant and community recyclers who came to his yard. "I knew these people very well because they came over all the time. For a few of them who consistently bring high-quality and large-quantity materials, I would pay them a bit more. First, their materials are worth the

money because they already sort them a bit. Also, I want to make sure that they would come to my yard all the time."

Meanwhile, most of the itinerant and community recyclers also indicate that they typically only go to about 2 to 3 yards for one material to have a good relationship and save themselves from the sudden shock that one yard might stop doing business one day. But all in all, while the relationship is reinforced through their everyday businesses, trust and connection are built between the yard buyers and the itinerant/community recyclers. Further, hometown relationship based familiarity has become a significant social capital that helps migrants to better their business and livelihood in Beijing mutually. And gradually, the hometown bonded connections as a form of social capital has become an important factor in the recycling business and an ethnic economy starts to emerge and dominate recycling business in Beijing.

6.3.5.2.2 Making extra money by working more

One important feature for migrant recyclers to win their competition against the state-owned business is that their informal business operating styles make themselves free of administrative burden. While the competition becomes history after state-owned companies gradually lost their business and land, their informal business operation lingers on. One typical informal working style in recycling could be reflected by their working hours and working days since their money is solely based on recycling activities, which means they have no official 40-hour work time during weekday or weekend time at all.

Based on my observations with several yard buyers, recycling yard is open for business from about 5:30 am or 6:00 am and work until past midnight during the summertime.

However, the work is not formal, and when some itinerant/community recyclers want to sell their materials past midnight, they would directly go over to the yard house and knock on the door until the business runner comes over to buy their materials. After the trade, the yard buyer would go back to sleep since that is not a busy time for business. Same things happen at night as well, and Mr. Zhu even complains to me that he couldn't sleep well because "there is this one itinerant recycler who always comes around 00:30 at night and he has to sell his items at that time. I never wait for him, but it's always right at the moment when I fall asleep when he comes over and knocks on the door. Because he always brings his materials to us, it's hard to say no, and it has been this way all the time."

In addition to a very flexible working hour, they also never have weekends since residential wastes are coming out constantly. Particularly, the weekend is usually the busy time because that is when local residents would have some time to organize and sell their recyclable materials. So basically, the recycling business is open almost all the time, with only a few exceptions. Figure 70 has shown that heavy rain and snow have the strong impacts on migrants' recycling work, while heavy wind does not affect the recycling as much. Additionally, fog almost only has some impacts on the itinerant recyclers. But among all different types of recyclers, community recyclers are not impacted as much as other recyclers and only less than 30% are affected by heavy rain, while less than 20% are affected by other weathers. In addition to these weather situations, they are rarely affected by any other reasons to stop their business.

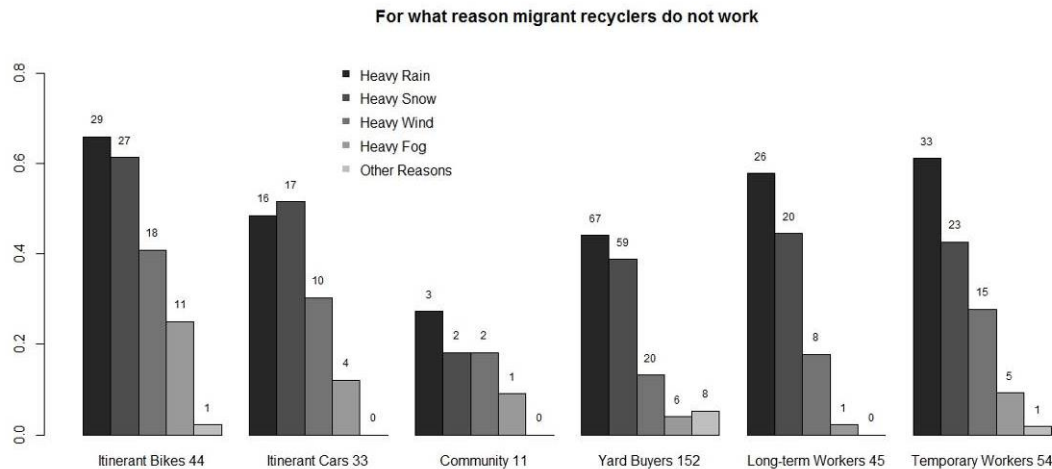


Figure 70: Chart: For what reasons, migrant recyclers do not work¹¹⁵

6.3.5.2.3 Making extra money from the yard

While itinerant and community recyclers' businesses are mostly based on one-on-one trade, there are little informal tricks they could do to increase their business. But sadly, during my interview with a group of recycling market managers in *Chaoyang* district, one manager very proudly told me about his famous invention for recycling business: a scale, which was broadly received as a business standard to "help" recyclers to make more profit and save on spending. But as recycling is always a cash business, there are a lot of issues like this that nobody would normally notice unless he or she knows someone from the inside. Besides these not-so-great informal activities, the cash business has also inspired the full potential of recycling when materials move through the recycling system. When recycling was run as a formal business, all standard procedures have limited the "reuse" part of the recycling business. However, since migrants have a very flexible recycling style, a lot of previously nonexistent customers emerge in the recycling yards too. As they provided an opportunity for yard buyers to make extra money on their

¹¹⁵ See Appendix F. Q1.7 DTWK_RAIN, DTWK_SNOW, DTWK_WIND, DTWK_FOG, DTWK_OTHER.

recyclable stock, it also increases the chance for reusing the material before they are treated as "resources." Although several of the following activities might be on the edge of being either illegal or informal, they function so perfectly to exhaust every item's full potential before they are remade into resources.

Table 17: Informal activities in migrant recycling yard for extra profit

Type	Activities in the recycling yard
Paper	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In the paper pile, cash belongs to the person who spots it first. Interestingly, recycling workers were able to recover over 2000yuan in the sealing part of some unopened gift packages (possibly for bribing). 2. "Book pickers" are allowed to enter the book pile, and search for whatever used books they think are still valuable. The books are sold by kilograms but at a higher price than the recycling price. These books will be sold again at used book markets or street markets. 3. Large and clean corrugated boxes will be saved to sell to specific factories for a better price. The boxes will be measured and reshaped into smaller corrugated boxes to be used by mailing and delivery companies again. 4. Nice unused notebooks will be saved by the yard buyer families themselves, and they will be reused in their everyday accounting. 5. Some paper recycling yard also signs a contract with supermarkets to recycle their corrugated packaging boxes. The recyclers illustrated that the price they use to win the bidding is too high to make any profit through recycling. What they are interested in are the deluxe brand fruit boxes, which will later be sold on the black market at a higher price. The used fruit boxes will be reused again.
Plastics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clean toys will be directly given to yard buyers' children to play with. 2. The yard buyer family would also repack the leftovers from shampoo and body wash bottles to use by themselves. 3. Sometimes, people would also sell medical plastics to them too, although the activities are highly restricted.
Wood	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Model builders would come to wood recyclers to pick the pieces they want for their model building hobbies. 2. Furniture recyclers would also buy recycled wood materials to fix their recycled furniture. 3. Local residents would also come to buy pieces for their hobbies such as patio gardening.
Metal	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Model builders would come to select the right pieces of metal for their hobby. 2. Sometimes, nice and useable items would also come in large quantity from certain factories or organizations. Yard buyers would reuse the items as well.

Table 17: (cont'd)

PET bottle	1. Special award hunting. As all water and juice bottles are made of PET, the PET recycling yard is filled with recycled bottles. While many companies have the promotion printed on bottle cap for a cash price, or an additional bottle, migrant workers who sort the bottles by color would check each bottle cap for potential award. While the bottles arrive in a large quantity, these collected caps cannot be exchanged for cash directly. However, there is a special group of people who are doing the award cap hunting business. They would arrive at the PET recycling yard by motorcycles then migrant workers would take their collected cap to trade with him one after another. Then the "hunter" would sell these caps to retailers for a lower price than the award price; then the retailers could also make money on the awarding caps as well. It is a win-win-win situation.
Transport	1. While each recycling yard has their specific shipping route to the factories or next customer, they know the height limit for their route. Thus, many recyclers would overload their trucks by about a foot to reduce their transportation cost. For example, while the height limit is 4m in the city, the truck for paper recycling would be loaded to about 4.4m to ship more each time but also to stay under the height limit through the bridges on the way.

These activities (Table 17) have increased the recycling profits in the recycling yard and they further make full potential of the use value for all of their recycled items. While the recycling business is based on cash trade, these informal activities are inevitable, and to some extent, they are favored not only by yard buyers but also by various local residents as well.

Meanwhile, there are other informal activities in their recycling exercise. When I first visited a paper recycling yard in 2012, a yard worker is spraying water on the corrugated boxes. While they first told me that was a way to keep the dust down during truck loading, later they admitted that the water is mostly for adding weight to the paper pile before they are sold to the paper packaging companies (figure 71). But depending on the level of wetness, paper packaging companies may cut weight on the received paper materials. While the price of recyclable paper is going down, the paper recycling yard also complains about the high water price that spraying water on paper might be no longer

worth the effort. However, these forms of informal practices are invisible and considered as a business secret in recycling different materials.



Figure 71: Photograph: Spraying water in paper recycling as an informal strategy

6.3.5.2.4 Making extra money from acting as a group

As migrants have built vertical connections through hometown based relationship, horizontal connections have also contributed to materialize the social capital of ethnic economy. Since the recycling business is operated by hometown friends, relatives, and acquaintances, they also work together as a group in seeking better business positions in their trade. As some yard buyers' business relies heavily on contracts with different parties to secure their material inflow, nowadays migrants also work as a group to win the bidding-based contracts. Since most recyclers who recycle the same material know each other and even have the same hometown, it is quite easy for them to work out a preferred deal with the factory or business. For example, Mr. Zhou (Case 5) has shared his experience with me:

“When you see people bidding for a contract with a company, most recyclers already know each other. But they pretend they don't. When a

bidding event is open, if one recycler first told everyone else that he wants the contract, generally speaking, nobody else would try to compete with him. So, he will tell everybody about his bidding price, then everyone else would bid with a lower price to make sure he wins it. Then he will give people some “taxi” money for transportation to come over and help him. Then when there’s another bidding event, he would come too to help others. So, this is how it works around bidding in recycling.”

Also, he further illustrates that

“Nobody could win the competition against *Henan* people in recycling. For example, if I come here to do recycling, almost everyone is from my hometown. And they would know that I will work in recycling for a long time. While the recycling company knows that *Henan* migrants could work in recycling for a long time, it is also a protection for their business. Now we already have this network that covers the whole China. In less than one day, we could know where certain items are at a high price, where they are being sold at a low price. When we are in recycling, we communicate with each other all the time. I often call my friends in *Shaanxi, Guangdong, Fujian, Zhejiang* about pricing. Because recycling materials typically cannot be shipped in long distance because the price changes so fast. Let’s say you ship out a truckload today for a good price far away, when you get there after several days, and the price has already changed. But when we know the price all over China, we have a sense of feeling about the general trend for the price.”

Therefore, in *Henancun*, the domination of recycling business by *Henan* migrants has created an ethnic economy advantage for themselves. And the ethnic economy has further materialized into extra profit when migrants are doing business with other parties outside their realm defined by their ethnicity. This situation is quite a common strategy for ethnic businesses to cope with the social and political barriers they generally face in their business.

6.3.5.2.5 .com generation

Recycling in Beijing has changed vastly from a formal state owned company to an informal migrant business. Nowadays, migrant recyclers also enjoy the new technologies through different online services. While many yard buyers have computers at their home, they are advertising their business through various search engines and online social media to promote and extend their businesses. Based on the most commonly used search engine www.baidu.com¹¹⁶, searching “waste recycle Beijing (废品回收北京)” will return over 1,500,000 items and most of them are advertising migrants’ own recycling companies with full contact information on there. While this research does not cover this topic during the time it was designed, online business has expanded the scale of recycling business in Beijing.

Interestingly, when I took a bus to leave *Henancun* one day in September, a local unhappy couple, probably in their 70s, was on the same bus. They dressed very nicely and seemed very annoyed by the loud, dusty and messy situation in *Dongxiaokou*. While I asked them if they are from here in *Dongxiaokou*, they told me that they wanted to buy a used bed, and on baidu.com, they found a recycling company who posted that they have

¹¹⁶ Baidu.com is the most widely used search engine in China because Google is banned.

different furniture in stock. Following the address, they took a bus and came to *Dongxiaokou*. However, after seeing the recycling yards in the recycling companies, they could not find the advertized recycling company at all. While they were quite in shock to see the “messy” situation around the recycling companies, they believed this was not the right place for them. They also never knew the existence of these recycling enclaves at all. After complaining about the messy and unordered situation around *Dongxiaokou*, they said they would never come back again.

There is still a difference between what people think an online advertisement should bring and what the reality really is.

Therefore, migrants have taken various strategies to cope with the unfriendly and stigmatized social environment which is associated with migrants’ nonlocal *Hukou* status in Beijing. While some of the strategies are formal, some are informal. However, their crucial goals are the same: to stabilize the business and to make a better profit. In the past 25-30 years, migrants have tried to secure their migration through chain migration, then to avoid the brutal *Shourong* policies by entering a recycling yard, and further to develop a self-institutionalized *Henancun* with various social service, later to improve their housing condition based on a minimum investment strategy and to promote a favored recycling business relying on ethnic economy as their social capital through all different kinds of formal and informal activities. While migrants are coping with their *Hukou* based structural barriers, recycling companies also face their own *informality* based structural barriers.

6.4 Recycling Companies in Beijing

While Beijing's policy on recycling has been changing these years, recycling companies face various risks on their long-term existence and there still lacks a standardized model for them to follow. Therefore, unlike the recycling migrants who take almost all kinds of formal and informal strategies, recycling companies' coping strategies appear entirely exploratory. Different recycling companies seem to have different understandings about the policies as well as socioeconomic conditions they are facing. Thus, strategically, they took completely different routes in achieving their own interests. While some recycling companies tend to build the company as a market, some recycling markets try to register as a recycling company. While some companies try to localize themselves to get closer to the government, some businesses try to stay as far away from Beijing as possible. This is quite intriguing because as an observer and researcher, it seems that nobody is confident about the future of the recycling companies at all and there still lacks the guidance about how to build a qualified recycling company in Beijing.

6.4.1 Market vs. Company

Nowadays, although almost all recycling companies unanimously take the form of "land-leasing, land-dividing and subleasing to yard buyers" as their business strategy, the recycling business type is actually along two completely different routes. Technically speaking, the way recycling companies are operating is under the category of a "market" instead of a "company." However, since there is no formal guidance on which one is allowed or not allowed, the recycling companies are operating based on their own preferences or choices.

6.4.1.1 Recycling market

The reason recycling companies should be classified as a market is because the “company” does not carry out any “recycling” operation; instead, their income is solely from their rental business with different yard buyers. Although recycling companies very rarely take this route in their business registration, *FYXY* Company registers as a market. Instead of registering with the Commerce Department, markets need to be registered with the Industrial and Commercial Bureau. Since only Beijing’s local resident could be the license holder for any “market” in Beijing, this only works for the local owners. One of the most important benefits of registering as a market is that all the recycling yards are allowed to register for their own recycling operation licenses, in another word, their own recycling company license. Also, recycling “market” license has a very low tax rate that is imposed on their income from rent. As the board member of *FYXY* Company explained, “This is the official way to run recycling because technically speaking, all of the recycling companies like us are not operating recycling activities by ourselves. And, this is the form that is defined as the right form by the government as well.”

This is partially true because the local government did classify all recycling companies as recycling markets in their 2001 government documentation *JingShangFaJiao*(2001)#30, and also has further plans to build official or formal recycling markets in different districts. However, the government also revoked its previous statement in 2006 by stating that the government is promoting the replacement of the traditional recycling markets by “professional sorting centers” in *JingShangJiaoZi*(2006)#52. Apparently, the government has realized that the “market” style of recycling operation is not wanted by the city because of a market’s appearance as low-density, low tech and messy style of operation

which is not following Beijing's "global city" image. The local government has directly stated that the recycling markets will be replaced and they are no longer the way recycling should be operated. Paradoxically, while the government is against the market "style," they missed the fact that most recycling companies are not using "market" license at all; instead, most of them are registered as a recycling company in Beijing. While *FYXY* has a local owner, most recycling companies are owned by migrants, especially after 2003 when *JingZhengFa*[2003]#8 freed the local *Hukou* requirement in recycling business registration. Since migrants are still not allowed to register their business as a "market" in Beijing, many of them are forced to register their businesses as "recycling companies." Thus, although most recycling companies have the business style of a recycling market, what they registered with the local government is officially the "recycling companies."

This situation then becomes very awkward. While the government is trying to stop the "market" style of the recycling business, in operation they are in fact fighting against the few "correctly" registered "locally owned" recycling markets while the majority of recycling markets were able to escape the ruling because they are "forced" to "incorrectly" register as recycling companies in Beijing. While their operating style is almost identical to the "correctly" registered *FYXY* market, they cannot enjoy the benefit of low tax rate; instead, they have to pay as a company for their business tax as VAT. But this is another issue since they are not operating recycling exercises by themselves and they do not have sales receipt at all. Meanwhile, instead of letting every recycling yard to have their own recycling license in the market, the recycling yards in these companies are

part of the recycling company and individual yard could use their company license for their recycling business.

Figure 72 has demonstrated that majority of the yard buyers are using the recycling market's license in their operation, which further confirmed our illustration that most recycling companies are registered as recycling companies instead of a more “proper” recycling market license.

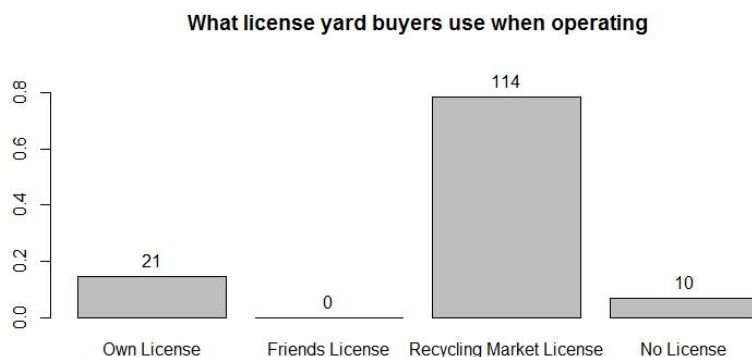


Figure 72: Chart: What license yard buyers use in their recycling business¹¹⁷

6.4.1.2 Recycling company

After 2003, anyone could register with the Commerce Department to start a recycling company. Although the City Ministry of Commerce has stopped the registration for recycling businesses in 2006, numerous recycling companies have established in Beijing. During this time, several migrant recyclers also started their own market-type recycling companies. Although this license only allows them to run recycling operation by themselves, opening a market-based recycling company is in a gray area as they could argue that yard buyers are part of the company in their recycling business. However, most of the companies start to face tax issues as the city government has gradually canceled

¹¹⁷ See Appendix F. Q1.16 LICENSE.

the tax refund policy in the recycling business. On the one hand, these companies are not recycling based which makes their earnings not based on sales at all; on the other hand, and these companies also tend to register in some industrial parks in other cities to enjoy the tax-free policy in their business. Thus, we can see that although registering as recycling companies might bring the recycling market potential tax issues locally, migrant recyclers manage to avoid it by registering in another city. Later in 2006, while the city is introducing the policy to replace recycling markets with “professional sorting centers,” these companies do not catch any attention because their operation is thought to be in line with the government’s intention. However, at the same time, recycling business which registered as recycling markets ran into trouble.

As I have illustrated in 5.3.4 (3), *FYXY* Company is owned by a local Beijing resident and his local *Hukou* status gave him the privilege to register his recycling company as a market. However, following the 2006 government documentation, the “market” type of recycling business is no longer the favored business style by the local government. Thus, in 2007, *FYXY* started its own paper packaging company as a “professional sorting center” inside the *FYXY* recycling market. As part of *FYXY*, the new paper recycling company is registered as a sub-company of *FYXY*. However, because the paper packaging company is locally registered, they have to follow the new tax rules in 2008 to pay VAT in full in and after 2011. Because the paper packaging company cannot obtain the receipt from purchasing the recycled paper materials, they are paying the high VAT rate of 17% based on their full sales price. While the profit margin associated with paper packaging company is way less than 17%, they started to have a deficit in this business even though

it strictly follows the guidance from government requirement in building a formal and legal business.

6.4.2 To Formalize or to Informalize

As illustrated above, we have witnessed a quite strange competition between the “formal” and “informal” recycling businesses in Beijing. While different departments of the local government are not coordinated on setting an overall developing plan for the recycling business, the formal business is losing their business to the strict government rules instead of losing to their “informal” counterparts. On the contrary, the informal activities, such as registering non-locally, recycling market registering as recycling companies and avoiding local taxation, migrants owned “informal” recycling companies can avoid all the restrictions in the city. Also, with the *Hukou* limitation, migrants are still treating their stay in Beijing as temporary, which makes their operation in Beijing very flexible as well. If their operation is not allowed in Beijing anymore, they still have their hometown as a potential escaping plan. However, the recycling business owned by a local resident does not have the opportunity to escape from Beijing, on the contrary, they are restricted in Beijing to continue running the recycling business no matter how the economic situation turns out to be.

All in all, different government departments design their own policies, and there still lacks an overall design to regulate or standardize recycling business in Beijing. Following the policies from one department, a recycling company might be harmed by the policies of another department. This situation creates a trap for recycling companies who want to operate as “formal” as possible simply because the “formality” standard is still in the air. However, “informal” recycling businesses are favored in this process because their

flexibility allows them to avoid the strict regulations set by various government departments.

Therefore, the “informal” status of recycling is not inherently “informal.” On the contrary, the constantly changing urban policies as well as government’s pathological interpretation on recycling business have gradually channeled recycling business into informality and informality has become recycling business’ inevitable coping strategy to survive in the society.

6.5 Summary

In this chapter, I have discussed the coping strategies taken by migrant recyclers and recycling companies to deal with the structural barriers, associated with *Hukou* and *informality* respectively, in the city. As we could see that almost all the coping strategies are pointing at two goals in the city: to stabilize and secure their business and to increase their profits in the city.

In this process, while migrants are locked in a temporary status in their migration to the city, they have taken all different kinds of formal and informal coping strategies to make their migration successful. Following chain migration, migrants could have a more secured status in the city when they arrive. Then by escaping the unfriendly and stigmatizing political and social policies such as *Shourong*, migrants started to live inside different recycling company yards. After these yards had started to emerge as a dominant recycling business style, *Henancun* began to emerge and flourish with all types of self-institutionalized social services. While the recycling companies function as a protection for their existence, they also incorporated different family projects with minimum investment to make better their living in Beijing. Later, when the recycling business is

more and more stable and secured, migrants also took all kinds of formal and informal strategies to make extra income from their businesses. The hometown based recycling, as a form of ethnic economy, has gradually started to materialize its social capital through acting as a group in the business as well. Through these strategies, recycling business in Beijing has developed to be a full fledged ethnic economy. Although “assimilation,” which is common in international immigration cases in the Western countries, is still not feasible due to *Hukou* limitations, migrants’ stay in Beijing has become self-sustainable and been strengthened by the shared ethnic identity as “migrant” recyclers.

Meanwhile, although migrant recyclers have successfully carved out a piece of their own living and working space in Beijing, their organizers, in the forms of recycling companies, still faces uncertain government policy issues in Beijing. Further, because there still lacks an organized cross-government policy on recycling business, various policies that are from different government departments have forced “formal” recycling into a controversial position between the formal and informal routes as their coping strategies. While business formality and standards are still lacking in the city, recycling companies are channeled into taking “informal” coping strategies to deal with the paradoxical government policies. While recycling companies seem to be able to survive through “informality,” the informal situation of recycling business might further cause the government to put more strict rules on their existence.

Therefore, we can see that migrant recyclers and recycling companies have taken various coping strategies to deal with the structural barriers they are facing in Beijing. While neither *Hukou* nor cross-government coordination would change significantly in the near future, migrants and recycling companies will continue with their current coping

strategies to stabilize and secure their business as well as to maximize their profit in Beijing.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS

“Henancun? I never heard of such a place in Beijing.”

---- a Henan community recycler in Beijing

The term *Henancun* has emerged since the late 1980s, together with other ethnic enclaves such as *Zhejiangcun*, *Xinjiangcun*, and *Anhuicun* in Beijing. *Henancun* is also viewed in the category of the typical self-organized placed based rural-migrant enclaves in the city with its specific ethnic business of recycling. As *Henancun* stays nearly invisible to the locals in Beijing, they bare various criticisms and stigmatization from the local government through different political and social policies with a pathological view that their appearance does not suit Beijing’s modern image as an emerging global city. Spatially, their existence in Beijing also faces challenges from repetitive demolition events to accommodate the fast-paced urban infrastructure development, urban renewal, and various commodity housing projects.

By focusing on three dynamic *Henancun* locations in the north (*DXK*, *Changping* District), east (*PC*, *Chaoyang* District) and southwest (*DXFT*, *Daxing* and *Fengtai* districts) of Beijing, this dissertation research has tries to understand the emergence and development of *Henancun*, the structural or institutional barriers in the city and migrants’ strategies in coping with these constantly changing urban policies as illustrated in three main chapters. Based on 304 valid questionnaire respondents in the three *Henancun* areas,

over 60 unstructured and semi-structured interviews with various stakeholders in and of *Henancun* and close observations with their recycling business practice, this project has revealed that *Henancun* should not be simply classified as one of the “migrant enclaves” that lie on the fringe of Beijing for affordable housing or land availability; rather, relying on a vivid, active and dynamic business structure, migrants in *Henancun* have built and dominated an effective and efficient recycling system and tried their best to adapt to various unfriendly, stigmatizing and discriminating, if not devastating, urban social, political and economic policies to survive and thrive in the city. With tears and blood, migrants have successfully developed a self-sustaining parallel society: *Henancun* in Beijing is not only for migrants to make a living in their migration, but it represents one of the only few ways to enjoy China’s rapid economic development as a rurally registered Chinese person in the city.

Based on three interrelated but stand-alone chapters, this dissertation research has tried to understand *Henancun* and its dwellers from three different angles: the history and geography of *Henancun*, various structural and institutional barriers faced by migrant recyclers and recycling companies and their coping strategies to continue their livelihood and business in Beijing. With many surprising moments in my fieldwork, this research revisits the typical view on *Henancun* as an indestructible whole to be represented as one of the migrant enclaves in Beijing and tries to illustrate the vivid inner structure that helps *Henan* migrants to successfully join, thrive and dominate in Beijing's recycling business. Also, their success is not by luck; instead, they broke through series of structural and institutional barriers and constraints using various formal and informal, sometimes even illegal, strategies in the past 25 years.

7.1 Henancun: A Complex Recycling Enclave

The term *Henancun* emerged as one example of the migrant enclaves in Beijing around the late 1980s in the academic literature (Fan and Taubmann, 2002; Gu and Liu, 2002). But the term is somewhat misleading because *Henancun* emerged not only from a hometown-bonded relationship but the recycling business plays a determining role in its development. After China adopted the open policy in 1978, restrictions on rural-to-urban migration are gradually lifted, and people started to migrate from rural hometowns to the major cities for various job opportunities. In the 1980s, because of the growing needs for all kinds of living necessities in China, *Zhejiangcun* was developed in Beijing as a garment trading center on the south side of Beijing. While it became the biggest garment center in Beijing with almost all its products from *Zhejiang* and all of the businessmen from the same province, the place is widely referred to as *Zhejiangcun* in Beijing. During the same period, migrants from different provinces gradually arrived in Beijing to look for job opportunities as well. However, while the urban job market is segregated and segmented by a limitation on *Hukou* status into formal and informal ones, most migrants stayed in temporary or contract based jobs. While recycling happened to function as a market niche for *Henan* migrants in Beijing, chain migration has further guided or channeled *Henan* migrants to the recycling business. Similar to a “cultural division of labor” (Hechter, 1978), rural migrants have witnessed their form of "hometown division of labor" in Beijing.

However, the emergence of *Henancun* is not merely because *Henan* migrants were seeking a living space to survive their initial migration in the city. Instead, while almost all the rural migrants in Beijing faced serious unfair and stigmatizing political and social

policies in Beijing, recycling companies evolved to become a safe and secure haven for recycling migrants to escape the risk they would have experienced in the streets. As illustrated in the first, third and fourth chapter, the emergence of *Henancun* is not coincidental; rather, it is one of the most important coping strategies migrants took in seeking protection in the city. However, the appearance of *Henancun* was catalyzed by various stigmatizing and discriminatory urban policies while *Henan* migrants happened to be the dominant force in the recycling business which involves a great deal of traveling on the unsafe urban streets. As I have illustrated in the first chapter, the enclave would always form without *Henan* migrants, but it would not without the recycling companies. Therefore, I would like to first challenge the long-existing view about *Henancun* as merely a migrant enclave and argue that the emergence and development of *Henancun* be closely related to both migrant's temporary status and the informal recycling companies in Beijing.

In addition, Chinese enclave studies about *chengzhongcun* in South China or migrant enclaves in Beijing mostly choose the focus on the space itself as a whole to discuss the various institutional barriers they are facing or the social functions the space represents in the city (Fan and Taubmann, 2002; He *et al.*, 2010; Ma and Xiang, 1998; Zhang *et al.*, 2003b). However, *Henancun* reveals a different kind of enclave in Beijing which has a rich and complex internal social and business structure that is very different from the traditionally known housing function an enclave provides in the city. Similar to our argument that we cannot treat rural migrants as one homogeneous group in the city, *Henancun* should not be treated as an indivisible enclave as well. We should acknowledge the fact that *Henancun*, as both a migrant and business enclave, has

developed complex business structure to ensure migrants' livelihood and the efficient and effective recycling business in Beijing. I would like to argue *Henancun*'s complex internal organization, including the business companies, different recycling actors, and the self-institutionalized social service, have created a parallel society on the fringe of Beijing. Despite migrants' temporary *Hukou* status and recycling companies' informal condition, *Henancun* has become an inseparable but invisible part of Beijing to provide recycling services to all residents and local businesses in Beijing.

7.2 Henancun: in between the State and Society

While *Henancun* has experienced numerous demolition and relocation cases in the past 25 years, their spatial trajectories have been studied and recorded through retrospective interviews and questionnaires in this dissertation research. Even though other "migrant" enclaves also faced relocation cases (Wang *et al.*, 2002), *Henancun*'s experience with demolition and relocation is at another level in severity and frequency. While the situation is not caused directly by *Henancun*-targeted state or local policies, these policies in deed set up a socio-political context which has defined the recycling migrants' temporary migration status and recycling companies' informal business style. Although the temporary and informal status associated with *Henancun* and its dwellers is a very "convenient" excuse for the local government to take over the space for various urban projects, this is not sufficient to explain the fact that *Henancun* has experienced much more demolition events than other migrant enclaves in Beijing. I believe there should be other factors that are playing the determining role in shaping *Henancun*'s spatial trajectory in the past 25 years.

First, the development projects *Henancun* has been facing are mostly large urban level or district level projects such as infrastructure (ring road construction, subway construction, river clearing and widening), commodity housing development, and large international projects (the Asian Games, the Olympic Games), which are the typical projects that are designed and pushed by the local government through top-down urbanization and development orders. Since these projects are designed from the consideration on a city scale, I do not believe these projects are specifically designed to target *Henancun* as location choices. *Henancun* just always happens to prefer the places that are facing demolition in the city. Following this bizarre statement, I would like to further argue that *Henancun* either always had bad luck with their location or they happen to share similar considerations in location choices as those large projects. Wang *et al.* (2002) have argued that the demolition of *Hui* (Muslim) enclave in Beijing is related to their location being on the developing path of urban projects. But since luck is something that is very hard to predict or study, I would like to argue that the numerous demolition and relocation events *Henancun* has been facing are because *Henancun* location choices are sharing similar considerations as these urban projects favors in Beijing.

Here, I would like to emphasize again that *Henancun* is more than a migrant enclave rather than a migrant one. Thus, the enclave is not just for seeking affordable housing for migrants; rather the recycling companies, as *Henancun* organizers, made choices and decisions on where they will set up their business to successfully carry out recycling with the probability to maximize their profits. Generally speaking, a recycling enclave like *DXK*, which focus on residential recyclable materials, would prefer to stay close to the residential centers or newly developed housing/business centers for material access and

low transportation cost, close to a main traffic path for transportation, areas with low developing density for recycling's open market business style, and large pieces of undeveloped land for cheap rent and migrants' pursuing of maximum profit through clustering the business. I think these are all attractive features for building any large projects in that: first, being close to the central city guarantees high land value in the future; second, *Henancun*, where recycling operates in open market style, always has low developing density which suggests low demolition cost; third, the clustering of *Henancun* also reserves large pieces of contiguous land which are necessary for all large projects and land with this feature happens to be very rare in the city.

Thus, I would like to argue that the many times of demolition and relocation events experienced by *Henancun* are not accidental. Rather, it has illustrated the conflicts between the top-down and bottom-up urbanization while the top-down urbanization projects have crashed the bottom-up ones represented by entrepreneurial recycling businesses in Beijing. While the top-down and bottom-up divide is also viewed as a metaphor for state-society relations, *Henancun* in Beijing has provided a perfect example to demonstrate Smith's (2014:210) argument that "the state [is] often positioned 'above' society." Meanwhile, the informality of recycling and temporality of migrants become very convenient excuses for the local government to "persuade" *Henancun* out of the way for the pursued large urban projects in Beijing.

7.3 Complex Internal Structure with Complex Structural Barriers in Henancun

While the literature has considered *Henancun* as one of the many migrant enclaves in Beijing, I have argued that it emerged and developed as both a migrant and business

enclave in that both factors play significant roles in its development. And more importantly, *Henancun* is not a solid and indivisible space; instead, it has a very complex socioeconomic structure with almost full-fledged self-institutionalized social facilities and services to support the self-sustaining lifestyle inside *Henancun*. Also, the causes of stigmatization and discrimination for people at different levels of the *Henancun* structure also vary significantly. While this research has presented detailed structural barriers that are faced by migrant recyclers and recycling companies at different layers of *Henancun*'s inner structure, generally speaking, I could briefly classify the barriers into two categories: one faced by the recycling migrants and one faced by the recycling companies.

These two different types of barriers functioned differently in shaping *Henancun*'s socioeconomic landscape of various angles. The one encountered by the recycling migrants are targeting their "migrant" status instead of their recycling activities. The barriers faced by migrants we have examined include the *Hukou*-status based inaccessibility to various social services and facilities in the city; *Shourong* policy; unstable income and demolition events. These barriers have generally set a boundary in migrant recyclers' everyday life and businesses to politically extinguish the possibility for migrants to "fully" migrate to Beijing, socially exclude migrant families from accessing social services and welfares in Beijing and also economically force migrants to rely on unstable income from their "informal" activities without security. Particularly, migrants' experiences with the violent *Shourong* policy illustrate the extent to which migrants have been unfairly treated in the city. Although *Shourong* arrived at its end in 2003, *Shuorong* policy shows one corner of the social and political context migrants are facing in the city.

Furthermore, the barriers faced by recycling companies are even harsher from unstable land leasing status, constantly changing government guidelines on recycling business and paradoxical and unpractical policies from various government departments that squeeze the business from different angles. These barriers not only increases the instability in recycling companies' business operation but also even drives recycling companies out of business in Beijing.

These political, social and economic barriers experienced by *Henancun* and its dwellers have largely defined the formal boundary of migrant and business activities in Beijing. And although migrants no longer face physical threats from these policies, their businesses at different levels are all confronted with a life-or-death situation space-wise and profit-wise. Further, it is just these harsh and uncoordinated urban policies which forced migrant recyclers and recycling companies to adopt various coping strategies in seeking protection, security, stability, and profitability in Beijing.

7.4 New Urban Space in the Making

While the rapidly developing Beijing and the influx of rural migrants in the city have gradually challenged the traditional work unit (*danwei*) based homogeneous urban structure, *Henancun* has well illustrated the process how new urban space is in the making. From a space point of view, this space emerged in between the courses of a top-down and a bottom-up urbanization that represents the government-led structural forces and the entrepreneur-led market forces respectively. As illustrated earlier, in the state-society relations, the state, in general, has the upper hand, and *Henancun* is no exception as we can see in its developing history and spatial trajectory in Beijing.

Different from the enclave studies whereby capital is playing the determining role in immigration, the influence and effects of the capital as a market force are heavily restricted by a series of urban policies against the rural migrants as well as the recycling business in Beijing. This situation resembles the ghetto development in the U.S. because both are facing some structural barriers that highly restricted “capital’s” capability. While racial ghettos in the U.S. face serious structural barriers in the city regarding ghetto dwellers’ access to occupation and education in the society, *Henancun*’s dwellers do not have access to local social services or facilities either. While *Henancun* emerged through its economic function in recycling, migrants’ economic status could somewhat support their livelihood and business. While recycling business thrived together with China’s rapid economic development during the 2000s, their capital is almost bounded within *Henancun* area, but their capital cannot be translated into any social or political improvements, such as education, medical services, housing, or *Hukou* status, in the society. Therefore, while the demand for social facilities and services grew with migrants’ increasing capital accumulation, the bounded *Henancun* was forced to expand internally to develop various institutions to ease migrants’ life and support migrants’ businesses in the enclave. This is how *Henancun* gradually developed into a full-fledged parallel society in Beijing under the forces of politically stigmatizing rules, socially excluding urban policies and economically tolerating attitudes on *Henancun* and its recycling business.

Based on all of the socio-political barriers in the city, different layers of societies started to form in Beijing as well. From an urban management point of view, *Henancun* is considered as informal for both its dwellers’ temporary migrant status and recycling

company's operation styles in Beijing. When *Henancun* gradually developed to be a full-fledged sub-society by itself, the whole place adopts the label from its dwellers and its dominating recycling business as being "informal," no matter how physically close to the "formal" society they are located. The formal and informal space in Beijing is also a representation of an "inside-outside" dichotomy. If we include migrants' hometown in our analysis, *Henancun*'s functionality, and identity become even more intriguing.

Henancun is viewed as being "outside" in Beijing mainly because as a migrant-dominated space, migrants have their hometown as their *Hukou* registration location. But at the same time, *Henancun* also has the "outsider" status as comparing with migrants' hometowns as well. To some extent, under the *Hukou* defined and related structural barriers in Chinese cities, the spatial organization in overall China has changed from an urban-rural dichotomy during the planned economy era to a urban-outside space-rural structure. Using *Henancun* as an example, this "outside" space serves as a buffer zone between rural and urban space in China. From a rural viewpoint, *Henancun* has considerably helped alleviate poverty for the countryside through migrants working in the city. And from an urban point of view, *Henancun* has also helped provide cheap recycling services to the residents of the city as well.

Despite that I have been arguing that *Henancun* has developed to be a parallel outside society in Beijing, its economic tie with the city is undeniable and inseparable. However, while service is well received in the city, the links between *Henancun* and the locals are kept hidden through a convenient invisibility. Rather, the few open ties between them are through well-registered parties that are as formal as it could be, such as the registered community recyclers to collect recyclable materials from local residents, the recycling

companies which sign contracts with local businesses and offices, and even various used and second hand markets that specialize in books, furniture, electric appliances in the city.

Let me recall the two quotes at the very beginning of this dissertation.

“When I go to the city, I always try to avoid buses or subways, because my hands look different. They are full of callus from working with trash, and the dirt in my fingernails can never be cleared.”

----a yard buyer in *Henancun*

“The car looks good, right? I almost never drive it these days because I don’t make as much money as before. But I have to have it, so when I need to sign a contract with some companies, I need to drive over to show that I have the ability to buy their trash.”

----another yard buyer with a Buick parking in his yard

Although migrants have their migrant space in the making, whenever they need to make contacts with the “formal” society, they want to show a representation as “formal” as possible. The informal status migrants are bearing not only imposes heavy weights on migrants’ shoulder when they cross the insider-outsider boundary, but it also forces migrants to accept their subordinate condition and to some extent, to depreciate themselves for their existence in Beijing.

Therefore, although *Henancun* appears to some extent as a new space with full fledged social institutions in the making, the inherent temporality and informality which the local government has strong-handedly imposed on them through structural forces have predefined their ephemeral existence in Beijing. Will this buffer zone disappear one day or may it transform to become a long-term existence in Beijing? I don’t know. But what I find interesting is that from both urban and rural points of view, *Henancun* has finally

adopted something permanent: the permanent “outsider” identity. As neither part of Beijing nor part of migrants’ rural hometowns, *Henancun* stays conveniently invisible in both urban and rural residents’ eyes. While urbanites care about the recycling service in the city and ruralists care about the economic gain from the city, nobody cares about the physical existence of *Henancun* on the fringe of Beijing. To some extent, this new space in the making, as represented by *Henancun*, is not necessarily important to anybody in the society, except for the migrant recyclers and recycling companies which bare all the burdens and structural barriers in the society.

7.5 Informality and Coping Strategies

Facing various structural and institutional barriers, migrant recyclers and recycling companies in *Henancun* take all kinds of coping strategies to seek stability/security and profitability. While there are both formal and informal strategies they take, the purpose of these approaches are the same and ironically the formal ones seem not to work as good as the informal ones. From an urban management point of view, *Henancun* is criticized for its informality and potential association with safety risks and illegal activities as a pathological interpretation from the government. While technically the interpretation is not completely wrong about *Henancun*’s real situation, from a developing perspective, the reasons *Henancun* becomes informal are precisely since the government is trying too hard to formalize migrants’ recycling activities.

As illustrated in various marginality studies under different social contexts, informal activities have always been a common strategy in slum conditions for slum dwellers to sustain their livelihood (Bourgois 2002; Neuwirth 2005; Shen 2002; Venkatesh 2006, 2008). But *Henancun* has demonstrated quite a different case in that its emergence and

development derive from its economic functions as the recycling service provider. And the informal status is not inherently associated with their recycling activities in Beijing. Instead, their activities are gradually recognized by the city as informal because the local government views their recycling activities and business styles as incompatible with Beijing's contemporary modern image. Therefore, the local governments have gradually changed their regulations on the recycling business styles, locations, and even the recycling companies' functions in the city. But the poor execution in banning informal/illegal recycling activities and the poor cross-department coordination have led to a situation whereby being "formal" is very costly for both the recycling companies and migrant recyclers in *Henancun*.

As I have illustrated in Chapter Five, formally registered recycling companies face various regular visits and checks from different government departments, ironically because they are well registered so they could be easily tracked down in the city. However, because the local government cannot keep track of the informal recycling activities who chose not to register with the local government, these recycling companies enjoy the benefit of staying informal and anonymous in the city. Inevitably, this paradox has gradually cornered the formal companies who try hard to remain formal in the society, while informal ones stay well under the radar from various government departments. Thus, the poor execution in banning informal/illegal recycling activities has ironically made informal recycling companies favorable in Beijing.

Besides, although there are over 15 government departments that are partially related to the recycling business in Beijing, the coordination among them is nearly impossible. While one government department sets too strict or detailed rules on the style of a

business operation without coordinating all government departments, business runners would inevitably face risks of losing business from policies that came from other government departments. This situation has forced recycling companies to adopt informal strategies to stay profitable in Beijing.

Meanwhile, when the competition gets more severe with more migrants in the cash-trading recycling business in the city, migrant recyclers also face the threat of losing their profit to other competitors in their everyday practice. While government's order on what to recycle and what not to recycle is quite straight forward, migrant recyclers use all sorts of formal and informal strategies to increase their profits in the business. But, formal strategies in general are not very effective or efficient in winning a business competition because formal strategies, such as specialization and contract recycling, take a long time to build and operate. Therefore, I would like to argue that ironically and paradoxically, the informal coping strategies and informality associated with migrant recyclers and recycling companies are a direct result of the local government's intention to formalize the recycling business without providing feasible operational guidance and appropriately coordinating different government departments.

7.6 Discussions

All in all, this dissertation has presented the emergence and existence of *Henancun* in Beijing. While we have investigated the history and spatial trajectory of *Henancun*, the structural and institutional barriers it is facing and various coping strategies migrant recyclers and recycling companies are taking in the city, many additional questions are still yet to be answered.

Will *Henancun* disappear one day in Beijing? Maybe, since the local government did not seem to want it in the first place.

Will recycling be gone too? Probably not, since the local government will always need them.

This dilemma is not only for *Henancun* or *Henan* migrants in Beijing. Rather, this is quite a big question that all our social scientists should pay attention to in cities on a global scale. Although I have argued for a double exploitation in *Henancun*, the exploitation is everywhere in the world, such as Mexican workers in the U.S., Zimbabwean nurses in the U.K., and sweatshop workers in Chinese garment factories. These people share common situations as someone whose work is needed but their physical existence is not desired in their working environment. However, this exploitation is also due to the huge gap that exists between these peoples' hometown and their workplace regarding income, social services or even food security. While severe inequality starts to become a global phenomenon, this dilemma will emerge and persist in various places.

At the same time, this dilemma also represents the conflicts between the local and the outside, the formal and the informal, the state and the society, the authoritarianism and the democracy. *Henancun* provides quite an intriguing case to understand the nature of these conflicts through a structural-agency debate by examining the interaction between structural barriers and coping strategies. Under China's political structure, the local—the formal—the state—the authoritarianism remains an upper hand in the conflicts between urban development and *Henancun*. Although *Henancun* is not physically segregated from the city (in fact, they are closely interlinked with each other through recycling business),

there is always an invisible wall between the two. The closer an outsider can get to the local; the more secured or more stable one can get in their livelihood.

I have revisited *DXK Henancun* in the summer of 2015. The *DXK Henancun* I visited in my fieldwork is replaced by high-rise residential building with over 30 stories. But recycling is still in operation in some recycling companies around *DXK* area, and they seem to have an even worse them than in 2012. Basically, after 2008, the global financial crisis has hurt the recycling business badly. With China's economy is slowing down after 2012, recycling is suffering even harder than before and many migrant recyclers have left recycling to work in other jobs. In fact, many became cab drivers in the *DXK* region. Although they cannot join the local, formal taxi companies, other nonconventional companies, such as *didi* and *kuaidi*¹¹⁸, accept them as casual cab drivers. While every registered driver has to use his/her car as the taxi, the car has to be locally registered with a local car plate. In my casual chatting with some drivers in *DXK*, I asked them what they did before they became a taxi driver. Almost all of them answered recycling. When I asked them what they felt about leaving recycling to become a taxi driver, one of them answered with a very mysterious smile,

“I'm lucky. My car had a Beijing plate when I was in recycling, so now I can work as a taxi driver in Beijing.”

Maybe *Henancun* will become a taxi enclave in the future, but I am sure this time that I can ask a *didi/kuaidi* driver about its location.

¹¹⁸ Chinese version of Uber.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Detailed job for constructing the reusable materials recycling system

Municipal Development and Reform Commission:

Policy making; project distribution and policy; Making Recycling company list with Municipal Commission of Economy and Informatization and Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau

Municipal Commission of Economy and Informatization

Guide recycling company in skill levels, cooperate to promote the connection between recycling companies and reuse companies.

Municipal Public Security Bureau

Watch and guide the security work for recycling; enhance checking and examination of recycling company illegal recycling activities

Municipal Bureau of Urban Planning; Municipal Bureau of State Land and Resources

Planning and Land Provision for recycling landuse and sorting centers

Municipal Commission of City Administration and Environment

Testing on residential community trash sorting; developing certain closed trash station as recycling site; building connection between the recycling economic park development and recyclable sorting centers; being in charge of building the professional collection, transporting and reutilization system for kitchen waste oil; managing the quality of companies in collecting, transporting and reusing companies for kitchen oils; developing standards and guidance polices for collecting, transporting and reusing kitchen oil.

Municipal Traffic Committee

Being in charge of checking and examining illegal recycling materials transporting vehicles

Municipal Bureau of Commerce

Managing recycling business; designing business development policies; designing recycling system construction planning; guiding districts and counties in developing recycling system; guiding contracted restaurant units in allocating oil-water separator and collection devices

Municipal Industry and Commerce Administration

In charge of recycling company registration, investigating on unregistered recycling activities; cooperating with other relevant parties in recording municipal kitchen waste and waste oil in Beijing company credit information system

Municipal Bureau of Health

In charge of revising the detailed management for setting quantitative scales for restaurants; including the kitchen waste oil in the management system

Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau

In charge of managing the protection on environmental pollution during transporting recyclable materials and kitchen waste oil; fining on illegal activities, including restaurant kitchen waste oil into daily routine monitoring

Municipal Bureau of Work Safety

Monitoring, managing and guiding work safety for recycling activities

Municipal Statistics Bureau

Cooperate with relevant department in building recycling statistics system; building recycling data work

Capital Civic Enhancement Committee Office

In charge of propagating work and activities for the theme of recycling

Public security traffic administration of the Beijing municipal public security bureau

Easing the passing of registered specialized recycling transportation vehicles; investigating and monitoring the illegal activities of transporting kitchen waste oil

Municipal Fire Department

In charge of monitoring and examining on fire prevention work

Municipal Law Enforcing Bureau of City Comprehensive Administration

In charge of monitoring, managing the dirty and messy environment and relevant activities around recycling stations, sorting centers and recycling markets; investigating and regulating unregistered itinerant recycling activities.

Municipal Bureau of Finance, Municipal Human Resources and Social Security Bureau, Municipal Commission of Housing and Rural and Urban Construction, Municipal Agriculture Municipal, City Social Office

Based on each administration's responsibility, working with other bureaus to promote city recycling system development

北京市人民政府关于印发北京市加快推进再生资源回收体系建设促进产业化发展意见的通知

附件：再生资源回收体系建设工作部门职责分工

市发展改革委：负责再生资源综合利用产业体系的政策制定和协调实施；研究提出再生资源处理及综合利用重大项目布局和政策建议；会同市经济信息化委、市环保局提出本市再生资源再利用企业名单。

市经济信息化委：负责指导再利用企业提高加工能力和水平，配合推动回收企业与再利用企业的衔接工作。

市公安局：负责指导监督再生资源回收治安保卫工作，加强对回收企业非法回收再生资源的监督检查。

市规划委、市国土局：负责再生资源回收站点、分拣加工中心建设的规划和用地问题。

市市政市容委：负责推进居住小区垃圾分类达标试点工作，推动有条件的密闭式清洁站作为再生资源回收场所，推动有条件的循环经济园区与再生资源分拣中心实现功能搭载；负责组织推进餐厨废弃油脂专业化收集运输处理和资源化利用体系建设工作；负责对餐厨废弃油脂收运处理单位的资质管理，研究制定餐厨废弃油脂收集、运输和处理的规范化标准和有关政策。

市交通委：负责对非法从事再生资源回收的运输车辆进行查处。

市商务委：负责再生资源回收行业管理，会同有关部门制定行业发展政策，编制再生资源回收体系建设规划；指导监督各区县进行再生资源回收体系建设；指导签约餐饮服务单位按照相关标准配建或配置油水分离器、专用收集容器等设施设备。

市工商局：负责再生资源回收经营主体的登记注册，依法查处未登记注册的再生资源回收经营者；会同相关部门及时将全市餐厨垃圾和废弃油脂排放登记数据纳入北京市企业信用信息系统。

市卫生局：负责修订餐饮服务单位卫生量化分级管理细则，将餐饮服务单位餐厨废弃油脂规范管理纳入量化分级管理。

市环保局：负责对再生资源和餐厨废弃油脂回收设施运行中环境污染的防治工作实施监督管理，依法对违反相关法律法规的行为进行处罚；将餐饮服务单位餐厨废弃油脂规范管理纳入日常监管范畴。

市安全监管局：负责再生资源回收安全生产的监督管理和指导工作。

市统计局：负责会同有关部门共同研究建立回收统计制度，开展再生资源回收统计工作。

首都精神文明办：负责开展以再生资源回收为主题的宣教工作和创建活动。

市公安局公安交通管理局：负责对经过备案的专用回收物流车辆提供通行便利；对收集运输餐厨废弃油脂车辆的交通违法行为进行查处。**市公安局消防局：**负责依法指导开展消防监督检查工作。

市城管执法局：负责对再生资源回收站点、分拣中心、集散市场周边环境脏乱行为进行监督管理和对流动无照商贩的查处工作。

市财政局、市人力社保局、市住房城乡建设委、市农委、市社会办：按照各自职责，与其他部门一起共同推进本市再生资源回收体系建设工作的开展。

APPENDIX B

Eight city-level comprehensive sorting centers

Table 18: Eight city-level comprehensive sorting centers

District	#	Name	Current (ha)	Planned (ha)	Notes
Chaoyang	1	Lou Zi Zhuang	6.0	6.0	Planned
Chaoyang	2	Dou Ge Zhuang	6.0	6.0	Planned
Haidian	3	Shang Zhuang	6.0	6.0	Planned
Fengtai	4	Beijing Huajingyuan	4.3	6.0	Current
Fengtai	5	Chang Xin Dian	6.0	6.0	Planned
Changping	6	Guang Li Fu Yuan	4.0	6.0	Current
Daxing	7	City recycling model area	10.0	10.0	Current
Shunyi	8	Ying Zhao Xin	6.7	6.0	Current
Total			49	52	

市级综合处理中心规划表

区县	#	项目名称	现状用地面积（公顷）	规划用地面积（公顷）	备注
朝阳区	1	朝阳区楼梓庄再生资源集散中心	6.0	6.0	已规划
朝阳区	2	豆各庄处理中心	6.0	6.0	规划新选
海淀区	3	上庄再生资源处理中心	6.0	6.0	已规划
丰台区	4	北京市华京源再生资源回收市场	4.3	6.0	现状保留
丰台区	5	长辛店镇赵辛店物流区	6.0	6.0	规划新选
昌平区	6	北京广利福源再生资源有限公司	4.0	6.0	现状调整
大兴区	7	市再生资源回收利用示范区	10.0	10.0	现状保留
顺义区	8	北京盈兆新再生资源回收市场	6.7	6.0	现状保留
合计			49	52	

Source: Notes in seeking advices of “Beijing Recycling Market Distribution and Location Planning” by Beijing Urban Planning Committee

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APPENDIX C

Twelve district-level comprehensive sorting centers

Table 19: Twelve district-level comprehensive sorting centers

District	#	Name	Current (ha)	Planned (ha)	Notes
Mentougou	1	New Recycling Market	3.0	3.0	Planned
Tongzhou	2	Songzhuang sorting center	3.0	3.0	Planned
Tongzhou	3	Kuoxian sorting center	3.0	3.0	Planned
Changping	4	Xiaotangshan recycling market	3.0	3.0	Planned
	5	Nankoujuduoyuan	5.5	5.0	Current
Daxing	6	Detonghuaxian	3.0	3.0	Planned
Pinggu	7	Lv Jie Market	5.4	3.0	Current
Miyun	8	Shanlinfeng Recycling	1.3	3.0	Planned
Fangshan	9	Shunyi Fazaisheng Market	4.0	3.0	Current
	10	Yanshan	3.0	3.0	Planned
Yanqing	11	New Recycling Market	3.0	3.0	Planned
Huairou	12	New Recycling Market	3.0	3.0	Planned
Total			40.2	38	

区县	#	项目名称	现状用地面积（公顷）	规划用地面积（公顷）	备注
门头沟	1	新建再生资源集散市场	3.0	3.0	规划新选
通州区	2	宋庄综合处理中心	3.0	3.0	规划新选
通州区	3	漷县综合处理中心	3.0	3.0	规划新选
昌平区	4	小汤山再生资源集散市场	3.0	3.0	规划新选
	5	南口聚多源物资回收公司	5.5	5.0	现状调整
大兴区	6	德通化纤采育处理中心	3.0	3.0	规划新选
平谷区	7	北京绿洁市场服务管理中心	5.4	3.0	现状保留
密云县	8	北京山林丰再生资源回收有限公司	1.3	3.0	规划新选
房山区	9	顺义发再生物品回收市场	4.0	3.0	现状保留
	10	燕山综合处理中心	3.0	3.0	规划新选
延庆县	11	新建再生资源集散市场	3.0	3.0	规划新选
怀柔区	12	新建再生资源集散市场	3.0	3.0	规划新选
合计			40.2	38	

Source: Notes in seeking advices of “Beijing Recycling Market Distribution and Location Planning” by Beijing Urban Planning Committee

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APPENDIX D

Out-migration destinations by Labor Department in *Gushi* County

Table 20: Out-migration destinations in *Gushi* County

	# Emigrants	Beijing	Guangdong	Zhejiang	Jiangsu	BJ Percent	GD Percent	ZJ Percent	JS Percent
段集	8136	422	1345	1208	2194	5.19	16.53	14.85	26.97
马罡	17845	4086	4552	4367	1964	22.90	25.51	24.47	11.01
南大桥	10320	1567	1402	1321	1634	15.18	13.59	12.80	15.83
胡族	21606	2670	6680	2840	2735	12.36	30.92	13.14	12.66
石佛	14910	372	987	4571	3403	2.49	6.62	30.66	22.82
杨集	9255	1981	2027	2379	693	21.40	21.90	25.71	7.49
陈淋	13177	1264	594	2583	7082	9.59	4.51	19.60	53.75
武庙	11231	1378	1670	2155	2337	12.27	14.87	19.19	20.81
往流	14762	4836	4151	1480	2212	32.76	28.12	10.03	14.98
徐集	14477	3860	2670	1710	2360	26.66	18.44	11.81	16.30
郭陆滩	11569	1088	6301	1195	726	9.40	54.46	10.33	6.28
陈集	16114	2512	2087	1446	4898	15.59	12.95	8.97	30.40
泉河	13376	1616	1071	920	2503	12.08	8.01	6.88	18.71
汪棚	13184	1866	4265	2422	626	14.15	32.35	18.37	4.75
观堂	5769	1829	926	673	670	31.70	16.05	11.67	11.61
张广	10526	1513	1878	2287	2981	14.37	17.84	21.73	28.32
柳树	8311	304	520	1659	2723	3.66	6.26	19.96	32.76
方集	14302	1234	2031	1999	1610	8.63	14.20	13.98	11.26
李店	13260	8646	1153	820	960	65.20	8.70	6.18	7.24
沙河	14325	637	1390	2411	4764	4.45	9.70	16.83	33.26
分水	13766	2516	2148	2533	2855	18.28	15.60	18.40	20.74
三河尖	7410	410	2460	440	870	5.53	33.20	5.94	11.74
草庙	6125	1865	2236	187	128	30.45	36.51	3.05	2.09

Table 20: (cont'd)

祖师	11236	1408	1680	2155	2327	12.53	14.95	19.18	20.71
黎集	24723	2560	2186	8074	9791	10.35	8.84	32.66	39.60
洪埠	32000	16171	7514	1819	2145	50.53	23.48	5.68	6.70
张老埠	8456	319	869	1850	4453	3.77	10.28	21.88	52.66
赵岗	6623	246	764	456	2276	3.71	11.54	6.89	34.37
蒋集	27245	12122	3424	2212	3424	44.49	12.57	8.12	12.57
丰港	14845	3142	2160	789	969	21.17	14.55	5.31	6.53
城郊	4259	1454	882	254	358	34.14	20.71	5.96	8.41
城关镇	346	76	62	7	43	21.97	17.92	2.02	12.43
城关社区	54724	10967	9876	8764	7385	20.04	18.05	16.01	13.49
Total	468213	96937	83961	69986	86099	20.70	17.93	14.95	18.39

APPENDIX E

Interview respondents

1. Mr. Zhao: Car recycler in *PC*, Beijing
2. Mr. Qiao: Itinerant recycler in *DXK*, Beijing
3. Mr. Sun: Community recycler in *Haidian* district, Beijing
4. Mr. Li: Community recycler with a truck, close to Bird Nest
5. Mr. Zhou: Foam yard buyer in *DXK*, Beijing
6. Mrs. Wu: *DXK FYXY* recycling company board member
7. Mr. Zheng: *DXK FYXY* recycling company manager
8. Mr. Wang: *Chaoyang* district recycling company manager
9. Mrs. Feng: *DXK FYXY* recycling company accountant
10. Mr. Chen: *DXFT* recycling company owner

APPENDIX F

Questionnaire & Questionnaire code book

Part I. Questionnaire (In Chinese)

调查人员 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 8 / 9 / 10

问卷编号 # _____

日期 2013/01/ 12 / 13 / 14 / 15 / 16 / 17 / 18

北京外来人口聚集地成因与演变调查问卷

您好，我们是美国密歇根州立大学地理学系的调研组，目前在做关于北京外来人口聚集地的问卷调查。此次问卷为完全匿名，并且保证所有信息将被用作学术研究。为感谢您的支持与帮助，在问卷结束后，我们将给与一定的现金作为补偿。

~~~~~社会经济状况~~~~~

请记录被访谈者性别 ☐男 ☐女

1.1 您第一次来北京是哪年? \_\_\_\_\_年

1.2 您第一次来北京之前在老家的职业是什么?

☐务农 ☐学生 ☐事业单位下岗 ☐退休 ☐其他

1.3 您当年为什么选择来北京?

☐亲戚介绍 ☐朋友介绍 ☐不熟悉的同乡介绍 ☐职业中介 ☐自己决定

1.4 请问您的户口属于 ☐城市户口 ☐农村户口

请问户口所在地是\_\_\_\_\_省\_\_\_\_\_市\_\_\_\_\_县

您在北京这些年户口有发生过变化吗? 如果有，  
是哪年? \_\_\_\_\_，从\_\_\_\_\_省\_\_\_\_\_市\_\_\_\_\_县迁来  
通过以下何种方式? ☐婚姻 ☐买房 ☐雇主帮助变更 ☐其他\_\_\_\_\_

1.5 请问当前您或者您家庭主要从事什么职业?

☐废旧品回收行业 (包含二手家具家电) ☐其他 \_\_\_\_\_

1.5.1 如果您 (和您爱人) 现在从事的是废旧品回收行业，请问您在以何种方式做回收?

☐流动三轮车或电动车回收 ☐流动汽车回收  
☐固定摊位小区回收 ☐废品回收市场租点回收  
☐废品回收点长期合同工人 ☐废品回收点临时 (记天或计件) 工人  
☐其他 \_\_\_\_\_

您 (和您爱人) 今后是否打算更改回收方式? ☐是 ☐否

1.5.2 如果您 (和您爱人) 从事的是废旧品回收行业，请问您的家庭从事过以下哪几种形式的回收? (多选)

☐捡废品 ☐废品回收点打工 ☐小区回收废品 ☐开摊位收各种废品  
☐废品市场开摊位专收某种特定废品 ☐其他 \_\_\_\_\_

1.5.3 如果您 (和您爱人) 从事的是废旧品回收行业，您主要的回收品为 \_\_\_\_\_?

☐钢铁类 ☐有色金属 ☐纸 ☐木头 ☐分类塑料 ☐塑料瓶

☐泡沫 ☐杂货 ☐废旧家具 ☐废旧电器 ☐综合回收  
☐其他\_\_\_\_\_.

1.15 请问您（和您爱人）从事废旧品回收行业以来，有\_\_\_\_\_次更换回收物品的种类？

如果您有更换过回收物品种类，更换的原因有？（多选）

☐物品受管制不允许再回收 ☐资金短缺无法继续 ☐货源不充足  
☐为有更好的经济回报 ☐方便管理 ☐亲戚朋友介绍  
☐其他\_\_\_\_\_

1.16 您（和您爱人）在从事回收过程中是否需要废品回收营业执照？

☐需要并用我自己的营业执照 ☐需要并租用、借用朋友的营业执照  
☐需要并使用回收市场的营业执照 ☐不需要

1.17 您（和您爱人）现在是否跟亲戚或朋友在合资合作经营？

☐跟亲戚一起合资合作经营 ☐跟朋友一起合资合作经营 ☐自己家庭独立经营

1.18 您（和您爱人）是否与下列企事业单位有长期废品回收购买协议或合同？

☐商店/超市 ☐大型市场 ☐建筑商或拆迁单位 ☐居委会/物业  
☐机关或事业单位 ☐其他\_\_\_\_\_.

1.19 您（和您爱人）的工作地点涵盖以下几个地点（不包括路过）？

☐二环以内 ☐二环三环之间 ☐三环四环之间 ☐四环五环之间  
☐五环以外

1.20 您对目前的职业是否满意？ ☐是 ☐否

1.21 您是否考虑今后从事其他职业？ ☐是 ☐否

1.6 您每天的大概起床时间是？\_\_\_\_\_您每天的大概休息时间是？\_\_\_\_\_.

1.7 何种天气情况下，您会暂停工作？

☐下雨 ☐下雪 ☐大风 ☐下雾 ☐其他\_\_\_\_\_.

1.8 除了以上情况，您平均一周工作\_\_\_\_\_天，在工作之余都做些什么？

☐辅导孩子做作业 ☐逛街 ☐去景点游玩 ☐其他\_\_\_\_\_.

1.9 请问您在从事此项工作之前在北京是/否给别人打工，上过班？

如果是，请举例\_\_\_\_\_，为何后来放弃？\_\_\_\_\_.

1.14 您居住的房间为

☐自行或他人自主搭建 ☐市场提供 ☐农村住房 ☐城市楼房

1.10 现在您居住的房间中一共有\_\_\_\_\_人一起居住？（包括您自己）

1.11 您在北京是否有产权房？

☐有产权房，并且我住在里面  
☐有产权房，但我不住在那里  
☐无产权或使用权房，我就住在工作地点附近  
☐无产权或使用权房，租住的地方不在我工作地点附近  
如有产权或使用权，该房地址\_\_\_\_\_街道\_\_\_\_\_社区

1.12 来北京打工之后，您在别的地方是否有新建或购买房屋？（请圈选，可多选）

☐在老家 县城/农村 新建/购买  
☐在其它 县城/农村 新建/购买  
☐打算以后在老家 县城/农村 新建/购买  
☐打算在其它 县城/农村 新建/购买  
☐没有，并不打算在任何外地购买或新建

☐ 目前还没有考虑过这个问题

1.13 请按照您在北京居住的房间状况选择（请圈选居住面积，设施请在合适地方打勾选择）

| 住房 | 10 平内 | 10-20 | 20-30  | 30-40 | 40 平米以上 |      |      |
|----|-------|-------|--------|-------|---------|------|------|
| 屋内 | 厕所    | 自来水   | 夏天晒水淋浴 | 电热淋浴  | 空调      | 炉子暖气 | 集中暖气 |
| 有  |       |       |        |       |         |      |      |
| 无  |       |       |        |       |         |      |      |

1.22 您在北京拼搏的这些年是否曾经被收容过？

☐ 是 ☐ 否

1.23 您个人在北京是否因为您的工作或身份的缘故而经历过不公正的对待？ ☐ 是 ☐ 否

~~~~~日常生活~~~~~

2.1 您或您家庭多数时间在哪里购买食物？（可多选）

- ☐ 露天市场、周边蔬菜食品店
☐ 大型超市等可出具正规发票的地方
☐ 不需自行购买，饮食由回收点统一提供
☐ 自家种植

2.2 您或您家庭多数时间在哪里购买日常用品？

- ☐ 在露天市场或小卖部 ☐ 在大型超市等可开具正规发票的地方
☐ 多数在回收市场回收使用 ☐ 其他_____.

2.3 您或您家庭平均一周有几次在外面饭店或小饭馆吃饭？

- ☐ 几乎不在外面吃 ☐ 1-2 次 ☐ 3-5 次 ☐ 5-10 次
☐ 基本都在外面吃

2.4 您每周接触的人中，平均来讲北京本地人大约有_____人？

- 2.5 家里农忙时， 您是/否回家？ ☐ 经常 ☐ 偶尔 ☐ 有时
 春节时您是/否回家？ ☐ 经常 ☐ 偶尔 ☐ 有时
 清明时您是/否回家？ ☐ 经常 ☐ 偶尔 ☐ 有时

2.6 您今年是/否回老家过年？

如果您回答“否”的话，请问原因是：

- ☐ 亲戚都在身边，老家没什么人了 ☐ 老家条件不好，这边环境好些
☐ 春节生意好做些，不舍得回老家 ☐ 经济上无法支付回家费用
☐ 其他_____.

2.7 在北京这么多年，下列旅游景点您去过几次？（请详细记录次数）

| 故宫 | 颐和园 | 长城 | 欢乐谷 | 天安门广场 | 天坛 | 后海 | 首都博物馆 |
|----|-----|----|-----|-------|----|----|-------|
| | | | | | | | |

~~~~~基本信息~~~~~

3.1 您出生在哪年？ \_\_\_\_\_

3.2 您的文化程度是？ \_\_\_\_\_

3.3 您的婚姻状况？

- ☐ A 已婚 ☐ B 未婚 ☐ C 离婚 ☐ D 其它\_\_\_\_\_

3.4 您是否有子女？

- ☐ 没有子女 ☐ 一个孩子 ☐ 两个孩子 ☐ 三个孩子 ☐ \_\_\_\_\_个孩子

3.4.1 请问现在您的伴侣和孩子是否都与您住在一起？（限已婚和/或有孩子的对象）

- ☐ 是的 ☐ 都不在 ☐ 伴侣和\_\_\_\_\_个孩子在一起，有\_\_\_\_\_个不在

- ☐ 仅与孩子一起，伴侣不在一起      ☐ 仅与伴侣一起，没有孩子  
☐ 仅与伴侣一起，孩子不在一起      ☐ 其他情况\_\_\_\_\_.

3.4.2 您大孩子（长子或长女）都在哪里上过小学？（多选）

- ☐ 在北京正规学校上过小学      ☐ 在北京外地打工子弟学校上过小学  
☐ 在老家上过小学      ☐ 在其他地方上过小学  
☐ 没有让他上过学或没到上小学年龄

3.4.3 您大孩子（长子或长女）都在哪里上过中学？（多选）

- ☐ 在北京正规学校上过中学      ☐ 在北京外地打工子弟学校上过中学  
☐ 在老家上过中学 ☐ 在其他地方上过中学 ☐ 没有让他上过中学或没到上中学年龄

3.4.4 如果子女已经工作，是否跟您从事一样或类似的工作？ ☐ 是 ☐ 否

3.4.5 如果子女还没有工作，您是否希望他/她继续从事您目前的职业？ ☐ 是 ☐ 否

3.5 您或您家庭的年总收入最高时\_\_\_\_\_元，最低时\_\_\_\_\_元。

3.6 您或您家庭的消费情况（住房就在摊位的请只记录摊位费）

| 每天 | 每月   |    |    | 每年  |      |     |
|----|------|----|----|-----|------|-----|
| 吃饭 | 单独住房 | 水电 | 娱乐 | 摊位费 | 子女教育 | 寄回家 |
|    |      |    |    |     |      |     |

3.7 请问您来到北京后的所有居住地点，如不清楚，请在此处写下地名并在地图上圈点

| 序号 | 时间<br>(年) | 地点(详细) | 途径 <sup>119</sup> | 具体工作内容 | 离开原因 | 有否补偿 |
|----|-----------|--------|-------------------|--------|------|------|
| ①  |           |        |                   |        |      |      |
| ②  |           |        |                   |        |      |      |
| ③  |           |        |                   |        |      |      |
| ④  |           |        |                   |        |      |      |
| ⑤  |           |        |                   |        |      |      |
| ⑥  |           |        |                   |        |      |      |

~~~~~关于户主~~~~~

4.1 请问您是否是家庭户口中的户主？ ☐ 是 ☒ 结束问卷 ☐ 不是

如果您回答“不是”，请问户主是您的_____？

4.2 户主的性别？ ☐ 男性 ☐ 女性

4.3 户主出生在哪年？_____

4.4 户主的受教育程度？_____

4.5 户主目前的户口在_____省_____市_____县 ☐ 与您一样

户主的户口是/否变更过？

如果户口有过变更：
 是哪年？_____, 从_____省_____市_____县迁来
 通过以下何种方式？ ☐ 婚姻 ☐ 买房 ☐ 雇主帮助变更 ☐ 其他_____

4.6 户主目前的工作是？

- ☐ 废旧品回收行业（包含二手家具家电） ☐ 其他_____

¹¹⁹途径包括①亲戚/②朋友/③同乡/④自己寻找；离开原因①干不下去/②有更好的机会/③拆迁

感谢您的合作，是否可留电话联系方式，方便日后深入访谈？如果您参加访谈我们提供额外补助。我们会妥善保存您信息，该研究结束时，我们会将您信息彻底删除。

电话_____

Part II. Questionnaire (in English)

Surveyor 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 8 / 9 / 10

Questionnaire ID # _____

Date 2013/01/ 12 / 13 / 14 / 15 / 16 / 17 / 18

Questionnaire about the Emergence and Development of the Migrant Enclaves in Beijing

Hello, we, as a research team from the Department of Geography in Michigan State University at the U.S., are conducting questionnaires about the emergence and development of the migrant enclaves in Beijing. This questionnaire is completely anonymous and will be used for academic research purposes only. In appreciation of your corporation, you will receive a small amount of cash as a compensation for your time.

~~~~~Socioeconomic Situations ~~~~~

Please record gender of the participant ☐Male ☐Female

1.1 First year you came to Beijing \_\_\_\_\_

1.2 What is your occupation before coming to Beijing?

- ☐Farming ☐Student ☐Public institution laid-off  
☐Retired ☐Other \_\_\_\_\_

1.3 Through what channel did you decide to come to Beijing?

- ☐Introduced by relatives ☐Introduced by friends ☐Introduced by  
unknown people from hometown ☐Job Agency ☐Self-decision

1.4 Is your *Hukou* ☐Urban or ☐Rural

The location of your *Hukou* is \_\_\_\_\_ Province \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ County

Is your *Hukou* changed to Beijing during the years in Beijing? If your answer is yes,  
Which year? \_\_\_\_\_, From \_\_\_\_\_ Province \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ County

Through which channel? ☐Marriage ☐House Purchasing ☐Sponsored by  
employers ☐Other \_\_\_\_\_

1.5 What is your or your family's primary job?

- ☐Recycling (including used furniture and appliances) ☐Other

1.5.1 What is your primary way of recycling, if your and/or your spouse is/are working in the recycling business?

- ☐Mobile with tricycle or bicycles ☐Mobile with cars  
☐Fixed-location community ☐Fixed-location recycling market  
☐Long-term worker in market ☐Temporary worker in market  
☐Other \_\_\_\_\_.

Are/Is you and/or your spouse plan to change the way of recycling in the future?

- ☐Yes ☐No

1.5.2 If your and/or your spouse work in the recycling business, which way(s) of recycling have you ever been working in? (pick as many as there are)

- ☐Recycling materials picking ☐Worker in the recycling market  
☐Community recycling ☐Streetside recycling depot

☐ Recycling yard buyer ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_.

1.5.3 If you and your spouse work in the recycling business, the main item(s) you collect is/are?

☐ Steel and iron ☐ Copper and Aluminum ☐ Paper ☐ Wood  
☐ General plastics ☐ PET & HDPE ☐ Foam ☐ Leftover  
☐ Used furniture ☐ Used electronics ☐ Variety  
☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_.

1.6 When do you normally get up in the morning? \_\_\_\_\_

When do you normally go to bed? \_\_\_\_\_.

1.7 Under what weather condition would you stop working?

☐ Heavy Rain ☐ Heavy Snow ☐ Heavy Wind  
☐ Heavy Foggy ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_.

1.8 Other than the above mentioned conditions, how many days do you work per week in general? What do you do after working?

☐ Help children with homework ☐ Shopping ☐ Tourism  
☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_.

1.9 Before your current job, do you work as a temporary worker for others in Beijing? If you answer yes, please give an example \_\_\_\_\_, why did you give up in the end?  
 \_\_\_\_\_.

1.10 How many people are living together in your house/room? (including yourself)

1.11 Do you own a commercial housing in Beijing?

☐ Yes, I live in there. ☐ Yes, but I don't live there  
☐ No, I live close to where I work  
☐ No, and I don't live close to where I work

If you have a commercial housing, it is located at \_\_\_\_\_ Street \_\_\_\_\_ Community.

1.12 After working in Beijing, have you built or bought new housing? (Circle as you see fit)

☐ At hometown, County/Countryside Newly built/Purchased  
☐ At other County/Countryside Newly built/Purchased  
☐ Plan to do at hometown County/Countryside Newly built/Purchased  
☐ Plan to do at other County/Countryside Newly built/Purchased  
☐ No, and don't plan to purchase or build new housing  
☐ I haven't thought about this question yet.

1.13 Please indicate your living condition in Beijing (Please circle the area of the house you are living in and mark Yes or No for different facilities)

| Housing  | <=10m <sup>2</sup> | 10-20         | 20-30                  | 30-40                 | >40 m <sup>2</sup> |         |                           |
|----------|--------------------|---------------|------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|---------|---------------------------|
| In House | Restroom           | Running water | Solar heated hot water | Electric heated water | AC                 | Furnace | Public heating facilities |
| Yes      |                    |               |                        |                       |                    |         |                           |
| No       |                    |               |                        |                       |                    |         |                           |

1.14 The place you are living is:

☐ Self-built or built by others ☐ Provided by market  
☐ Rural housing ☐ City housing

1.15 \_\_\_\_\_ times have you changed the type of materials you are recycling, since your and/or spouse joined recycling business? If you have changed before, the reasons for the change include? (choose all you see fit)

- ☐ Materials restricted from recycling
- ☐ Not enough material inflow
- ☐ For ease of management
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Financially not feasible
- ☐ For better economic return
- ☐ Introduced by relatives/friends

1.16 Do you need a recycling license when running the recycling business?

- ☐ Yes, I have my own license
- ☐ Yes, I'm using the license from the market
- ☐ Yes, I'm using my friend's license
- ☐ No

1.17 Are you cooperating with your relatives and friends in your business

- ☐ Yes, cooperating with my relatives
- ☐ No, run by my own family only
- ☐ Yes, cooperating with friends

1.18 Do you have long-term recycling contracts with any of the following institutions or companies?

- ☐ Shops/Supermarkets
- ☐ Communities
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Big Markets
- ☐ Government or institutions
- ☐ Construction Companies

1.19 Where do you work? (not including passways)

- ☐ Inside 2<sup>nd</sup> ring road
- ☐ B/t 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> ring roads
- ☐ B/t 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> ring roads
- ☐ B/t 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> ring roads
- ☐ Outside 5<sup>th</sup> ring road

1.20 Are you satisfied with your current job?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

1.21 Do you have the intention to work in other jobs?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

1.22 Have you ever been taken away for *Shourong* in Beijing?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

1.23 Do you feel being unfairly treated for the job you are working in or your migrant identity?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

~~~~~ Everyday Livelihood ~~~~~

2.1 Where do you/your family buy groceries for most of the time? (choose all that fit)

- ☐ Open market, surrounding grocery stores
- ☐ Big supermarkets, where official receipts could be requested
- ☐ Provided by the recycling yards
- ☐ Self-grown

2.2 Where do you/your family buy everyday necessities?

- ☐ Open market, surrounding stores
- ☐ Big supermarkets, where official receipts could be requested
- ☐ Recycled from the recyclables in the recycling markets
- ☐ Other _____

2.3 How many times on average do you/your family eat outside in the restaurants per week?

- ☐ nearly never
- ☐ 1-2 times
- ☐ 3-5 times
- ☐ 5-10times
- ☐ almost all the time

2.4 How many Beijing local people do you have contact with on average in a week?

2.5 Do you go home

- during agriculture busy time (planting/harvesting)
- during spring festivals?
- ☐ Never
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Never
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Sometimes

during Tomb sweeping day? ☐Never ☐Often ☐Sometimes

2.6 Do you plan to go home this spring festival?

If you answer 'No,' why is that?

- ☐All my relatives are here, nearly nobody at home
☐Environment at hometown is not as good as here
☐Good business during Spring Festival
☐Cannot affording the cost for going home
☐Other _____.

2.7 How many times have you been to the following tourist places in Beijing?

| The forbidden city | Yiheyuan | The Great Wall | Happy Valley | Tian'anmen Square | Tiantan | Houhai | Capital Museum |
|--------------------|----------|----------------|--------------|-------------------|---------|--------|----------------|
| | | | | | | | |

~~~~~ Demographics ~~~~~

3.1 Which year were you born? \_\_\_\_\_

3.2 What is your highest education attainment? \_\_\_\_\_

3.3 What is your marriage status?

- ☐ Married ☐ Single ☐ Divorced ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

3.4 Do you have any children?

- ☐ No children ☐ One child ☐ Two children  
☐ Three children ☐ \_\_\_\_\_ children

3.4.1 Are your spouse and children living together with you? (for married couples with children)

- ☐ Yes ☐ Neither ☐ Spouse and \_\_\_\_\_ children here, \_\_\_\_\_ children not here  
☐ Only children here, spouse not ☐ Only spouse here, no children yet  
☐ Only spouse here, children not here  
☐ Other situation \_\_\_\_\_.

3.4.2 Where did your oldest child go to primary schools? (choose all that fit)

- ☐ Beijing's formal primary schools ☐ Beijing's migrant primary schools  
☐ Primary schools at hometown ☐ Primary schools at other places  
☐ No school age children yet

3.4.3 Where did your oldest child go to middle schools? (choose all that fit)

- ☐ Beijing's formal primary schools ☐ Beijing's migrant primary schools  
☐ Primary schools at hometown ☐ Primary schools at other places  
☐ No school age children yet

3.4.4 If your child(ren) is/are working, is s/he in the same work as yours?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

3.4.5 If your child(ren) is/are not working yet, do you hope s/he will continue with your current job? ☐ Yes ☐ No

3.5 The yearly disposable income (best income) in a good year is about \_\_\_\_\_ yuan; the yearly disposable income (worst income) in a bad year is about \_\_\_\_\_ yuan.

3.6 Cost situation for you/your family (if you live in the yard, please only fill in the Rent Fee).

| Per Day | Per Month  |         |               |          | Per Year        |           |
|---------|------------|---------|---------------|----------|-----------------|-----------|
| Food    | House rent | Utility | Entertainment | Rent Fee | Kid's Education | Send home |
|         |            |         |               |          |                 |           |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

3.7 Please indicate all of the places you have lived in after coming to Beijing. If you are not clear about the name, please write the name and mark it on the map in the following page.

| # | Year | Location | Access <sup>120</sup> | Detailed work | Reason to leave | Compensation ? |
|---|------|----------|-----------------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------|
| ① |      |          |                       |               |                 |                |
| ② |      |          |                       |               |                 |                |
| ③ |      |          |                       |               |                 |                |
| ④ |      |          |                       |               |                 |                |
| ⑤ |      |          |                       |               |                 |                |
| ⑥ |      |          |                       |               |                 |                |

~~~~~About *Hukou* Holder ~~~~~

4.1 Are you the *Hukou* holder of your family?

☐ Yes **End of Questionnaire** ☐ No

If you answered "No," the *Hukou* holder is your _____?

4.2 Sex of *Hukou* holder? ☐ Male ☐ Female

4.3 Which year was *Hukou* holder born? _____

4.4 Education attainment of *Hukou* holder? _____

4.5 *Hukou* is at _____ Province _____ City _____ County

☐ Same as yours

Is the *Hukou* changed to Beijing during the years in Beijing? If your answer is yes, Which year? _____, From _____ Province _____ City _____ County Through which channel? ☐ Marriage ☐ House Purchasing ☐ Sponsored by employers ☐ Other _____

4.6 What is *Hukou* holder's current job?

☐ Recycling (including used furniture and electrical appliances

☐ Other _____

Thank you so much for your cooperation. If possible, could you please leave your phone number for scheduling a detailed follow-up interview? For the follow-up interviews, we will compensate on the time. We will store your information in this questionnaire very carefully and delete all your information after the research is completed. Thank you.

Phone Number: _____.

¹²⁰ Accesses include ①Relatives ②Friends ③Unknown people from hometown ④Searching by oneself; Leaving reasons include ①Cannot continue with the business ②For better opportunities ③Demolition

Part III. Questionnaire Codebook

Number of : 131

Variables

Number of Cases : 304

Table 21: Description of variables

| Variable | Name | Label | Value Label(s) |
|----------|------------|------------------|--|
| 1 | LOCATE | 采集地点 皮村 东小口 大兴丰台 | 1 = 'PC', 2 = 'DXFT ', 3 = 'DXK ' |
| 2 | STUNO | 采集人员编号 | 1-10 |
| 3 | QNO | 问卷编号 | |
| 4 | SEX | 性别 | 1 = 'Male', 2 = 'Female' |
| 5 | FYINBJ | 第一次来北京的年份 | |
| 6 | JOBBFBJ | 来北京之前的工作 | 1 = 'Farmer', 2 = 'Student', 3 = 'Laidoff', 4 = 'Retired', 5 = 'Other' |
| 7 | OTWK\$ | 其他工作的详细说明 | |
| 8 | HOWBJ | 如何来北京的 | 1 = 'Introduced by Relatives',
2 = 'Introduced by Friends',
3 = 'Introduced by Unknown People from Hometown',
4 = 'Job Agency',
5 = 'Self Decision' |
| 9 | PHUKOU\$ | 原户口省份 | |
| 10 | CHUKOU\$ | 原户口城市 | |
| 11 | COHUKOU\$ | 原户口县城 | |
| 12 | CURHK\$ | 改变户口后的现户口 | |
| 13 | PRIMEJOB\$ | 现主要工作 | |
| 14 | TYPERCY | 回收方式 | 1 = 'MOBILE with tricycle or bicycles',
2 = 'MOBILE with cars',
3 = 'Fixed-Location Community',
4 = 'Fixed-Location Recycling Market',
5 = 'Long-term Worker in Market',
6 = 'Temporary Worker in Market',
7 = 'Other' |
| 15 | CHGTYPE | 是否有更改过回收方式 | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 16 | E_PICK | 是否曾经捡废品 | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 17 | E_WORKER | 是否曾经做废品工人 | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 18 | E_COMMU | 是否曾经在社区回收 | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 19 | E_ALL | 是否曾经回收全部材料 | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 20 | E_MARKET | 是否在回收市场回收 | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 21 | E_OTHER\$ | 其他 | |

Table 21: (cont'd)

| | | | |
|----|-------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| 22 | MATERIAL | 主要的回收材料 | 1 = 'Steel and Iron', 铁和钢
2 = 'Copper and Aluminum', 有色金属
3 = 'Paper', 纸类
4 = 'Wood', 木头
5 = 'Plastics', 分类塑料
6 = 'PET', 1 号塑料瓶
7 = 'Foam', 泡沫
8 = 'Leftover', 杂货 (包含布等)
9 = 'Furniture', 二手家具
10 = 'Electronics', 二手电器
11 = 'Variety', 全种类回收
12 = 'Carpet', 地毯
13 = 'glass bottle' 玻璃瓶 |
| 23 | MATOT | 回收多种的话, 另外兼回收哪类材料? | 1 = 'Steel and Iron',
2 = 'Copper and Aluminum',
3 = 'Paper',
4 = 'Wood',
5 = 'Plastics',
6 = 'PET',
7 = 'Foam',
8 = 'Leftover',
9 = 'Furniture',
10 = 'Electronics',
11 = 'Variety',
12 = 'Other' |
| 24 | WKUPTIME | General wake up time | |
| 25 | SLEEPTIME | General time to sleep | |
| 26 | DTWK_RAIN | Don't work during heavy rain | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 27 | DTWK_SNOW | Don't work during heavy snow | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 28 | DTWK_WIND | Don't work during heavy wind | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 29 | DTWK_FOG | Don't work during heavy fog | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 30 | DTWK_OTHER | 其他原因不工作 | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 31 | WHATOTHER\$ | 具体原因是? | |
| 32 | WKDAY | 一周工作几天 | |
| 33 | HPKIDHW | 工作之余是否辅导孩子作业? | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 34 | SHOPPING | 工作之余是否逛街 | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 35 | TOURISM | 工作之余是否景点游玩? | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 36 | WNW | What else to do if not work | |
| 37 | WNW_OTHER\$ | Other means ... | |
| 38 | WKFOTHER | 是否为别人打过工? | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 39 | WKFOTHER\$ | 举例说明 | |
| 40 | WHYQUIT\$ | 为何放弃给别人打工? | |
| 41 | NOINHOUSE | how many people are in the house? | |
| 42 | OWNHOUSE | Do you own housing in Beijing? | 1 = 'Yes, I live there',
2 = 'Yes, I don't live there though',
3 = 'No, I live close to my work',
4 = 'No, I live a little far from my work' |
| 43 | WHRH\$ | 具体地址是? | |

Table 21: (cont'd)

| | | | |
|----|-----------|--|--|
| 44 | HPLAN | New bought or Self built house? | 1 = 'Self-Built one at Home Town',
2 = 'Self-Built one at my Rural Village',
3 = 'Bought one at Home Town',
4 = 'Bought one at Rural Village',
5 = 'Self-Built one at Other Town',
6 = 'Self-Built one at Other Village',
7 = 'Bought one at Other Town',
8 = 'Bought one at Other Village',
9 = 'Plan to self-build one at home town',
10 = 'Plan to self-build one at home village',
11 = 'Plan to buy one at home town',
12 = 'Plan to buy one at home village',
13 = 'Plan to self-build one at other town',
14 = 'Plan to self-build one at other village', 15 = 'Plan to buy one at other town',
16 = 'Plan to buy one at other village',
17 = 'I'm not going to build or buy house.',
18 = 'I haven't thought about this question' |
| 45 | OTHSPLAN | 其他新置房屋状况? | 1 = 'Self-Built one at Home Town',
2 = 'Self-Built one at my Rural Village',
3 = 'Bought one at Home Town',
4 = 'Bought one at Rural Village',
5 = 'Self-Built one at Other Town',
6 = 'Self-Built one at Other Village',
7 = 'Bought one at Other Town',
8 = 'Bought one at Other Village',
9 = 'Plan to self-build one at home town',
10 = 'Plan to self-build one at home village',
11 = 'Plan to buy one at home town',
12 = 'Plan to buy one at home village',
13 = 'Plan to self-build one at other town',
14 = 'Plan to self-build one at other village', 15 = 'Plan to buy one at other town',
16 = 'Plan to buy one at other village',
17 = 'I'm not going to build or buy house.',
18 = 'I haven't thought about this question'
19 = 'have bought one in Beijing' |
| 46 | HOUSEAREA | How big is the place you are staying in? | 1 = 'within 10sqm',
2 = '10-20sqm',
3 = '20-30sqm',
4 = '30-40sqm',
5 = 'over 40sqm' |

Table 21: (cont'd)

| | | | |
|----|--------------|--|--|
| 47 | IHRESTRM | In house restroom | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 48 | IHRUNNINGW | in house running water | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 49 | IHSOLARWT | in house solar heated water | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 50 | IHELECWT | in house electric heated water | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 51 | IHAIRCOND | in house air conditioner | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 52 | IHFURNACE | in house furnace | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 53 | IHPUBCHEAT | Public heat | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 54 | SELFB | 是否自建房? | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 55 | MKTH | 是否市场提供? | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 56 | AGH | 是否农村房? | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 57 | URBAPT | 是否城市楼房? | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 58 | TIMESCHG | 更换过几次回收物品种类 | |
| 59 | REASONCHG\$ | 更换原因? | |
| 60 | LICENSE | 是否具有自己的回收营业执照 | 1 = 'Yes, I am using my own license',
2 = 'Yes, I am renting or using friends' license',
3 = 'Yes, I am using the market license',
4 = 'No' |
| 61 | SHAREOP | 是否合资合作经营? | 1 = 'Cooperating with relatives',
2 = 'Cooperating with friends',
3 = 'Complete family business',
4 = 'Work for other people's business' |
| 62 | CT_SM | 是否与商店超市有回收 contract | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 63 | CT_OM | 是否与大型市场有回收 contract | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 64 | CT_CSTRCT | 是否与建筑商或拆迁单位有回收 contract | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 65 | CT_COMMUNITY | 是否与居委会/物业有回收 contract | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 66 | CT_GOV | 是否与机关事业单位有回收 contract | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 67 | CT_OTHER | 是否与其他地方有回收 contract | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 68 | OTCT\$ | 其他地方是? | |
| 69 | WKAREA1 | I work inside the 2nd ring road | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 70 | WKAREA2 | I work between second and third ring road | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 71 | WKAREA3 | I work between the third and fourth ring roads | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 72 | WKAREA4 | I work between the fourth and fifth ring roads | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 73 | WKAREA5 | I work between the fifth and sixth ring roads | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 74 | SATISFY | Are you satisfied with your current job? | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 75 | CHGJOB | Intention to change your current job | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 76 | SHOURONG | ever been kept away for Shourong 收容 | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |

Table 21: (cont'd)

| | | | |
|----|-----------|---|---|
| 77 | UNFAIR | ever been unfairly treated | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 78 | BUYFOOD | Where does your family buy grocery? | 1 = 'Open Market and Food Store Around',
2 = 'SuperMarkets',
3 = 'Provided by the Recycling Yard',
4 = 'Self-Grown by family',
5 = 'Never buy' |
| 79 | BF2 | 如果不止一处地方，其他还包括？ | 1 = 'Open Market and Food Store Around',
2 = 'SuperMarkets',
3 = 'Provided by the Recycling Yard',
4 = 'Grown by family' |
| 80 | BUYOTHER | Where does your family buy everyday stuff? | 1 = 'Open Market or Close-by store',
2 = 'SuperMarket',
3 = 'Use Recycled Ones in Market',
4 = 'Other' |
| 81 | BO2 | else | 1 = 'Open Market or Close-by store',
2 = 'SuperMarket',
3 = 'Use Recycled Ones in Market',
4 = 'Other' |
| 82 | EATOUT | Frequency to eat in restaurants per week | 1 = 'Nearly Never',
2 = '1-2 times',
3 = '3-5 times',
4 = '5-10 times',
5 = 'Almost all the time' |
| 83 | INTOUCHBJ | How many Beijing people you have contact with per week? | |
| 84 | GHAG | Do you go home during agricultural busy time? | 1 = 'Never',
2 = 'Often',
3 = 'Sometimes',
4 = 'Only when something special happened' |
| 85 | GHSF | Do you go home during spring festival? | 1 = 'Never',
2 = 'Often',
3 = 'Sometimes',
4 = 'Only when something special happened' |
| 86 | GH45 | Do you go home on April 5th?
清明 | 1 = 'Never',
2 = 'Often',
3 = 'Sometimes',
4 = 'Only when something special happened' |
| 87 | GHTY | Are you going home this year for SF | 1 = 'Yes',
2 = 'No. All relatives are here, barely no one's at home',
3 = 'No. hometown's condition is not as good as in Beijing',
4 = 'No. Good business during Spring Festival. ',
5 = 'No. Can't afford to go back.',
6 = 'Other',
7 = 'Haven't decided' |
| 88 | OTRNGH\$ | | |

Table 21: (cont'd)

| | | | |
|-----|----------|---|---|
| 89 | TMSGG | How many times visiting the forbidden city? | |
| 90 | TMSYHY | How many times visiting Yiheyuan? | |
| 91 | TMSCC | How many times visiting the Great Wall? | |
| 92 | TMSHLG | How many times visiting Huanlegu? | |
| 93 | TMSTAM | How many times visiting Tiananmen? | |
| 94 | TMSTT | How many times visiting Tiantan? | |
| 95 | TMSHH | How many times visiting Houhai? | |
| 96 | TMSCM | How many times visiting Capital Museum? | |
| 97 | YBORN | which year you were born | |
| 98 | EDU | Education | 1 = 'None',
2 = 'Primary School',
3 = 'Middle School',
4 = 'High School',
5 = 'Professional Middle School',
6 = 'Academic College',
7 = 'Professional College',
8 = 'Graduate Studies' |
| 99 | MARRY | Marital Status | 1 = 'Married',
2 = 'Single',
3 = 'Divorced',
4 = 'Other' |
| 100 | NUMKIDS | How many kids do you have? | |
| 101 | WIFEHERE | Is your wife with you? | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 102 | NKHERE | how many kids are with you? | |
| 103 | KIDINPS | Is your oldest child in primary school yet? | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 104 | KIDBJFP | Did your oldest child go to Beijing's local primary school? | 1 = 'Yes',
0 = 'No',
2 = 'Beijing private school' |
| 105 | KIDBJMP | Did your oldest child go to Beijing's migrant primary school? | 1 = 'Yes',
0 = 'No' |
| 106 | KIDHTP | Did your oldest child go to hometown primary school? | 1 = 'Yes',
0 = 'No' |
| 107 | KIDOTP | Did you oldest child go to primary school at other places? | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 108 | KIDINMS | Is s/he ever in Middle School? | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 109 | KIDBJFM | Did your oldest child go to Beijing's local middle school? | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 110 | KIDBJMM | Did your oldest child go to Beijing's migrant middle school? | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 111 | KIDHTM | Did your oldest child go to hometown's middle school? | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |

Table 21: (cont'd)

| | | | |
|-----|------------|--|--|
| 112 | KIDOTM | Did your oldest child go to middle school at other places? | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 113 | KIDWORK | What work does your child do? | 1 = 'S/he's not working yet',
2 = 'S/he's doing the same work as I do',
3 = 'S/he's not doing the same work as I do' |
| 114 | KIDPW | Do you plan to let s/he work as what you do? | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 115 | DISPINCH | Disposable income highest per year | |
| 116 | DISPINCL | Disposable income lowest per year | |
| 117 | SPDFOOD | Spending on food per day | |
| 118 | SPDHOUSE | Spending on housing per month | |
| 119 | SPDUTIL | Spending on Utility per month | |
| 120 | SPDENTERT | Spending on Entertainment per month | |
| 121 | SPDYARD | Spending on renting yard per month | |
| 122 | SPDEDU | Spending on Kids' education per year | |
| 123 | SPDHOME | Money sending home per year | |
| 124 | HKHHOLDER | Are you the <i>Hukou</i> holder? | 1 = 'Yes', 0 = 'No' |
| 125 | RELTTY\$ | <i>Hukou</i> holder's relation to you? | |
| 126 | HKHSEX | <i>Hukou</i> holder's gender | 1 = 'Male', 2 = 'Female' |
| 127 | HKHAGE | the year <i>Hukou</i> holder was born | |
| 128 | HKHEDU | <i>Hukou</i> holder's education | 1 = 'None',
2 = 'Primary School',
3 = 'Middle School',
4 = 'High School',
5 = 'Professional School',
6 = 'College',
7 = 'Graduate Studies' |
| 129 | HKHJOB | <i>Hukou</i> holder's current job? | 1 = 'Recycling', 2 = 'Other' |
| 130 | HKHJOBS | | |
| 131 | HKHHUKOU\$ | <i>Hukou</i> holder's <i>Hukou</i> location? | |

APPENDIX G

Introduction to Key Chinese Terms

Giving the context of this dissertation research, several Chinese terms are important for understanding the discussion and analysis. Here is a list of the Chinese terms in this dissertation with brief introduction. I will also discuss these terms at greater length elsewhere in the dissertation.

Henancun 河南村: *Henan* is a rural province in China and *cun* is the administrative name for village in Chinese. *Henancun* means the migrant enclaves most *Henan* migrants live and run businesses in Beijing.

Gushi 固始: *Gushi* is a county in *Henan* province where migrants are from.

Hukou 户口: *Hukou* is the policy to divide Chinese population to be either rural or urban, which further determines their access to different social facilities and welfares.

Shourong 收容: *Shourong* literarily means “to take in.” Many migrant recyclers were taken away by the public order joint defense team under *Shourong* policy in Beijing.

Xingshang 行商: itinerant businessman. *Xingshang* refers to the roving recyclers who do not have a fixed location to run recycling.

Zuoshang 坐商: sitting businessman. *Zuoshang* refers to the recyclers who have a fixed space to run their recycling business, including both the community recyclers and the yard buyers.

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