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**China’s *Liushou’er* (Left-behind Children) Phenomenon:
Development and Challenges**

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China's Liushou'er (Left-behind Children) Phenomenon: Development and Challenges

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Background

The tremendous scale of rural-to-urban migration is currently one of the most perplexing issues in China due to the dramatically increasing number of immigrants in this country. Rural immigrants bring about political and social problems in the affected areas. In 1998, the number of rural-to-urban immigrants was 44.24 million (NBS, 1999), but it reached 150.97 million by the end of the second quarter of 2009 (NBS, 2009). Migrants with children face even greater difficulties in urban areas. Initially, they are denied access to basic welfare, housing and security in the target cities as a result of the stringent household registration system and the place-based public finance system (Xiang, 2007).

China's increasing economy and its rapid urbanization have provided millions of opportunities for the locals to migrate from smaller towns to bigger cities. The driving forces behind China's rural-urban migration include urban-rural income disparity, surplus labour in agriculture, modernized market economy and the government's policies on outer-migrations (Wong, et al., 2009). According to National Bureau of Statistics of China (NBS, 2009), there were 151 million people who have moved from rural areas of China to the big cities. However, the unique dual socioeconomic structure and related household registration system in China have restrained rural labourers' settling down in the cities. Therefore, hundreds of these immigrants have to migrate alone, leaving their families behind. This can be considered as one of the factors resulting in high number of LBC in China's rural areas.

According to the All-China Women's Federation's (ACWF) survey in 2008, there were about 58 million LBC in China in the same year, of which 28% comprised of children from rural areas (ACWF, 2008). It was also found that 55 million LBC left behind in rural areas were in unhealthy and inadequate living conditions (UNICEF, 2010). The LBC rates in China are still increasing drastically. The children who are left behind are found to be facing financial, personal and educational problems. Although many researchers have explored this area of study, very few researchers have identified the relationship between the LBC and their problems with regard to the social and economic growth and development in China. Besides, the issue of LBC betrays contradictions that exist between the continuously rapid developments and imperfect management system in China. As Zhao F.C. (2009) declares, the contradictions embody the conflict between the unbalanced developments in urban and rural areas and the incongruous economic and social developments in China. Moreover, the rising income inequality has been one of the most profound social consequences during China's economic transitions from an agrarian and socialist planned economy to an industrial and market based. The income inequality was also accompanied by a rising trend of social and economic polarization (Wang, et al., 2006). Therefore, led by the state government, the municipal governments seriously collaborate attempting to solve the LBC problems across the country.

Chongqing is the youngest municipality in Southwest China, with a population of around 28.6 million according to 2009 year-end census (Chongqing Municipal Bureau of Statistic, 2010). Out of this number, 4.4 million are LBC aged between 0-16 years old (Chongqing Women's

Federation, 2009). The urban population growth rate in Chongqing rose from 29.5% in 1996 to 50% in 2009, while the rural population dropped from 20.27 million in 1996 to 13.84 million in 2009 (Chongqing Municipal Bureau of Statistic, 2010). According to the survey from women's Federation of Chongqing in 2009, there are about 2.35 million rural LBC in Chongqing. Compared to the number of LBC (1.47 million) from the Fifth National Population Census in 2000, the number of LBC has increased by 0.88 million since then (Chongqing Daily, 2010).

According to the survey done by the Women's Federation of Chongqing, rural LBC represent 53% of the total population of children in this municipality in 2009. About 46% of the LBC live in the Northeast of Chongqing, while 36% of them reside in Southeast Chongqing (Chongqing Women's Federation, 2009). However, Chongqing is one of the first cities in China to initiate solutions to the problems encountered by LBC. The Chongqing Model is aimed at analyzing and solving problems faced by LBC, and it can also be applied to analysis and solution of LBC problem across China. On the other hand, the high living cost and access to education is a challenge in some regions in China (Wong, 2010). Since immigrants do not have sufficient money or energy to take care of their children, lack of parental supervision and inability to provide emotional support to their children (Guo & Zhu, 2009) is a common problem faced by migrant families or parents. Moreover, due to unstable employment conditions, immigrants have to constantly hunt for new opportunities. Without the basic economic security, immigrants to urban areas have to be particularly cautious about bringing family members with them (Xiang, 2007).

This paper will mainly probe into the local government's measures and initiatives and society's participation in activities and social support regarding LBC in Chongqing. This research mainly focuses on Chongqing province, which has the highest rate (49.9%) of rural LBC in China (Duan & Yang, 2008). This study further covers several local government agencies such as the Education Committee of Chongqing, the Chongqing Women's Federation and so on. The researcher has chosen —Wuxi county in Chongqing to evaluate the government and NGO's initiatives in its rural areas. The —Wuxi county is one of the poorest counties in Chongqing as the per capita GDP its rural residents is \$3500 in year according to 2010 census (<http://wx.cq.gov.cn>). Moreover, —Wuxi is one of the five counties with over 80% of current and potential rural LBC in the region (Chongqing Daily, 2010).

Due to time and financial constraints, the researcher limited the respondents to the selected schools and certain rural areas in Chongqing. Although the occurrence of LBC has been apparent since the late 80s in China, there are still very few reports written on LBC in English, which shows absence of government initiatives in encouraging more studies in this area. Furthermore, due to some local government's dysfunctions, there is a shortage of data collected from some governmental departments in Chongqing. Finally, the researcher encountered some difficulties in evaluating the local government's policies as the analysis period would take a longer time.

Literature Review

Although, according to the international standards, *—every human being below the age of eighteen years” is defined as a child (Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1990)*, different scholars have different opinions about the LBC's age range. Duan and his colleagues defined

LBC as the children at the age of fourteen or below (Duan & Zhou, 2005; Duan & Wu, 2009). In a survey carried out by the ACWF in 2007, LBC were described as children who are seventeen years old or below (ACWF, 2008). Meanwhile, Duan and Yang (2008) employed the same definition of LBC in their study in 2008. In addition, some different views pointed out by other researchers have suggested various definitions and descriptions of LBC.

In two different research papers respectively published by Lu and Zhang, LBC are considered to be children between 7 to 18 years old (Lu, 2006; Zhang, 2010), while Zhou and Ye define LBC as children who are left behind and are under 18 years old (Duan & Zhou, 2006; Ye & James, 2005). According to the report of Chongqing Women's Federation, LBC are within the age range of 0-16. As the above views demonstrate, there seems to be no one correct definition of LBC, especially regarding their age range, upon which authors and researchers agree. However, most of the scholars agree on some essential features and characteristics that majority of LBC share such as lack of independent ability, which means they are usually in the period of the nine years of compulsory education, that is, the period covering primary school and junior secondary school years, which, according to the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China (2006), is 6 or 7 to 12 or 13 primary school and 12 or 13 to 15 or 16 for junior secondary school. Based on this categorization, this paper defines the LBC as the children who are under 16 years old, which is also consistent with the definition, presented by Chongqing Women's Federation's survey.

The first dispute is between the two different views on LBC's family structure. Majority of scholars believe that if one of parents has migrated, the children who stay at home can be counted as LBC (Duan & Zhou, 2006), while some other researchers argue that LBC are the children who have been left behind by both migrant parents (Lin, 2003).

The second argument is about the parents' migration time span. Some of the studies defined LBC as children with their parents migrated for more than three months, and some others suggested that it should not be less than half a year. While many scholars claim that the LBC's parents should be migrant workers who have left their home and children for at least one year (Ye & Pan, 2008). However, after the Fifth National Population Census in 2000, many studies on LBC unanimously agree that minimum period for LBC's parents' migration is half a year so that these children can be considered as LBC (Duan & Zhou, 2006).

Being left behind in China is not only a family matter of practical consideration for the migrants and their family members, but is also related to fundamental institutional arrangements and unequal social relations. These institutional arrangements also explain the problems faced by the left- behind, and the marginal difference in welfare status between them and those accompanied by family members in rural communities (Xiang, 2007).

Urbanization and Rural-urban Income Gap

Since the inception of the reform program in the late 1970s, urbanization has been one of the most important features of China's development (Dillon, 2009). China urban development report points out there were 132 cities in 1949 and the urbanization rate was 10.6% in China (Fan, Niu & Wei, 2009). This rate increased to 44.9% in 2007 (Fan, 2008). However, according to the World Bank, the average urbanization rate in the world was 49% in 1995, and the urbanization rate was 75% in the developed countries (China Mayors Association, 2005). According to Zhang and Song (2003), the level of urbanization in China has drastically

increased and the urban population of China reached 620 million and urbanization rate was 46.6% in 2009. The Annual Report on Urban Development of China estimates the urbanization rate will reach 52% in 2015, and 65% in 2030 (The Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Urban Development and Environmental Research Institute, 2010). However, Zhao, Su and other researchers (2009) state that, although China is becoming more urbanized, the urban–rural dual structure is unlikely to change in near future. The level of urbanization is usually measured by the share of the urban population in the total population. From this perspective, the rural-urban migration is the main source of urbanization growth in current China (Zhang & Song, 2004).

With the rapid urbanization, the rural-urban income gap continues expand. The rural-urban income gap is measured by the ratio of urban per capita disposable income to rural per capita net income (Zhang & Song, 2004). According to the NBS, the ratio of urban-rural income was 2.79:1 in 2000. It increased, however, to 3.21:1 in 2004, 3.28:1 in 2006 and 3.33:1 in 2007. The income of the rural residents was less than the urban residents, that is, 8172 Yuan in 2006, which raised to 9646 Yuan in 2007 (Zhang, 2008). The increase rate of per capita net income of rural residents was higher than urban residents in recent two years. However, there is still a big income gap between rural residents and urban residents. The per capita net income of the rural residents was 13,180 Yuan less than urban residents in 2010. In 2011, the annual rural per capita net income was 6,977 Yuan, which was 14,843 Yuan less than that of the urban residents. (Source: NBS. (2012). The national economic and social development statistical bulletin in 2011 in the People's Republic of China. Retrieved from http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjgb/ndtjgb/qgndtjgb/t20120222_402786440.htm). According to Zhang and Song (2003), the rural-urban income gap is the main force driving the city-ward migration, especially for migrants from inland rural areas to coastal urban areas.

Household Registration System

Wong (2010) explains that the household registration system is called the Hukou system in China. It is an administrative measure that registers households according to place of their origin. According to Richburg (2010), the —Hukou is essentially a household registration permit, akin to an internal passport. It contains all of a household's identifying information, such as parents' names, births, deaths, marriages, divorces, moves and colleges attended. Most importantly, it identifies the city, town or village to which a person belongs. It was established in the 1950s in order to prevent the rural population from spontaneously moving to cities. Xiang (2007) states that under the Hukou system, people born in urban areas are officially registered as residents (Ju Min) and those in rural areas as peasants (Nong Min). Residents and Peasants are two distinct categories of social status that entail different rights, and Peasants cannot obtain urban Hukou status unless mandated by the state. Ma (2010) states this designation limits a person's employment, education or social services in the place which is not where people belong. However, having permission to enter other cities and sticking to a stable job by rural to urban migrants does not mean they can benefit from the same welfare as urban citizens (Lin, 2009). The Hukou system remains a formidable obstacle for the overwhelming majority of migrants who want to live with their families in the city (Xiang, 2007). Lin (2009) mentions that the majority of migrant workers in cities, usually do not have long-term urban residencies (or household registration status) and medical insurance. In early days, changing registered permanent residence was forbidden in China. As Ma (2010) describes, migrant rural workers may live in a city for years —Urban Hukou. Rural migrant workers are not entitled to subsidized public housing, public medical insurance, government welfare services or public education beyond elementary school. However, few —Hokou system reformations have been initiated. According to the Ministry of Public Security (2008) in 2006, the Hukou system

started relaxing and enabling migrants to transfer their Hukous to cities. Indeed, many demands for transferring the —Hukou from rural to urban have been set up in practice. For instance, in Guangzhou City, migrants must have lived in a fixed place within the city proper (not the outskirts) for a minimum of five years, have a stable source of income, and have participated in the city's social security program in order to be able to apply for permanent residence in the city, effectively ruling out the vast majority of internal migrant workers who are highly mobile and unlikely to have lived in the same place in the city for five years.

Methodology

Part of the collected data was gathered through internet from various websites and web pages containing LBC information resources and databases including Chongqing Children's Library, and the Chongqing Daily internal information retrieval library. In order to have primary qualitative data, the researcher carried out primary investigations through semi-structured interviews and questionnaires. The semi-structured interviews involve school principals, teachers, volunteers, government and NGO staff. The questionnaires cover students and teachers in the selected schools.

There are 247 schools in Wuxi County, including 19 junior secondary schools with 1823 secondary students and 218 primary schools with 2666 primary students (Chongqing Municipal Bureau of Statistics, 2011). Among these schools, 3 primary schools and 3 junior secondary schools are located in the center of the county town. Most of the students in these 6 schools are city residents. Therefore, these groups of children were not automatically discarded from the potential samples.

From among 216 primary schools, the researcher has chosen 3 town schools and one village school to hand out the questionnaires. There is no junior secondary school in villages, thus, the researcher was obliged to visit 3 junior secondary schools in different towns. The respondents are grade five and six students in primary school and grade one and two students in junior secondary school. A total of 505 questionnaires (420 students and 85 teachers) were distributed, but only 344 (295 student questionnaires and 49 teacher questionnaires) were returned, leaving only 295 which were rightly answered that fit the sampling criteria of this research and, as a result, only valid for data extraction.

Findings and Discussion

Among 295 LBC, there are 212 students (113 male and 99 female) from primary schools and 83 respondents (46 male and 37 female) from junior secondary schools. Due to the definition of LBC defined in this research, the respondents were in 6-16 years old age range, thus the survey only covered the fifth and sixth grades in the primary schools, and the first and second grades of the junior secondary schools.

Among these children, 70 LBC are 8-10 years old, 195 LBC are 11-12 years old, and 30 LBC are 13-15 years old. In addition, 97.2% of the LBC from the primary schools are at the age between 8 and 12, and 98.8% are from the junior secondary schools aged 11-15. This age range shows that in this research the schooling age rule of the compulsory education policy has been effectively implemented. Among 49 teacher questionnaires, 29 respondents were from the

primary schools, including 4 primary village schools teachers. Another 20 teachers were from junior secondary schools.

According to Chongqing Women’s Federation’s survey in 2009, there were 2.35 million 0-16 year old rural LBC, compared to the Fifth National Population Census in 2000, it raised by 0.88 million (60%) (Chongqing Women’s Federation, 2009). Chongqing has the highest rate (49.9%) of rural LBC all over the country. Rural LBC represent 53% of the total population of rural children in 2009 (Duan & Yang, 2008). In Chongqing, 28% of rural LBC have to walk half an hour to go to school, and 15% walk for two hours. Around 700 thousand rural LBC spend one hour on the way to their school and back (Chongqing Women’s Federation, 2009).

Second, majority of LBC are primary school students. In 2008, rural LBC shared 42.2% of students in primary school, and represented over 40% of students in secondary school in Chongqing. Both were the highest rate in China (The Ministry of Education Department of Development Planning, 2009). According to Chongqing Women’s Federation, 18% of LBC are 0-6 years old, 55% of LBC are 6-12 years old, and 27% of LBC are at the age of 12-16. Male LBC represented 53% of the total LBC, slightly higher than the female LBC (Chongqing Women’s Federation, 2009). A survey which involved 6 counties shows, majority of rural LBC are studying in primary school. On the other hand, only few LBC have experienced formal pre-school education. Most of those up to 6 year old rural LBC have not received any standard pre-school education. Especially in poor areas, for example, there is no younger than 3 year old LBC entering pre-school in Wushan and Wuxi Counties. Only 30% of the 3-6 year old LBC have received pre-school education (Wu, 2010).

Thirdly, LBC stay with diverse family structure. Wu (2010) indicates majority of LBC are cared by single parents and grandparents, 50% of LBC are left behind with their mother and 32% of LBC stay with their grandparents. There are 15% of LBC living together with father, 3% of LBC are cared for by others. According to Fu and Liu (2008), 2.54% of LBC stay alone, 34.65% of LBC have no parents at home, and 23.4% of LBC stay with their grandparents. Besides, as Liu and Fu indicated, 79% of LBC have been taken care of by their grandparents in Chongqing. The Chongqing Women’s Federation summarized that among 2.35 million rural LBC, 1.3 million rural LBC’s both parents have left home, that is, 55% of rural LBC have no parents at home, and 32% of LBC live with their grandparents (Chongqing Daily, 2010). Wang (2009) noticed that most of LBC lack parenting, and 95% of LBC contact their parents by phone once a week. Moreover, LBC are unevenly distributed in Chongqing. There are 9 counties each with 100 thousand rural LBC. LBC shared over 80% of the total rural children in 5 counties (Chongqing Women’s Federation, 2009; Wu, 2010).

Table 1: Family Structure of LBC in Wuxi County in 2011

| | No. of students | LBC with both parents migrant | | LBC’s guardians | | |
|--|-----------------|-------------------------------|---|-----------------|-----------|--------|
| | | Number | % | Grandparents | Relatives | Others |
| | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|-----|
| Primary school | 33354 | 10165 | 30.48 | 8132 | 1708 | 325 |
| Junior secondary school | 21306 | 6148 | 28.86 | 4918 | 982 | 248 |
| Total | 54660 | 16313 | 29.84 | 13050 | 2690 | 573 |

Source: the Education Committee of Wuxi County

Table 2: Migrated Family Member Based on Different Types of Schools

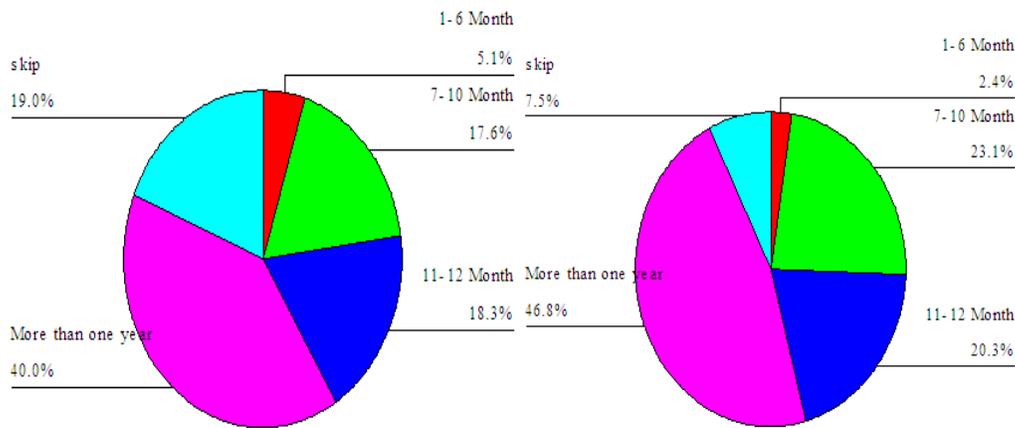
| Type of school | | Migrated family member | | | Total |
|----------------|------------|------------------------|--------|-----------------|--------|
| | | Father | Mother | Both of Parents | |
| primary school | Count | 38 | 21 | 153 | 212 |
| | % of Total | 12.9% | 7.1% | 51.9% | 71.9% |
| high school | Count | 18 | 1 | 64 | 83 |
| | % of Total | 6.1% | 0.3% | 21.7% | 28.1% |
| Total | Count | 56 | 22 | 217 | 295 |
| | % of Total | 19.0% | 7.5% | 73.6% | 100.0% |

Based on the student questionnaires, Figure 1 below indicates that 46.8% of the fathers and 40% of the mothers have left home for more than one year. Only 5.1% of the LBC's fathers have left home for less than half a year, and 2.4% of the LBC's mothers have been working out of their hometown for 1- 6 months. The study also shows that 62% of the fathers work out of Chongqing. Similarly, majority of mothers (66.4%) migrate outside Chongqing; 19% of the fathers work in Chongqing, and 12% of the fathers work and live in Wuxi County. These two percentages about fathers are both higher than percentages of mothers.

Figure 1: Period of separation from parents

Father

Mother



This research studies the relationship between LBC and their guardians. As illustrated in Table 3, 36.3% of the LBC believe their grandparents are the most important persons for them. 31.2% of the LBC think that the father is the most important figure in their lives. And 24.1% of the LBC choose their mothers as the most important person. These numbers indicate the grandparents take over parents in terms of LBC’s love. On the other hand, it also shows that 41.7% of the LBC receive help mostly from their grandparents, while just over 15% of the LBC are helped by their parents. The result reveals that LBC have closer relationship with their grandparents than their parents. Moreover, among other guardians, LBC’s relatives play a more important role in caring for them.

Table 3: Most Important Person(s) for LBC

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Grandparents | 107 | 36.3 | 36.3 | 36.3 |
| Father | 92 | 31.2 | 31.2 | 67.5 |
| Mother | 71 | 24.1 | 24.1 | 91.5 |
| Teacher | 3 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 92.5 |
| Friends / Classmates | 1 | 0.3 | .3 | 92.9 |
| Relatives | 12 | 4.1 | 4.1 | 96.9 |
| Sisters or brothers | 9 | 3.1 | 3.1 | 100.0 |
| Total | 295 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Table 4: Person(s) Who Helps LBC Most

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Grandparents | 123 | 41.7 | 41.7 | 41.7 |
| Father | 55 | 18.6 | 18.6 | 60.3 |
| Mother | 43 | 14.6 | 14.6 | 74.9 |
| Teachers | 20 | 6.8 | 6.8 | 81.7 |
| Relatives | 29 | 9.8 | 9.8 | 91.5 |
| Sisters / Brothers | 25 | 8.5 | 8.5 | 100.0 |

| | | | | |
|-------|-----|-------|-------|--|
| Total | 295 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |
|-------|-----|-------|-------|--|

Since the household registration system reforms started in Chongqing in 2011, there are numbers of rural residents who have changed to citizenship in cities. This initiative of Chongqing's government has fundamentally helped solve the LBC's issue. However, 71.9% of the LBC hope their parents will come back home. Only 11.9% of the LBC wish to go to city following their parents. Regarding LBC who dislike moving to city, as the interviews indicates, most of the LBC are not comfortable with city life and are afraid to be discriminated as rural. However, some of them are satisfied with rural life. On the other hand, 14.2% of the LBC do not care whether their parents will come back. 2% of the LBC do not wish their parents to come back. This result together with the findings showed that some of the LBC have already broken up their relationship with their parents.

Development and Challenges

The number of rural LBC has hence expanded rapidly over the past few years due to the increasing number of immigrants from rural areas to urban areas. There were about 22.9 million rural LBC in China in the year 2000 (Duan & Zhou, 2005). However, this number rose to 58 million in 2005, and a report by the ACWF in 2008 claimed that up to one-third of the rural children were left behind (ACWF, 2008). Therefore, the large number of LBC and the problems associated with them are challenges and risks in terms of economic and social growth in China.

Some of the challenges are discussed below:

Risks on Next Generation's Development

Most of the LBC face serious mental and physical problems during their growing stage, which affects their character and values as they become adults. Hence, looking into the near future, this also can affect the quality of human resources in the next generation. One of the primary reasons for this claim is that, according to Ding (2009), most LBC have recorded very poor scores in their studies, high rates of repetition in the same class and high level of drop-outs. They also tend to dislike studying, are usually undisciplined and have no ambitions or goals in their lives. According to Duan and Zhou (2006), the drop-out rates of LBC are usually higher in secondary school. Apart from that, many LBC develop health problems in the critical growing stage. Through Guo's research which examined several the aspects of children's physical well-being, it was reported that LBC are weak in their anthropometrics, such as height, weight and self-evaluation of health (Guo & Zhu, 2009). There is also a significantly higher proportion of LBC that suffer from psychological and behavioral problems. A survey conducted by Yeoh and Lam (2006) in Jichun County with 250 junior high school students whose parents had left them for at least half a year, revealed that 16.6 % of these students felt abandoned, 12.3 % of them had problems expressing difficulties or obtaining help, and 6.5 % of them felt —anguished□ about being left behind.

Risks on Society's Security

According to Chan (2009), LBC have a higher risk of being involved as victims of accidents and crimes compared to children with both parents. On the other hand, LBC also tend to be criminals since they lack supervision from parents and have no one to guide them to the proper

path (Chan, 2009). Furthermore, it is also reported that LBC suffer a higher risk of abduction and abuse (ACWF, 2008). According to China Youth Research Center (2008), 40% of the juveniles in reform centers in 2006 were LBC.

Risk on China's Sustainable Development

The LBC issue has several negative impacts on China's development. Firstly, it may extend the economic gap between rural and urban areas. The LBC usually follow their parents to the city as the new generation of immigrants. One third of 15-17 year old rural LBC began to go to work in urban areas after graduating from secondary school (ACWF, 2008). Therefore, lesser farmers work on the land in rural areas. One of the results is that many villages in China have become deserted, with only elderly people and younger children left behind. Secondly, growth of LBC increases the economic gap between east and west China. For the eastern part of China, being on the receiving end of immigrants has allowed economy development with cheaper labour. On the other hand, for the western part of China, difficulty in finding labourers has contributed to its slower economic growth leading to another problem that most families in western China live on lower incomes with only some basic needs fulfilled. As a result, this is widening the gap between the east and west of China. The second and third generation immigrants to the city are more willing to live permanently in the city rather than returning to the rural area. Due to the fact that most LBC who work in the city have low educational background, they are unable to earn a higher income, a problem which increases the gap between the rich and the poor in cities, aggravating China's inequality problem.

Loss of Ethical and Moral Values

LBC's moral problems affect the continuation of Chinese traditions. Due to long separation periods, parents and children are unable to spend time together anymore. Therefore, compared to children who have both parents at home, the LBC tend to have more disciplinary problems. Nor do they have LBC intimate relationships with their parents. There is clearly no sign of adequate affection between such children and their parents. As a result, this affects LBC's personality development as they are usually unable to distinguish right from wrong, having no role model to look up to in their lives, especially during the growing stage (Zhang, 2010). Zhang (2010) further claims that most LBC would have the common values distorted as a result of not having parents with them. Similarly Han (2008) argues that many LBC are spoiled, unappreciative and selfish. Parents try to compensate their lack of love and affection by buying lots of toys and giving money to their children. This only worsens the situation between parents and children, encouraging LBC to develop consumerist attitude.

Concluding Remarks

As urbanization continues to grow in China, the migration of rural labourers from villages and smaller towns to bigger urban areas is inevitable. However, this migration seems to be a necessity for China to be able to continue her social and economic growth and development. Hence, it is inevitable that the number of LBC will increase in the near future. It is, therefore, vital to analyze and find possible solutions relating to the problems faced by LBC, mainly in education, health and security areas of their lives. It is also important to note that this problem should be handled before it becomes a bigger problem, hindering the social and economic growth and development of China. One of the main significances of this study is that its findings can be used to raise awareness of the LBC about China's society and government. Furthermore, this research aims to analyze and discuss the various problems faced by the LBC.

The outcomes of this analysis can be applied to further academic purposes as well as government references in policy making.

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