Research on the situation of deaf-mute Children of Migrant Workers in Guiyang, China

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Abstract

This report is the outcome of a Field Study project. The aim of the study was to find out how the floating deaf-mute children of migrant workers experience psychological problems in Guiyang, China. Bronfenbrenner’s ecological system theory was used as a theoretical frame. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with 4 inner migrant couples who have deaf-mute children receiving treatment in a Center for disabled in Guiyang. 12 professionals working with treating deaf-mute children are also interviewed as well as 5 deaf-mute children. In total together 21 informants are interviewed. The result of this study shows that three main aspects influence the psychological problems of floating deaf-mute children with migrant parents most: social welfare policy, family income conditions and the center of treatment environment. This study explored the problems based on Brofenbreener’s ecological systems approach, which for the author had a new perspective to research on the situation of deaf-mute children of migrant workers in Guiyang, China.

Key Words:  Deaf-mute children, migrant workers, poverty, bullying, Bronfenbrenner's ecological system theory, working conditions
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Disposition

Chapter one of the essay is an introduction, which interprets the reason why the author conducts this study. The second chapter is the previous research to interpret some significant elements and researching outcomes on this part. Chapter three is describing Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory, which later on is used to analyze the result of the study. The forth chapter is to describe what method the author applies to collect data and information to answer the research questions. In addition, Chapter five is the analytic part where the results of this study are analyzed based on Bronfenbrenners’s ecological theory. Finally, the sixth chapter will give some discussions and summaries of the study's results and some suggestions for future research. In the end, the author will give some conclusion of this study, as well as present the reference list and the appendixes.

1. Introduction:

Guiyang is a medium-sized city in the southwest of China, and it is the capital of Guizhou province. Due to opening and reforming in China, Guiyang has performed well in the past decades. However, its economic development is not as fast as in other big cities like Beijing and Shanghai, because it is located in the inland of China (Ma, 2005). Every year there is an increasing number of farmers leaving their hometowns to find jobs in Guiyang for the better working opportunities and higher salaries (Yang, 2000). Even so, farmers intend to come to Guiyang with their children to be provided a better chance for treating their disabilities. However, the deaf-mute children cannot get the same education and medical treatment for the local children there, even if the local children are diagnosed to be disabled or even deaf-mute. Because of different incomes, the economic gap between rural children and the urban children has enabled them to be treated in a different way and some children suffer from discrimination by
the mainstream of the people in Guiyang (Ma, 2005). Thus, the deaf children have become a marginalized group in Guiyang, and they cannot be integrated and assimilated into the existing groups in Guiyang. Also, the increasing number of the farm workers' disabled children have been exposed the shortage of treatment and special educational resources in China, such as teachers and rehabilitation instruments (Rong, 2001).

According to Yeates (2008), inner Migrant Workers are produced by the agricultural reconstruction and urbanization caused by the market economy in the 1970s. Around 140 million people have moved to the urban areas with a hope to work in the world factories, due to the market system on the basis of the land issue (ibid.). In China, inner migrant workers are mostly referring to the farm workers.

In Guiyang, inner migrant workers usually do a lot of manual works and it will solve some life basic problems for them. That is to say, their economic conditions bring a lot of negative effects on their children except for the disabled children, such as living conditions, nutrition, clothing, treating, social services and education quality (Ridge & Wright, 2008). The children who live in the extreme poverty will face more difficulties than other children who live in good conditions, when it comes to leaving parents (working abroad), unemployed parents (parents with no jobs), parents who abandon their children. According to United Convention on the Rights of the Child, children are not only depending on their parents, but also having their rights to claim their thoughts, to refuse discrimination and to access a certain quality of life (Ridge & Wright, 2008). All the children should make most of the chances in relation to their basic rights and treatments, even if the child is diagnosed to be disabled to some extent.
1.1 Aim and research question:

The aim of this study is to gain a deeper knowledge about the living conditions of floating migrant workers' deaf-mute children, as well as finding some suggestions and solutions to encounter their problems.

Research questions:

1. How are these deaf-mute children’s situation in school?
2. What kind of living conditions do these children have at home?
3. What solution can be suggested for encounter their problems?

1.2 Research background

Concept: Floating migrants worker

Many western countries have experienced industrialization and urbanization earlier than most of the oriental countries. A huge number of farm workers migrate from the rural areas to the prosperous cities in order to find better living conditions and to live in a more comfortable life (Treiman, 1970). Similarly, many poor people living in the undeveloped cities immigrate into numerous advanced countries to pursue much more happiness and sweetness in their daily lives. Several researchers from different countries have conducted the numerous studies on this social issue, having focused on various aspects and dimensions, such as social policy, social exclusion and inclusion, citizenship, social service, welfare, integration and assimilation and so on so forth.

Background in China

Currently, the household registration system, education system and the living conditions of the floating migrant-worker families have been paid attention by citizens and government in China. Social inclusion and exclusion have been closely
related to this study in this area. In Guiyang, there are a spot of studies based on the ecological system to find out the psychological problems of the floating farm workers’ children, especially from the disabled children.

**Background in the center of disabled rehabilitation**

Since 1957 the committee Guizhou, disabled persons had started expanding and combining the different disabled associations like blinding person association, deaf and mute association. In the year of 1988, the Guizhou disabled persons' Federation was established. The establishment consists of some departments for meeting a variety of the disabled children’s needs. The organization did not only improve the medical treatment but provides also social services and living resources to the poor disabled in remote areas for enhancing their quality of life accordingly to the development plans during the years to come. The development plans were working towards to increase the living standards of the disabled (Guizhou disabled persons' federation, 2010).

What's more, the disabled rehabilitation center was one of large-scale branch of Guizhou disabled persons' federation, where around 450 disabled people get free treatment, where 39% were disabled children (including autistic children, children with cerebral palsy, and deaf-mute children). Meanwhile, the total number of employees is 70 professionals who are distributed over different sections and 12 of them belong to the section of deaf-mute children’s rehabilitation. There is one director of the respective section, two caregivers, two doctors, three collective course teachers, and four single course teachers (Disabled person rehabilitation center, 2013).
1.3 The role and goals of the deaf-mute children rehabilitation section:

The deaf-mute children rehabilitation which provided one-year free treatment and special education has created a comfortable kindergarten atmosphere for deaf-mute children. The kindergarten has two different levels of special education classes, one was the elementary class for 1 ~ 3 years old deaf-mute children, the other is a higher level class for 4 ~ 7 years old deaf-mute children. Each class only has 12 deaf-mute children and other 23 deaf-mute children who only receive the free artificial cochlea surgery, but they cannot get special education offered by this center because of no class position (Disabled person rehabilitation center, 2013). Social workers play the extremely important role of the teachers to train deaf-mute children's listening, pronunciation, cognitive competence and self-sufficiency ability at any event. Every child has two different courses: one is the “collective course”, including a lot of aspects; for instance, drawing, dancing, handcrafting, calligraphy, mathematics, recognition and cognitive capabilities, basic listening and pronouncing, etc. The other is the “Single course”, in which single course teachers can adopt different teaching approaches of listening and pronouncing for different children.

Actually, this section of deaf-mute children use a lot of different techniques to meet teaching needs, such as dancing class, music class, children playroom, single course class, collective course class, etc. Of course, it also includes all kinds of possible therapies, psychological counseling, and measuring the effect of artificial cochlea. The section of deaf-mute children rehabilitation, need to find some enterprises to sponsor new rehabilitation equipment and other resources.

The limitations of deaf-mute children rehabilitation section:

The children’s welfare systems in different cities are different, based on the urban economic level in reality (Liu, 2005). There are several existing non-profit
organizations and private rehabilitation centers in Guizhou. Due to non-profit organizations invested by the whole nation, it offers quite a lot of the limited resources for deaf-mute children, as the author mentioned, this center just could provide 24 places to deaf-mute children getting rehabilitation, and other deaf-mute children just could have free artificial cochlear surgery. If the children's parents want their kid to get rehabilitation, they can choose private rehabilitation centers, if they could afford massive medical cost with their own personal ability and financial supports.

Furthermore, the lack of professional social workers has brought quite negative effects on disabled services. As noted by Hugman (2010) the development of social work in China has, in many ways, been driven by the growth of university level programs. However, neither programs of social work are offered in poor cities in China, nor they arise public care and awareness for social welfare. The author found that personnel without professional social work education and professional training were working at the rehabilitation center for the disabled. There are around 450 disabled people who have accepted treatment in this rehabilitation center, but there are only 70 working staffs to shoulder their responsibilities. There are also a few personnel without any professional knowledge and skills, compared with other developed countries’ social workers.

Apart from that, wrong teaching methods are used by a lot of teachers through all ages in China. However, children who study in normal education schools or special education schools, are always punished by teachers when they have violated the class discipline. The same phenomenon existed at the author’s internship placement, when she learned the teaching methods from other experienced teachers, she found that they always punished deaf-mute children with ignorance/indiscipline, and when children grabbed other children's toys or items, however, she observed that it could bring serious influences, which could show that a few children begin to deal with their
problems through fighting, a few children began to imitate teachers' behaviors to solve their own problems. In addition, they were unwilling to coordinate with teachers in the class, because they would fear to be treated badly when they might have meant poor performance at the class.

### 1.4 Motivation

With the fast and rapid development of the economy, more and more farm workers move with their children to cities to find work. In this process of migration, psychological problems will appear more frequently among farm workers' children (Wang & Song, 2007). This occurs especially for disabled children and is becoming a world-wide issue. In fact, they are not only belonging to a socially marginalized group, but also they are disabled children in need of welfare. The deaf-mute children can enjoy their human rights and social service by living with their floating farm workers’ parents. As the author puts it, the psychological problems of deaf-mute children are not something in the world that must be performed quickly, and the thing is something that has to be done everywhere and in all ages in reality.

The author wants to mention that there are different angles to see this social problem, the author has chosen to focus on social relationships, inequalities, financial problem and living conditions. Deaf-mute children with floating farm workers' parents and disabled rehabilitation center are the author's target group. The author has previous experiences from working with deaf-mute children and has an internship at disabled person's rehabilitation center in Guiyang. The author works with deaf-mute children and special educational teachers for deaf-mute children, where every deaf-mute children’s parents are all belonging to the floating farm workers.
2. Earlier Research

In this chapter, the author wants to review the previous research on farmer workers' children and deaf-mute children. The author will describe the key points through literature review with how deaf-mute children’s mental health is heavily influenced by the special education as well as the treatment. The earlier research studies show the occurring issues of farmer workers' children, especially for deaf-mute children to a large degree. Previous research frequently describe education, exclusion, poverty and treatment which have occurred to the farmer workers' children, especially for the deaf-mute children. All of the articles can closely relate to the situation in Guiyang and provide a broader understanding of the issue the author wants to explore in this study.

2.1 The situation of farmer workers' children

Urbanization has placed pressure on land, a key resource for the inhabitants of the earth (Dominelli, 2012). Farm workers emigrate from rural areas into cities due to lack of income to get better living conditions in their own rural areas. However, most of the farm workers families still find themselves at the lowest level of living conditions in the society. This depends on the families' economic status in China, especially in the southwest cities of China like Guiyang. They earn little, and most of them cannot afford to buy an apartment for themselves in the city to settle down, so they had better rent the houses largely. Hence, their lives in the city are only characterized by mobility and temporality (Shen, 2010). Families always live in the temporary shacks near the construction areas, they move to a new work place and new temporary shack when they finish their work in a certain place. In fact, farm workers just can do some heavy physical work, but their pension is really low so that it is hard for them to support their daily life. There are some previous studies about farm workers incoming in Guiyang, the data shows that 58% of the farm workers’ wages
are 500-1000 yuan (RMB) per month, that the wages of 35% of the farm workers are 1500-2000 yuan (RMB) per month and that only 7% of them can earn more than 2000 yuan (RMB) per month. However, the average salary of the residents in Guiyang is 2500 yuan (RMB). Compared with the normal salary for people in Guiyang, the farm workers do not have surplus money to enrich their lives after they pay for their accommodations as well as their daily necessities (Sa-sha, 2012), nowadays 1000 yuan (RMB) is around 156.7 USD. There are a lot of farm workers' families who do not have any medical insurance. That is to say, their children often go to the private clinics to see a doctor, not being allowed to the bigger hospitals.

The education issues of migrant children are diversified from different perspectives. There are also three other problems, such as migrant children's difficult schooling caused by inconsistency of education resources between their origins and destinations, discontinuous education process caused by their parents' unstable employment and weak family education caused by their parents lower education degrees and longer working time (Hao, 2006). Also there is a common phenomenon that some schools are just preparing only for farm workers' children. It means that farm workers' children cannot study with other children who have local citizenship. These schools are driven in private regime where the children cannot get sufficient concern and financial support from the government as in the public schools. During 10-year reformation and development in China, now 70% of the farm workers’ children are studying in the farmer-worker children’s schools, which are also called floating schools based on a kind of standard, because they are not established with a long history (Zhen-dong, 2010). The results of Sa-sha's research (2012) has shown that 73% of investigated farm workers thought that it was difficult for them to find appropriate schools for their children to get a better education and thirty one percent of the investigated farm workers firmly believe that when they apply for an opportunity for their children to go to the school nearby, they were refused by school, because they do not have all the certifications which the education department
requires for children to enter the primary school in those areas. Of the farmer-worker’s children, twelve percent cannot be accepted by the school, because of the lower grades in their study. Half of the group of children with a working family are refused by the public primary school, because of the limited school seats, forty-six percent of the farm workers firmly believe that the tuition fees for the farmer-worker children are higher than for the local children. Sometimes as it is too high for them to afford, they cannot pay for it (Sa-sha, 2012). Most farm workers want to give their children better studying conditions. However, it is so hard for them to let their children go to public schools due to their incomes and their unstable jobs. These results show that a large number of farm workers' children are unable to go to school when they are at their school-ages.

Based on economical conditions, farm workers' children have less opportunity than urban children to communicate with others due to poor communication facilities, such as computers, mobile phones or other social tools. That is to say, their social circles are more limited than others'. Some statistics shows that as they are narrowed within a circle, the development of their social knowledge have certain limitations. This, in a sense, hinders more or less the development of their intelligence for study. Of the juvenile criminals, the proportion of farmer workers’ children amounts for 58% in total. Several of them are not aware of the law, responsibility and consequences in their practiced world.

2.2 Deaf-mute children in China

China's national policy focuses on oral/aural education and hearing rehabilitation. However, everyday practice in special schools for deaf children includes various forms of Chinese Sign Language. Each childhood education focuses on speeches and hearing. Elementary and secondary school curricula reflect low expectations for deaf students and lack the same academic content provided to hearing students. There are limited higher education opportunities. There are no support services such as note
takers or interpreters for mainstreamed students. To be honest, the deaf mute children are not able to obtain their job chances in their living conditions. For them, jobs are few, the vast majority of deaf adults are unemployed (Lytle, Johnson & Hui, 2005).

Among disabled children, deaf-mute children can be viewed as more normal-functioning compared to children with other disabilities, such as cerebral palsy or other physically disabilities. Hearing aid operation could provide them with better hearing and by that access to a higher quality of life. However, this operation is really expensive for poor families without government support. Facing such a terrible condition, they had better accept the present condition in their daily lives and abilities. This has led to that a lot of deaf-mute children do not have access to hearing aid operations in China, especially farm workers' children (Lytle & Hui, 2005).

2.3 Mental Health

Deaf-mute children of farm workers have limited possibilities to communicate with their parents. Their parents have no enough time for involvement in the children’s treatment. Due to the economical challenges, these families face a lot of time, which has to be spent away from the family. The child often lives with one parent while the other has to leave their homes for earning money to support the whole family with the enormous efforts. When children do not live with their parents for a long time, parents cannot give their children the sense of security and children will be anxious about their relationship with others. Research about the mental health of deaf-mute students describe that deaf-mute students have certain mental problems, and the degree of their anxiety is higher than that of general students (Yuping, 2000). Their anxiety center is upon personal anxiety, solitary and body syndrome. Deaf-mute female students show more extensive and stronger anxiety than the deaf-mute boy students, and their phobic tendency is prominent (Yuping, 2000). Other previous research in this area show that these children do not have a sense of belonging and happiness as local children.
Qiu-rong Z. (2008) states that the farmer-worker children have certain psycho social problems such as loneliness, study anxiety, and anxiety concerning their peers. In a short time, these serious problems cannot be solved. In fact, the deaf mute children are not accepted by the social conception and traditional sense in reality. In private schools, students have more difficulties in terms of emotions, behavior and communication than children in public schools. The reason why the farmer-workers' children suffer from loneliness is often that they are in lack of emotional communication with other people. That apart, they also have a limited sense of safety and reliability because of the frequent move to different unfamiliar zones for the need of their parents’ career (Yuping, 2000).

2.4 Policy in China

In China, a unique policy about citizen's residence registration, called household registration exists. It can be divided into two parts: “Rural areas permanent residence registration” and “urban areas permanent residence registration”. These different policies cause people to gain different welfare standards and social status (Liu, 2005).

According to the education law in China, children must enter primary school when they are at school-age (7 years old). They also have to attend to the public district school located near their household registration. If they want to go to another district school, the family has to pay more tuition fees for their children changing a new kind of school. There is a limited number of special schools for disabled children. When parents have to move to other places for their work chances, their deaf-mute children have to stay there for getting treatment and education with their mother or father, or these children have to leave their special schools to another one with their parents who are working in another place. However, there are limited public special schools requesting them to move one place to other places, or they can choose some private
special schools if they can pay the expensive fees. This policy leads to geographic limitations for children, especially for the farm workers' children who are not able to get equal rights to enter the school wherever they want to go. As a matter of fact, the relevant local government does not set up some necessary valid institutions to deal with the problem for the farmer-workers children. In the daily work by the relevant government department, the administrative staff members do not know how to deal with the problems which are closely related to the schooling for the farmer-worker children, as there is no specific and concerned law and institution for that. Without being able to enter a new school for their studies, many children have to stay at home or outside in the society.

3. Theoretical framework

Social work occurs in many places, involving a range of people and communities, addressing a mix of issues and needs, utilizing a cascade of theories and methods (D'Cruz & Jones, 2004). As a social work researcher, the researcher should pay attention to the useful and relevant theories and practices in order to understand and explain human behaviors and conditions at that time. Social work theory is not limited to social work only, it also borrows theory from other disciplines such as psychology, sociology, and so on so forth. The theory used should be depending on the circumstances and to help seeking an understanding for the situations that individuals face or are situated in (Parrish, 2010).

The author has chosen ecological systems theory by Urie Bronfenbrenner in this study:

“The ecological perspective came to the fore in social work during the 1970s as part of the trend toward increased concern for better environments and quality of life” (Greene & Ephross, 2009:201).

Within Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory, five systems are to be found:
micro system, meso-system, exo-system, macro system and chron-system respectively. The individual is placed in the center like annual ring (the individual is the core circle and family, community, society etc. are other bigger circles around the core circle).

Bronfenbrenner's model of human development starts with an initial mapping of the settings where most social interactions occur, those settings where we interact with people on a face-to-face basis. From this micro-level analysis, it is possible to explore how we are shaping the people around us and how we are concurrently being shaped (Shirley & Jill, 2008).

**Micro system:**
It is the system which can be the closest to the individual and someone directed contact. It refers to direct communication circumstances and directly impacts the child's development by family, school, religious institutions, neighborhood and peers at the same time (Shirley & Jill, 2008).

In this research, for deaf-mute children of floating farm workers, special school is the most significant micro system except their family. The psychological development of the deaf-mute children might be influenced by teachers’ educational and treating methods.

**Meso-system:**
It consists of the different parts of the individual micro system, and its function is not independent, but it is interconnected and interacted with others. That is to say, interactions bring indirect effects on the individuals in another conception (Greene & Ephross, 2009).

For instance, what kind of ways deaf-mute children get along with their parents will bring the same ways for them to get along with their friends and classmates in the
school, if their parents fight in front of the kids, they may have propensity for violence to their classmates and friends in the school.

**Exo-system:**

It refers to the individual as an active participant without direct involvement, but they still are heavily affected. For example, deaf-mute kids’ development will be influenced by their parents’ working circumstances, and environmental elements, like community, even though those deaf-mute children are not directly involved with them (Greene & Ephross, 2009).

**Macro-system:**

The macro-system consists of the all pattern of micro-, meso-, and exo-systems characteristics, which include culture, belief systems, bodies of knowledge, customs, life-styles, religion, economy, cultural values, political systems, material resources, etc (Greene & Ephross, 2009).

**Chron-system:**

This system refers to the historical change which will dramatically influence the individual, e.g. marriage, divorce, war and migration (Parrish, 2010). In Bronfenbrenner’s chron-system, he divided it into two types. First one is normal development, like starting a school, entering puberty, beginning to work, getting married and retired. The other one turns out to be the abnormal development, like migration, serious illness of family members or winning a prize in a lottery (Shirley & Jill, 2008).

In this research, deaf-mute children of floating farm workers were in the typical situation of the abnormal development. This kind of patterning of events in their environment and transitions could certainly bring effects on deaf-mute children's development, especially for their mental health.
The author has chosen the ecological systems theory by Bronfenbrenner because that it could provide possibilities to understand how deaf-mute children’s developments were heavily influenced by the different types of environmental systems that surrounds them. The author also thought that the ecological systems theory by Bronfenbrenner could help to understand why the deaf-mute children behave differently compared with others in the society such as school or in communication with others.

4. Methodology

In this chapter, the author would describe what qualitative method and data collected were mainly used in the process of interviewing staffs, floating farm workers parents, deaf-mute children as well as the observation during the author's field study. The author would also describe the process of data collection and data analysis. Each part of the research process would be explained in this chapter, such as research design, literature review, ethical considerations and the reliability and validity of the collected data.

4.1 Earlier Experiences

In the beginning, I wanted to list some of my own experiences about the real condition about that. The first theory in mind turned out to be social exclusion due to the situation of the deaf-mute children with floating farm workers. A common view was that floating farm workers sit in the street and wait for some manual works with their working tools like shovels, baskets and wrenches. Their deaf-mute children were playing alone around them at a young age. They did not accept any treatment and special education as the children with a good family do in the city. They were often
wearing dirty, old clothes, their hair was not tidy, they have dust on their face, and they looked dirty and tired sitting in the street, they look like in-nutrition.

Some farm workers do street vendor to sell some vegetables or other small items in the roadside without business license. They have to change places to sell their vegetables because street vendor is illegal, and their children are just standing behind or sitting around their parents.

Deaf-mute children become bullied by non-disabled children, just on account of their lower social position as well as the disabilities. The author experiences a situation during the field placement which evokes difficult emotions, dilemmas and questions. One deaf-mute child is physically harmed and bullied by several children with some wealthy families. They throw stones in the head which led to that blood streamed out of it. The deaf-mute child's father gets extremely angry and comes to stop the physical attack. He clearly sees the blood coming out of his child's wound, but he does not do anything to blame the other children or wanted to tell their parents. His eyes are filled with tears as he brings his child home. This situation affects the author and raises several questions: "Do this kind of bullying often occur on deaf-mute children? Whether do they feel excluded by the society? When the wounded child gets home, is it possible to gain any medical treatment for the injury? Do social welfare and medical institution provide some services? Is there any legal awareness of protecting children from being bullied by others? What kind of relationship does this father have to the society and surrounding? What reasons are there to not to go to a special school to accept treatment? Do they get any support from the government or society?"

Meanwhile, the author imagines a lot of social problems about that deaf-mute child, whether other deaf-mute children of floating farmer workers' face the same problem and are bullied by others, that is one reason why the researcher chooses deaf-mute children's rehabilitation center to do her internship and wants to find out the answer about this social problem.
4.2 Research design

The research design includes what data will be collected, and how to collect, where the data will come from and how it will be analyzed from different perspectives (Grinnel & Unrau, 2005). Since this study focused on the social and psychological problems among the farm workers' deaf-mute children, the author decided to use a qualitative method in order to collect the data and analyze some important data. This research includes interview and the author’s direct observation. Own person's observation is applied to observe peoples’ directly behaviors and reactions to get something significant and useful. Interviews are used to gain knowledge and achieve an understanding for their daily lives and relationships in their lives. Face-to-face interview is the dominant method in the field of qualitative research (Robson, 2011). The method of interviewing can help the researcher to obtain a deeper understanding of the thinking and belief of the investigated (Robson, 2011).

The author chose to conduct semi-structure interviews. Deborah and Benjamin (2006) hold the view that according to Bernard (1988), semi-structured interviewing is best used when researchers will not get more than one chance to interview someone and when researchers will be sent several interviewers out into the field to collect data. The semi-structured interview guide provides a clear set of instructions for interviewers and can provide reliable, comparable qualitative data (Deborah & Benjamin, 2006). In fact, semi-structured interviews are often preceded by observation, no matter the interview is informal or unstructured, in order to lead researcher to understand the situation and the topic of the study in a deeper way. Semi-structured interviews also create an open climate so that researcher can have an open mind.
4.21 Literature review

“Floating farm workers’ life conditions”, “immigrant”, “deaf-mute children treatment methods”, “psychological conditions of deaf-mute children with farm worker parents”, “special education of farm worker’s deaf-mute children”, and “social exclusion” etc. were used as search words by the author. The search words are used at Google Scholar and the Official Website of International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) Research about the treatment and living conditions of deaf-mute children on Chinese newspapers and research reports are as well used. The author also makes the best use of the course literature in this essay. Through this kind of literature reviewing, the author does her utmost to find the latest data of this social issue such as the life conditions of farm workers’ deaf-mute children, their treatments by society and family, and the psychological conditions of deaf-mute children.

4.22 Qualitative research method

During fieldwork, the researcher spent much time in the setting under study -- a program, an organization, a community, or wherever situations of importance to a study could be observed, people interviewed, and documents analyzed (Patton, 1990). In fact, there were three methods which were the most common used in qualitative research to collect data. Patton (1990) mentioned the first as “interviews”, it was an open-ended questions and probes yield in-depth responses about people’s experiences, perceptions, opinions, feelings, and knowledge in reality. Secondly, “Observations” Such as fieldwork descriptions of activities, behaviors, actions, conversations, interpersonal interactions, organizational or community processes, or any other aspects of observable human experiences (Patton 1990). The third and last qualitative method to collect data was “documents”, in which written materials and other documents from organizational, clinical, or programs records; memoranda and
correspondences, official publications and reports, personal diaries, letters, artistic works, photographs, and memorabilia, and written responses to open-ended surveys (Patton, 1990).

Qualitative method had some significant features. The total number of the participants was not on a large scale; the result of study was narrative instead of statistic data (Robson, 2010). In this study, the data of interviews collecting was more advantaged as it could be more flexible and variable. The most popular way of interviewing was structured interviews, semi-structured interviews and unstructured interviews (Robson, 2011). In the semi-structured interviews, the researcher set up a general structure by deciding in advance the ground to be covered and the main questions to be asked (Eric, 1995). In the process of interviews, participants could feel free to talk about, how much to say and how to express it, which let participants feel more flexible. The author had chosen the semi-structured face-to-face interviews to collect data, which was based on an interview guideline. Of course, additional questions, not including in the interview guideline took place during the research process. Robson (2011) stated that in semi-structured this could be done when the researcher encounters new interesting information to collect. In this research, participants were told the contents of research’s aim, method, research questions and this kind of interviews, which would be used only in this essay. Also confidentiality was guaranteed. All interviewees in this research took part voluntarily. Every interview was organized well; also in every interview, interviewees were encouraged to take it easy, then the author raised questions to them friendly. Whether interviewees could not understand question immediately, the interviewer repeated the question or changed the way for interviewees understanding questions easier and clearer. The researcher interviewed parents, staff in the deaf-mute children’s rehabilitation center and deaf-mute children (who all used assumed name by author):
The staff of deaf-mute children in deaf-mute rehabilitation center:

12 staff interviewed by author:
Mrs. Chen, The director of deaf-mute rehabilitation center;
Mrs. C1 & Mrs. C2, are caregivers for deaf-mute children;
Mrs. D1 & Mrs. D2, doctors for deaf-mute children’s hearing test;
Mrs. T1 & Mrs. T2 & Mrs. T3, collective courses for deaf-mute children;
Mrs. T3 & Mrs. T4 & Mrs. T5 & Mrs. T6, teachers in single courses for deaf-mute children;

(Disabled person rehabilitation center, 2013).

The farmer worker parents:

Mrs. P1 & Mr. P2, mother has not any work for taking care of their kid; father sells chicks and ducks;
Mrs. P3 & Mr. P4, mother taking care of their 3 kids without any work; father is porter in one supermarket;
Mrs. P5 & Mr. P6, who takes care of her 2 deaf-mute children at home; her husband has some manual works in other city;
Mrs. P7 & Mr. P8, mother is deaf-mute and takes care of their 2 kids, father sells vegetables.

The deaf-mute children of floating farmer worker parents:

Deaf-mute children Ren (K1) & Zhang (K2) in elementary class;
Deaf-mute children Chen (K3) & Shi (K4) & Luo (K5) in higher level class.
The language in the interviews was Mandarin. The author recorded the process of interviews and the interviews were translated. In the study, the author wrote down the field-notes, in line with the focus of the research inquires (May, T., 2001). Social and behavioral scientists have reported the importance of both verbal and nonverbal communication in human groups. While recording the language of participants, the observer should also attend to nonverbal forms of communication (Patton, 1990). For instance, the researcher, in the process of interviews, could observe participants reflection, and emotional change when they communicate.

For this study the meaning condensation as an analytic method to note was chosen. Meaning condensation is one way to note the key words during the interviews. For example, treatment methods, social services, poverty, relationships, social exclusion, living conditions, psychological problems and family conditions etc.

### 4.3 Data collection

#### 4.3.1 Sampling

The target groups in this study were deaf-mute children with floating farm worker parents, floating farm workers and the staff in the deaf-mute children rehabilitation center. For deaf-mute children, there were several rehabilitation centers in China, which could be divided into governmental as well as non-governmental. These different rehabilitation centers were providing various pricing on the treatment provided. However, some governmental centers were providing free treatments for deaf-mute children where they could choose different methods of treatment. The author’s ambition was to interview staffs employed by the deaf-mute children rehabilitation center in Guiyang, and floating farm workers who have deaf-mute children have accepted treatment in this rehabilitation center, and deaf-mute children. In order to represent different groups’ thoughts, the author wanted to cover as many
fields as possible which could provide the researcher more insight regarding the target groups. That is to say, this would definitely lead to a broad collection of data for the analysis and dramatically strengthen the validity of material found by the author.

In this study, it began with purposive non-probability sampling. Social scientists used non-probability samplings when a sampling population cannot be defined precisely or when a list of the sampling population was unavailable (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 1996). The author found proper respondents during her internship in Guiyang. Contact was established via face-to-face. The researcher presented her aim of this study and friendly asked them whether they were willing to participate in this study. She received staffs' kindly responses to include parents and deaf-mute children. On the first internship day, the author got friendly welcome and meets all staffs in the deaf-mute children rehabilitation center. After the interview with the director of rehabilitation center the author contacted all staff in the deaf-mute rehabilitation center for telling them the author’s aim of this research. The staff then recommended persons who were suitable as participants in this study. The researcher got a lot of help and recommendations from them.

4.32 Direct observations
The advantages of direct observation during interviews were that the interviewer could observe the interviewees’ behavior, attitude and emotional change. Direct observation increased the validity of the research. It avoided the situation when the participants report differently from the reality (Robson, 2011). There was one observation, called participant observation, method mentioned by Robson (2011), it was a widely used method in flexible designs, particularly in those which follow an ethnographic approach (Robson, 2011). Participant observation involved not only a physical presence and a sharing of life experiences, but also entries into their social and ‘symbolic’ world through learning their social conventions and habits, their use of language and non-verbal communication, and so on (Robson, 2011). In general,
participant observation relied on qualitative method, and it has two sides: formal and informal approach. In this study, it applied the informal method, in which it allows the author considered freely on what kind of information she wants to get.

In addition, Patton (1990) points out several advantages of observation during interviewing. At the beginning, the researcher could better understand and capture the context within which people interact with each other for better solving the problems, Secondly, it was firsthand experience when the inquirer interviews people. A third strength of observational fieldwork was that the inquirer has the opportunity to see things that might routinely escape the awareness among the people in the setting. Fourthly, the researcher was able to learn things whether interviewees would be willing to talk about or not, a fifth advantage of observation is to move beyond the selective perceptions of others. Finally, reflection and introspection were significant parts of field research (Patton, 1990). During the researcher’s 16 weeks of field study at the deaf-mute children rehabilitation center in Guiyang, the researcher had the chance to observe deaf-mute children, their parents and teachers at workplace. The researcher has done a direct observation study on the deaf-mute children rehabilitation center’s deaf-mute children at the age of 1-7. The direct observation of deaf-mute children in the rehabilitation center showed that they were extremely bashful and shy in the process of the communication with other non-disabled children.

4.4 Data transcription

All interviews were recorded and the interviewees were informed when the recorder was on the recording mode. For instance, the researcher took photos to note deaf-mute children’s routine in the rehabilitation center in order not to be confused and mixed up data and materials in the end after the field study. After each interview was done, the author transcribed the text as soon as possible by listening to the recordings. When a transcription was done, the writer compared and gathered all of data between notes
she took during the interviews. The interviews are transcribed with assumed name in order to protect all participants’ privacy.

4.41 Review of secondary data

Data archives lend themselves to secondary analysis as they are readily available and, typically, secondary data analysis could be an attractive strategy as it permitted the researcher to capitalize on the efforts of others in collecting the data (Robson, 2011). In this study, the author used secondary sources as a method of getting more information and knowledge in order to provide a suitable framework for the analysis. The author has chosen different articles, reports, journals, individual dissertations and some literature regarding this topic of deaf-mute children’s problems. These text sources have been found at Google Scholar and other databases online. In addition, course literature, International Social Work program the author studied at the University of Gavle, ware used as guidance when deciding which method and theory should be used in this research as well as concerning ethical considerations.

4.42 Data analysis

The material of the semi-structured interviews, the data transcriptions, were analyzed based on meaning condensation. The analysis process began with the procedure of coding, as coding played an important role in computer-assisted analysis of text (Gibbs, 2007 cited in Kvale and Brinkman, 2009). By this method, coding and categorizing has been conducted in advance, the author began coding the interview by creating suitable codes based on the ecological system theory, thus it was easier, clearer and more effective for the researcher to do the analysis of the text. Coding involved attaching one or more keywords to a text segment in order to permit later identification of a statement, whereas categorization entails a more systematic conceptualization of a statement, opening up for quantification (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The author started the interviews with staff in the rehabilitation center,
deaf-mute children and their parents within the code section of this research related with Bronfenbrenner’s ecological theory, such as the relationships between deaf-mute children and their parents, teachers and friends, also included environmental factors. Thereafter the author separated each target groups into two groupings: social welfare policy and living conditions. Meaning condensation can serve to analyze extensive and often complex interview texts by looking for natural meaning united and explicating their main themes (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The result was a combination of the responses of interviewing questions from participants and the author’s direct observation during her internship. That is to say, the author could analyze the data in a comprehensive way.

4.5 Essay credibility

This essay was a field study report which analyzes the psychological problems of floating farm worker’s deaf-mute children, from the perspective of Urie Bronfenbrenners ecological systems theory.

4.51 Reliability and validity

Reliability pertains to the consistency and trustworthiness of findings, it was often treated in relation to the issue of whether a finding was reproducible at other times and by other researchers (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). In the process of interviews, leading questions were occasionally used to check the stability in the statements of the participants. In the interview processing, questions were often reworded and asked several times to evaluate the consistency in the results. Respondents in the interview processing gave differing answers to the similar question. According to Patel and Davidson (2003), this does not always indicate a sign of low reliability. This inconsistency strengthened the reliability of this research, because the author recognized what kind of conditions they live in their different environments, which
had enabled their answers and behaviors to be different from others. Kvale & Brinkmann (2009) mentioned that the qualitative research interview was particularly well suited for employing leading questions to repeatedly check the reliability of the interviewees’ answers. As the author has experience from working in deaf-mute children rehabilitation center in Guiyang during 16 weeks, the author taught deaf-mute children general cognitive courses, and discussed teaching and treating methods for the deaf-mute children with staffs. Every day the author communicated with deaf-mute children’s parents when they came to the center. She found that the answers from participants were very reliable, the teachers and the researcher, working at deaf-mute children rehabilitation center, had worked closed with deaf-mute children during a long time also made this study more reliable. This was important for the researcher to gain more understanding for deaf-mute children with some psychological problems and their living condition.

Validity in the social sciences means improving the practices under consideration, which to a large extent is a moral and political issue as it is a question of epistemology (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Validity referred to strength, truth and correctness of a statement. Pragmatic validation is verification in the literal sense “to make true”. Truth was whatever assists researcher to take actions that produce the desired results (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Validation was here not some final verification of product control, it was a kind of verification process into each stage of the study with continual checks on the credibility, plausibility, and trustworthiness of the findings (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The study contained two aspects: psychological problems and living conditions with deaf-mute children respectively. The author was aware that her definition and points of these issues might be various from different interviewees’. Thus the author used reflexivity to identify fields of potential research bias to reduce threats to validity (Robson, 2012). During the stage of interview the researcher used recorder, notes from interviewees’ responses to analyze separately first, then compared the author own personal interpretation of the
findings. The discussion and analysis were structured to follow the research questions and theory. Considering each respondent’s background, education and environment, the researcher was following the interview guide carefully. As a means to improve the validity was found by the testing the meaning of the participants’ statements. Moreover the author followed up with interviewees’ interpreting and validating questions, of course, exploring the respondents’ interpretations was indispensable through the whole research. When the interview processing was coming to finish, the author summarized what had been said in the interview. The author let participants speak as detailed and freely as possible, which according to Patton (1990) increases the validity. Since the respondents do always feel comfortable with Mandarin, misunderstanding and wrong usage of words could be avoided in the process of interviews. That is to say, the validity of the data from interviews and the credibility of the essay were enhanced to the greatest extent.

4.52 Generalization

Generalization refers to the extent to what the findings in one situation could be transferred to other situations (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The author would use analytical generalization to support the findings presented in research questions and theory. Kvale & Brinkmann (2009) mentioned that analytic generalization involved a reasonable judgment about the extent to which the findings of one study could be used as a guide to what might occur in another situation. The study contained interviews with only 12 staffs, 4 families and 5 deaf-mute children. The small amount of interviewees reduces the prospect to generalize the findings. Through applying the ecological theory by Urie Bronfenbrenner about deaf-mute children’s problems as well as previous researches about mental problems of deaf-mute children and floating farm worker family living conditions, it was achievable to strengthen and predict the results of the study (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009). What’s more, the variation and purposive sampling improved the capability for generalization (Patton, 1990).
4.6 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations should be taken through the whole process of research. According to Robson (2011), ethical issues arise from the very beginning of a study, and continue throughout the whole study, up to and including the reporting, and disseminating, of the findings. Participants’ rights and welfare were main priorities while a central aim for every social worker conducting a research must always be to not violate participants’ integrity. That is to say, privacy, anonymity, informed consent and confidentiality must be present any research (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 1996). Before the interviews began, all participants were given information of the aim of this study as well as information regarding the writer, that this was an educational purpose research conducted by student from the University of Gavle, Sweden. The essential work was to protect individuals’ anonymity and the confidentiality of the data, and to inform all interviewees regarding the whole process, method and aim of the research in advance. Furthermore, before the interviews began, the participants were asked whether they agreed upon having the record of interview with a digital voice recorder. If the interviewees were unwilling to have a digital voice recorder during the interview, the researcher used hand written notes to record the detail of interview. In the whole process of interviews, only one deaf-mute child's parents expressed that they did not like voice reorder, because they said they would be nervous and awkward with voice reorder. The letter of consent was also noticed that their name would be used assumed name and that all data gathered would be destroyed at the end of the study. Psychological and physical harm for the participants was avoided in the whole process of interviews. In addition, letters were sent first to staffs and deaf-mute children’s parents to get their permission. Thinking that deaf-mute children could not understand the content of the interview questions, the researcher tried to used easier words and suitable format. Kimberly, Maclin, Robert and Solso (2008) noted that psychological researchers should respect the dignity and
worth of all people and protect their rights for privacy, confidentiality and
self-determination. In this study, all the participants came voluntarily.

4.7 Limitations

This study was conducted in Guiyang, China by one Chinese student studying in
Sweden. Since the author clearly knew the language spoken by the participants, there
was not any communication barrier. However, as some participants were farmer
workers without receiving any academic education, the researcher avoided academic
words in the interviews. Instead the author used easier words and sentences in order
for the participants to fully understand the questions. The author believed she was
facing the situation without any preconception, but there was still a risk that parts of
the discussion are lost or that the proper meaning does not come through, if
participants understood the author's question by wrong way.

5. Results and analysis

5.1 Theme 1: farm worker deaf-mute children’s treatment and family
condition

In the previous literature study, it was mentioned that there was a shortage of
qualified staff/teachers in the deaf-mute children rehabilitation center for deaf-mute
children, considering on the deaf-mute children’s family situation, their parents’
incomes were much lower than those of other people in the cities. In Guiyang, the
average income of farm workers was only around 1000 yuan (RMB) per month, while
the average income of normal urban worker at least in Guiyang was 2500 yuan (RMB)
each month. As a result, farm workers have almost no more left after they supported
for their daily lives (Sa-sha, Chen, 2012). As mentioned above, 1000 yuan (RMB) is around 156.7 USD as an exchange.

In this study, deaf-mute children rehabilitation center as one of the research objects was to offer treatment for 1 to 7 years old farm worker deaf-mute children. There were 47 deaf-mute children receiving treatment from the deaf-mute children rehabilitation center during the author's internship. However, due to limited spaces, 2 classes were offered (each class only have 12 deaf-mute children) to accept farm worker deaf-mute children. Other 23 deaf-mute children, who cannot accept any special education in the deaf-mute children rehabilitation center, only could have free artificial cochlear surgery. Even if there were 12 personnel to treat deaf-mute children, some teachers do not accept professional social worker’s training and special skills for treating them.

Mrs. T1 stated just like that, “In our section, there are just two regular staff, who can get 2500 yuan (RMB) per month, in this section, other staff all are temporary worker with only 800 to 1000 yuan (RMB) per month in total, if the teacher does not make any mistake such as being late for class or being absent from class”.

The teachers were busy all day but their salary was comparative low. In the interview and observation process, staff said that when deaf-mute children are ‘very naughty’ and cannot concentrate in the class, they would use bamboo stick to punish them physically or ask them to stand in a corner. One deaf-mute kid with good rehabilitation, who can speak a lot of sentences in the higher level (4-7 years old) class, said that the children were all scared of the teachers to punish them, which lead them to be careful and nervous to answer the teachers’ questions in the class.

“Psychological counseling is seldom done for deaf-mute children, who seemed like cheerful and lively”. -Mrs. D1
There was psychological counseling in the deaf-mute children rehabilitation center, but it existed in name only. It was easy to find that psychological counseling in the deaf-mute children rehabilitation center was not applied to deal with mental problems of deaf-mute children. "Psychological counseling" changed to "physical punishment place". It was used to punish the deaf-mute children such as standing in the corner, which was used to make the child feel ashamed for what he/she has done. It became obvious that the personnel in the deaf-mute children center do not understand how to use psychology counseling in the right way for deaf-mute children. Besides this, the children’s park and some storybooks which were donated by citizen would be locked after children played.

“It is to prevent deaf-mute children from stealing, there are some phenomena regarding some deaf-mute children stealing toys”-Mrs.C1

Furthermore, as mentioned above, farm workers deaf-mute children just accepted free treatment one year, that is to say, even if it was governmental project, after one year parents have to pay the treating fee which was beyond their incomes. There was another reason leading deaf-mute children who cannot continue accepting treatment because of the moving house from one place to other places for the change of the working place of their parents. As there still existed differences in treatment and special education for deaf-mute children between the rural and the urban areas, some deaf-mute children have to accept special education in a lower grade. Otherwise, they cannot follow other deaf-mute children in the special treatment class.

**Family and living conditions:**

In the process of investigation, the author took a direct observation of the community, rehabilitation center and the living conditions of the farm worker deaf-mute children
and took some pictures about external environment, rehabilitation facilities, housing facilities. Of course, the author also noted the relationships between the family members, neighbor of the community and other relevant data and information. When the researcher visited the home of deaf-mute children, she was shocked by the living conditions of farm worker’s deaf-mute children. One of the representative examples was the living conditions regarding a three-year-old deaf-mute boy at the primary rehabilitation level class. Compared with the other deaf-mute children in the class, his family conditions were not bad. He had two older sisters and one of them was deaf-mute too. They were living near the rehabilitation center with their mother while their father was working in another region for supporting two deaf-mute children’s treatment fees and family’s daily lives. There was a big hole in the wall, the curtains in the windows looked shabby due to use for a long time. In that community, there are many farm worker deaf-mute children families having this standard or living conditions. Because the community was offering cheapest rental apartment and near the rehabilitation center for them, every month they just need to pay around 80 to 200 yuan (RMB) for the apartment. Because of insufficient incoming, they burn coals to warm themselves in the apartment; and the smell makes it really hard for the people to stay comfortable.

In this study, the author found what a normal farm worker deaf-mute child's family can be like. Even if they have the basic food to eat and warm clothes to wear, their living conditions were under the standard level than other urban children. There was a special policy in China, which was One-Child-Policy, but in the rural places, people usually violate it, they want to have more children, especially boys (because people always think boys have more labor force than girls, and girl will marry with other boy, that is to say, the labor force of girls is short-term), when they have deaf-mute child in the family, they would choose to have more children without considering their living conditions and incoming. As a result, the children normally have three or four siblings at home. One deaf-mute child, at the primary rehabilitation level class, have six
siblings, four of them were deaf-mute children. This phenomenon was normal in China. Some of the parents were illiterate so that they can not understand the special educational materials and communication notebook with teachers. The family conditions of the deaf-mute children in this study were not satisfactory. Some deaf-mute children have the problem that they do not have enough clothes to wear, and when they come back home, they did not have enough food to eat.

**Analysis:**

Based on the ecological system theory by Urie Bronfenbrenner, an analysis was made of the psychological conditions of the farmer worker deaf-mute children in this study. It could be found that the farm worker children have the potential violence and unsociability. In the previous part, the author mainly showed that the farm worker deaf-mute children were bullied by other children, in fact, the most of deaf-mute children in Guiyang are often bullied by other non-disabled (Disabled person rehabilitation center, 2013). Also the teachers in deaf-mute children rehabilitation center gave the students physical punishment when they were ‘naughty’, for example, when deaf-mute children start collective course or single treatment course, some ‘naughty’ deaf-mute children were punished by the teachers because they did not pay attention to the course or played with their hands or toys. The physical punishment occured frequently in the micro-system. Even sometimes they would be punished by their parents. Both the parents and the teachers did not know that violence was illegal. It could not give the deaf-mute children positive enlightenment, but let them dislike the treatment at rehabilitation center and hatred towards the teachers. The micro-system, which refered to the social settings which were relevant to the individual. The people in the micro-system would bring directly effect on the individuals (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Most of the farm workers lack of education due to that they have engaged in manual work since they were children. They did not make light of which way they should take to teach and treat deaf-mute children. This
also explained why deaf-mute children in Guiyang were often bullied by the normal children. It would lead to some issues whether their potentially violent behavior would bring negative effects on them after they grow up, especially on communication with others.

5.2 Theme 2: deaf-mute children’s communication with parents and others

According to the special conditions of deaf-mute children, they cannot participate in outdoor activities often due to hearing aid operations. What's more, it was not easy for them to get on well with others during their treatment process, in the primary rehabilitation level, children only can understand and speak a few words not sentences, which means that they cannot express themselves correctly as well as understanding others’. In terms of treatment, special education and social ability, they were, on the whole, inferior to the normal children in the cities, even other local deaf-mute children with good living conditions who can get better treatment and special education due to their parent’s financial support. Some deaf-mute children rejected playing with others, this was probably a result of their parents work. The children were not steady in one place because they have to transfer from one rehabilitation center to another since their parents were changing working place. Another reason was that this rehabilitation just offers one year free treatment for them, if they want to continue they have to pay expensive treatment fees, some parents cannot afford the treatment fees and after one year they are forced to stop their child’s special treatment and education.

During this research, the author observed deaf-mute children at rehabilitation center and at home. Most of the farm workers and the deaf-mute children were lacking communication with each other and the local people and has also short of connections
with the city life. The deaf-mute children were only interacting with teachers, classmates and their own family members.

“These deaf-mute children’s parents have to go out early in the morning, deaf-mute children will have breakfasts at the rehabilitation center, usually mothers will pick up their children from rehabilitation centers at five o’clock, rehabilitation offered three meals for deaf-mute children, but most of deaf-mute children only eat a little food in the dinner time so that they will eat food at home with their parents. Some fathers have to work until ten or eleven o’clock at night. They cannot find a lot of time to be with their children. Consequently, some parents do not know clearly what has happened to their children such as falling ill or conflicting with other children”, -Mrs.C2

“She is unwilling to talk and play with peers, she only sees you or says one word if you ask her for many sentences”.- K4

There were other deaf-mute children, both at primary and higher rehabilitation level, who have the same situation. This girl does not want to have contact with others, but to looking in her eyes, the author could feel she was lonely and afraid. There was negative phenomenon in the class, some older deaf-mute children often bully younger deaf-mute children.

“There is one boy everyday crying when his mother asks him to the rehabilitation center, he is unwilling to leave his mother, he will not give any reflects to anyone when he know his mother leaving”. Mrs. T5

By the author directly observation, this boy refused communication with the strangers due to that he is frightened of the outside world, he lives in his own world.
Analysis:

According to Urie Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory, meso-system refers to the relationship between different micro systems which in turn affect the individual. Parent meeting and discussing notebook were communication ways between parents and teachers. However, many farm workers did not accept any education, they cannot understand and give some feedback on the discussing notebook with teachers, and even more than half of them cannot go to the parent meeting because of their work. In the family education and treatment, the farm workers' deaf-mute children seldom get right treatment and education from their parents. In the guardianship aspect, the farm workers' deaf-mute children also have problems. As mentioned in the previous part, their parents have to work for a whole day, they cannot take care of the children because they are not able to communicate with each.

Exo-systems refers to the social setting which would bring effects on the clients without direct involvement. For instance, farm worker’s job belongs to the exo-system. Most of the farm workers are doing manual work from 5 o’clock in the morning to 11 o’clock at night. Their heavy work made them not know their children’s daily life at the rehabilitation centre and at home. Fathers do not know if their children were ill, which seriously affects deaf-mute children rehabilitation and education. In addition, as the farm workers’ income and social status both are lower than local people, their family life is not well.

5.3 Social Environment

Some social settings were influential to the family such as culture, family ethnicity, access to basic resources and their experience of discrimination (Parrish, 2010). In the literature review, the author found that the farm workers in the cities could not earn a lot of capital. Their incomes were lower than others, working environment was dirty, living conditions were poor and security was out of expectation (Sa-sha, 2012). In the
field study, the author also found negative effects on deaf-mute children, because the rehabilitation centre is located in the rural and semi-urban area. Regarding farm worker family’s rental fee was 80 to 200 yuan (RMB) per month. For children’s rehabilitation and cheaper apartment they were segregated from the mainstream people in the city, which is unfavorable for the development of the deaf-mute children. In the sense of geographical effects, their living environments have prominent boundaries from the city. With the poor conditions of the road construction and communal facilities, deaf-mute children were walking to the rehabilitation every day. In that area, they cannot have good hygienic conditions for their daily lives, the corridor of their apartments were all dirty. Some farm workers make a living by selling vegetables and cleaning the streets. Their social circles were restricted in the crowded small slums. In addition, a sense of inferiority would grow inside deaf-mute children when they were bullied by other local children, which would often hinder the development of mental health for deaf-mute children.

**Analysis:**

As mentioned above, the social status of deaf-mute children and farm workers were not high and their incomes are not encouraging. Brofenbrenner (1979) noted that roles were usually identified by the labels used to designate different social positions in a culture. In the society, every associated position was role expectations regarding how the holder of the position was to act and how others were to act toward the holder. The function of personal role was an element of the micro system. Bronfenbrenner, however, points out that the roots were in the higher-order macro-system and its associated ideology and institutional structured. That is to say, farm workers’ social status and working environment would definitely bring effects on the deaf-mute children, who would follow the life style and thought mode of their parents in their living situation.
6. Discussion

6.1 Brief summary of the results in terms of the objective

The researcher tried to find out the living conditions of floating migrant workers' deaf-mute children in the deaf-mute children rehabilitation center in Guiyang. In this study, the researcher explored the problems based on Brofenbrenner’s ecological systems approach, which for the author was a new perspective to study the conditions of farm workers’ deaf-mute children. The ecological theory by Brofenbrenner adopted in the analysis of this research has helped the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the situation and the nature of their living conditions.

Through this study, the author found that the education level of the participating farm worker parents were not high, even some parents were illiteracy. In the farm workers’ life and work, they had limited access to communication with others. Their heavy work lead to that they were not involved in their children’s development and did not receive information about their children’s progress in education and treatment at rehabilitation center as well as in the family environment. The communication between rehabilitation center and parents, even the society, were not coordinated. Some parents could not use notebooks to write the process of deaf-mute child's treatment at home because they never accepted any education. On the social level, the social policy and social services could not support the deaf-mute children concerning their special education, treatment and mental difficulties which lead the serious problems to deaf-mute children’s development.

Improving the family income was the main purpose for farm workers, which could enhance their living quality and deaf-mute children’s treatment. However, by the participants in this study, most of the farm workers salary was comparatively low compared to the local people in Guiyang. The residents in Guiyang could get average 2500 yuan (RMB) salary per month, but for the farm workers, the average salary was
around 800 to 1000 per month. As a result, lots of farm worker deaf-mute children’s families were living below the poverty line.

Low level of material life has not only limited the deaf-mute children’s health development, but also influenced their special education, treatment and physical development. Initially, due to the economic limitation, farm worker parents had to choose the lower fee or free rehabilitation center for their children, if this center was non-profit government project, their children would get better treatment and education. As mentioned above, this rehabilitation center, where the author has done her internship, only offered one-year free treatment and education for the farm workers’ deaf-mute children, after one year, they could stop their children’s treatment or send them to cheaper rehabilitation centers, which was hard to provide good treatment. Secondly, deaf-mute children do not have their own room to study. As mentioned in the previous part, many farm worker families lived in the shack slums, there was a lot of rubbish in the corridor, and it should never mention a clean room for deaf-mute children to study and play. That community was segregated with other prosperous blocks, which had bad sanitation and there were no stadium and entertainment center. It exerted negative effects on the deaf-mute children’s psychological and physical development. Thirdly, the farm worker parents have low education level, even some of them did not have any education at all, which lead them to treat and educate their deaf-mute children hardly at home. Fourthly, because of their lower education they must take heavy work and when they finished the work day, they had no time to communicate with and take care of their children. Some children, at the higher rehabilitation center level, had to help their parents to sell vegetables and do some home work after they got treatment in rehabilitation center, from which their time and energy for study and practice their listening and pronouncing had been affected to a great extent. Finally, some deaf-mute children lacked nutrition, which left deaf-mute children to feel tired and out of energy during the day.
Suggestions for improving the situation of deaf-mute children and their families:

As mentioned previously, the community of deaf-mute children’s families is located in the lower level rural and semi-urban area, which is unsanitary and lack of good infrastructures. Based on the results of this study, some suggestions are given below. For this suggestions the author has used “six-step process of collaborative community empowerment” (Stepney & Popple, 2008):

To use the community-based approach solves the problems of deaf-mute children with farm worker parents.

1. The first step of collaborating the community empowerment is to enter the community by meeting with the community leaders, and discussing on goals;
2. To brainstorm and list the relevant issues;
3. To select high-priority issues;
4. To introduce social ecology model adaptable for the community;
5. To devise the action plan;
6. To decide the further plan which will direct the farmer-worker family and their deaf-mute children.

As mentioned above six suggestions, the author thinks the government should promote citizens’ attention about disabled person, and hold some donating activities for the disabled. In the fact, these six suggestions will be achieved in developed countries, but it will be achieved so hard in the developing cities, especially undeveloped cities like Guiyang, but the author thinks we still keep the positive mind to face social problems.

In the author’s mind, government project and social policy both are significant to empower and help deaf-mute children and farm workers’ families. Government should do more non-profit project regard to deaf-mute children’s treatment and
special education. In addition, rehabilitation center should ask staff to accept professional training about treating and educating deaf-mute children. Government also should advocate ‘ensuring social equality’ to prevent deaf-mute children suffering from abusing and bullying by others.

6.2 Suggestions for Future Research

In this study, the author applied Bronfenbrenner’s ecological system theory to understand the situation for the deaf-mute children in the urban area, where they experience a new life because of external changes, their parents’ work and their treatment. It brought a new way of viewing existing problems regarding the farm workers’ deaf-mute children and their treatment, special education and daily family life. The author suggests that future study can apply more on the western psychology theories and sociological theories to find out the problems in the society in developing countries like China. In this way, researchers can consider social problems through different cultural backgrounds and diverse ethical point of views. It can make the study result more objective and insightful. In this research, the author applied Brofenbrenner’s ecological system theory to explore how the environment will bring effects on the deaf-mute children. Even if the study was designed carefully and conducted guardedly, there are still some limitations due to certain uncontrollable reasons. For instance, the author could not interview deaf-mute children who only have done hearing aid operation; they did not come to the deaf-mute children rehabilitation center. And some parents were illiteracy; it was hard for the researcher to interview them in a deeper way. The author suggests future research regarding deaf-mute children’s problem can get some enlightenments and hopes the insufficiency in this study can be drawn as lesson to improve future studies.
7. Conclusions

Through 16 weeks of field study and based on the observation and analysis with Bronfenbrenner’s theory of ecological systems, based on the qualitative data from this study, the results showed that the living conditions and special education and treatment of the children in this study were unsatisfactory, even if these issues had been paid attention from the government and citizens. The deaf-mute children were still suffering from psychological problems due to their social and economic status in the society. Government should create more social policies, citizens should change their attitudes on the disabled, more social concerns should be shown to prevent deaf-mute children suffering from social exclusion. With the development of urbanization, more and more farmers will move into the cities to find a new job. To create a harmonious society in China, farm worker families should be paid more and receive more attention from the whole society, especially disabled children with farm worker parents. The government should take responsibility to take care of the living conditions, treatment and special education. Even if the author suggests some strategies for solving these social issues, still society as well as the governmental support is essential if these suggestions are to be realized.
8. Reference list:

Electronic reference:


Reference to books and article:


Teacher's Guide.


Appendix 1:

Interview Guideline to Farm worker parents:

1. Family Condition:

   (1) What is the education level for the parents?
   (2) What is your marriage condition?
   (3) What is your job and how is your working condition?
   (4) How many children do you have?
   (5) Are you satisfied with your salary?
   (6) What is the fixed charge of your family?
   (7) What kinds of method do you like to treat and education your deaf-mute children at home?

2. Living Condition

   (1) What type is your apartment?
   (2) Who can help your family when your family meet problem?
   (3) What challenges do you face in Guiyang?
   (4) Who do you communicate most in your daily life?
   (5) Do you think your community is safe and sanitary?
   (6) Do you communicate with local people usually?
   (7) What is your purpose to move into Guiyang?
   (8) Do you like your community?
   (9) Do you like your neighbors?
Other Questions

(1) Do you think you will come back to the countryside and do farming work?
(2) Do you think you will change your current work?
(3) Are you satisfied with your life in Guiyang?
(4) Do you communicate with your deaf-mute children often?
(5) Can you pick up them after they finish treatment everyday at rehabilitation center?
Appendix 2:

Interview Guideline to Teachers

(1) What difference do you think between the local deaf-mute children and the farmer worker deaf-mute children?
(2) Are you satisfied with your job?
(3) Are you satisfied with your salary?
(4) How do you deal with deaf-mute children’s naughty actions?
(5) What is the psychological difference between deaf-mute children and normal children you think?
(6) What do you want to do for the deaf-mute children?
(7) What challenge do you meet when you communicate with deaf-mute children?
(8) What challenge do you face when you communicate with deaf-mute children’s farmer worker parents?
Appendix 3:

Interview Guideline to the deaf-mute children

(1) Do you like your teacher?
(2) Do you love your parents?
(3) Do you like your classmates?
(4) Do you play with other children when you come back home?
(5) What do you do when you go to psychological counseling?
(6) Have you suffered physical punishment from teachers?
(7) Have you suffered physical punishment from your parents?
(8) Do you like your living condition?
(9) Do you like the life style of changing living places often because of parents’ work?