

THE “INVISIBLE” CHINESE EMPLOYEES:  
THE INFLUENTIAL FACTORS OF JOB SATISFACTION OF CHINESE  
EMPLOYEES IN THE AMERICAN WORKPLACE

By

Xian Xu

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Approved by:

Steve Hart, MSOD, Advisor

Kimberly Torres, Ph.D., Reader

## ABSTRACT

There are about 2.23 million Chinese workers employed in the American workplace. However, Chinese workers have received disproportionately less attention in the research of job satisfaction in the US. They should not be “invisible.” This capstone is a mixed-method research study that focuses on the influential factors of job satisfaction of Chinese employees in the American workplace, who are the first generation of Chinese immigrants originally coming from mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan. Data was collected using a Qualtrics survey of fifteen questions and nine personal interviews with Chinese employees in various industries. The finding of this study reveals that Chinese employees generally have a higher satisfaction rate with their organization and organizational culture than non-Chinese employees. Chinese employees attach importance to career development in the workplace, but put less value on the leadership/management in the organization, compared to their non-Chinese peers. Also, more Chinese employees feel excluded in the American workplace than non-Chinese employees. This study provides valuable information for managers and organizations in motivating and including their Chinese immigrant employees.

### **Keywords**

Job satisfaction, Chinese Employees, Chinese Immigrants, American Workplace, Diversity and Inclusion

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Asian Americans are often considered to be the “model minority.” They are stereotyped as intelligent, industrious, hard-working, self-disciplined, good at math and sciences, but quiet, shy, unpopular, reserved, traditional, and placing less value on a leisurely life (Lai, L. & Babcock, L. C. 2013). According to the US Department of Labor, there are about 10.1 million Asians employed in the USA (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019), accounting for 6 percent of all USA employees. By race, Asians are the third-largest racial/ethnic group in the US workplace, after whites and Blacks. Whites comprise the majority of the labor force, accounting for 78 percent compared to Blacks at 13 percent (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019).

Among all Asians labor forces, the largest group was Indian, making up 24 percent of all Asians. Chinese made up 22 percent, Filipinos were 15 percent, Vietnamese were 11 percent, Koreans were 7 percent, and the Japanese were 5 percent. The remainder (16 percent) were “Other” Asians; this category includes Hmong, Laotian, Thai, Pakistani, Cambodian, etc. (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019). In total, there are about 2.23 million Chinese workers employed in the American workplace.

The term “Chinese workers” in the BLS report includes three different groups who work in the US:

- 1) The first generation of Chinese immigrants, who originally came from mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan ("Chinese Americans," n.d.).

2) The first generation of Chinese immigrants, who were from regions that have large populations of the Chinese diaspora, including Southeast Asia and some Western countries like Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, and France, etc. ("Chinese Americans," n.d.).

3) American born Chinese or ABC, who is a natural-born American Citizen of Chinese descent, excluding the first generation of Chinese immigrants ("American-born Chinese," n.d.).

My research study focuses only on the first group of Chinese workers: the first generation of Chinese immigrants. They originate from mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan ("Chinese Americans," n.d.). Throughout my capstone, I refer to them as “Chinese employees” in the following article, so as to distinguish from the other two groups of Chinese workers.

## **Background**

In 2018, I conducted an online survey for my final paper of the course “Strategic Approaches to Human Capital Management and its Implications” (DYNM-629), concerning performance management in the organizations in China. Based on more than 500 responses, I had one interesting finding:

**Money is nice, but it is not enough to motivate Chinese laborers.**

According to the data, besides “money,” “to build self-confidence and self-value” is also another big work motivation for Chinese laborers. These initial findings indicated

that Chinese laborers feel encouraged when they feel valued and self-confident after a performance evaluation review. In other words, the more a Chinese laborer feels respected, the more engaged they are in their work.

In 2019, I read an article about organizational cultures from Rob Goffee and Gareth Jones in Dr. Janet Greco's course "Perspective on Organizational Dynamics" (DYNM-501). Goffee and Jones (1996) contend that there are four cultures: the networked, the mercenary, the fragmented, and the communal, depending on the organization's sociability and solidarity (Goffee, R. & Jones G. 1996).

My best friend Monique works for World Journal, which is the largest Chinese language newspaper in the United States. According to Monique, it is a typical networked organization, which has high sociability, but low solidarity. She enjoys the friendly work environment very much, but with the small wage, she is living hand to mouth, without enough capital to buy a home. Therefore, she took another part-time job, working for an online shopping company as a marketing coordinator. A few months later, she told me that she quit her part-time job because she couldn't acclimate to the work culture, which was vastly different from that at the World Journal. According to her, the relationship between co-workers was cold, and few employees talked about things outside the work. Everyone was focused on their sales performance to maximize their commissions to earn a high salary.

Moreover, the company has no patience for poor performance. Those who did not meet the sales target were fired or given explicit instructions on how to improve, with a firm deadline. In a workplace full of competition, the pressure to perform is always high. Obviously, it is a representative mercenary organization. However, Monique was used to

the relaxed and friendly work environment at the World Journal, where the employees act like family. As a result, although the online shopping company offered better wages and benefits, which could fully cover her monthly mortgage, she resigned.

Monique's experience sparked my interest in studying the influential factors of job satisfaction of the Chinese employees in the US. I feel certain my capstone study will provide insights for the human resources experts in the American workplace, especially for those who are working on D&I (diversity and inclusion) initiative. Also, my capstone study may help organizations that need to develop new strategies for managing and motivating their Chinese employees.

### **Questions**

- 1) What do the Chinese employees in the American workplace value more?
- 2) What is the biggest reason causing turnover for Chinese employees in the American workplace?
- 3) What's the major conceptual difference between Chinese employees and American employees in the American workplace?
- 4) Do Chinese employees feel included in the American workplace?

### **Road Map**

This capstone will be a mixed-method research study. The term "mixed-method" refers to a methodology of research that advances the efficient integration, or "mixing,"

of quantitative and qualitative data within a single research study. It may permit a more comprehensive and cooperative utilization of data than do single quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis (Wisdom, J.& Creswell, J.W. 2013). The introductory chapter outlines the background of the topic, the significance of my research questions, as well as the roadmap of the following chapters. In the second chapter, I include a literature review of the definition of job satisfaction and previous research studies. I also will indicate the limitation of each study and try to avoid it in my capstone study. The methodology chapter explains my methodological approaches: an online survey and nine one-on-one interviews with Chinese employees in diverse organizations, including the private sector, educational institutions, international organizations, government. I explain how I designed the questions for the survey and interview guide, and the reasons why I asked these questions. The data interpretation chapter includes data analysis of both the online survey and personal interviews. The analysis is divided into three sections: 1) Chinese experience, 2) non-Chinese experience, 3) the comparison between two groups. In this chapter, I can answer the questions that I raised in the first chapter—allude to what some findings are. The final chapter is for the conclusion. Also, I will point out the limitation of my capstone study for future research.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **The Definition Of Job Satisfaction**

The research on job satisfaction can be traced back to the 1930s during the Great Depression, which was used to measure the “morale” of the workers during the economic crisis (Latham, G. P. & Budworth, M. H. 2007; Weiss, H.M.& Merlo, K. L. 2015).

Another sentence to explain why this is significant.

According to the Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary & Thesaurus (2020), the definition of job satisfaction is “*the feeling of pleasure and achievement that you experience in your job when you know that your work is worth doing or the degree to which your work gives you this feeling*” (“Job Satisfaction.” n.d.). In Wikipedia, job satisfaction is “*a measure of workers' contentedness with their job, whether or not they like the job or individual aspects or facets of jobs, such as nature of work or supervision*” (“Job Satisfaction.” n.d.).

Besides, different authors have different understandings of what job satisfaction is. Hoppock (1935) is believed as the first researcher to provide a definition of job satisfaction. He indicates that job satisfaction means the mental, physical, and environmental satisfaction of the employee; the only way to measure job satisfaction was to directly ask employees about their work experiences (Hoppock, R. 1935). According to Vroom (1964), job satisfaction is workers' emotional orientation toward their current job roles (Vroom, V.H. 1964). One of the most often cited definitions of job satisfaction is that of Locke (1976), who defines job satisfaction as “*a pleasurable or positive*

*emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences*" ("Job Satisfaction." n.d.; Locke, E.A. 1976). Kalleberg (1977) describes job satisfaction as "an overall affective orientation on the part of individuals toward work roles which they are presently occupying" (Kalleberg, A. L. 1977). According to Spector (1997), job satisfaction is simply "*how people feel about their jobs and different aspects of their jobs. It is the extent to which people like (satisfaction) or dislike (dissatisfaction) their jobs*" (Spector, P. E. 1997).

There are many definitions of job satisfaction, but some of them have common themes. Job satisfaction is, therefore, a positive emotional state resulting from the pleasure an employee derives from doing a job (Locke, E.A. 1976; Spector, P. E. 1997), or as the affective and cognitive attitudes held by an employee about various aspects of their work (Kalleberg, A. L. 1977; Wong et al., 1998; Noor, A.M. & Mohammed, R.U. 2016).

## **Literature Review**

### ***The relationship between acculturation and job satisfaction among Chinese immigrants in the New York City restaurant business. (Au, A.Y.W., et al. 1998)***

Au, A.Y.W., Garey, J.G.; Bermas, N.; Chan, M.M. (1998) investigate the process of acculturation and its influence on job satisfaction of Chinese immigrants working in the restaurant in New York City. The study also includes a comparison study between the Chinese immigrants who work in Chinese restaurants in Chinatown and outside of Chinatown. The data were collected using acculturation and job satisfaction



questionnaires augmented by open-ended questions. After analyzing the answer of 65 respondents, the authors realize that the Chinese immigrants working outside the Chinatown have higher levels of job satisfaction, and also are more acculturated than Chinatown workers. Interestingly, male workers are more acculturated and more satisfied with their job performance than their female counterparts. According to the personal interview, the main reason for job dissatisfaction of Chinese workers working in restaurants in Chinatown is the limitation in language, skills, and educational level.

Studies of immigrants' job satisfaction are limited. It is the only research study about the job satisfaction of Chinese immigrants in the US that I could find. However, the study has a small sample because the authors only include Chinese employees in Chinese restaurants. The authors may have different findings if they could survey and interview more Chinese employees working in different types of restaurants or industries.

***The relationship between acculturation strategy and job satisfaction for professional Chinese immigrants in the Australian workplace. (Lu, Y. et al. 2012)***

Lu, Y., Samaratunge, R. & Hartel, C.E.J. (2012) investigate the attitudes of professional Chinese immigrants toward acculturation strategies, and the relationship between acculturation strategies and job satisfaction of professional Chinese immigrants in the Australian workplace. The authors conducted a questionnaire survey and obtained 220 respondents. After examining the survey data, the authors find that: 1) Professional Chinese immigrants have a predominant preference for maintaining their home culture; 2) The professional Chinese immigrants adopting the assimilation strategy have the

highest level of job satisfaction; 3) The professional Chinese immigrants taking the separation strategy have the lowest level of job satisfaction.

However, the study does not include a comparison study between Chinese employees and other racial/ethnic groups. Also, the study explores the experiences of Chinese employees in Australia, not the US. I assume that the Chinese employees in the American workplace may have different experiences.

***Employee participation and the influence on job satisfaction of the ‘new generation’ of Chinese employees. (Ying, Z., et al. 2015)***

Ying, Z., Yuhua, X., Malcolm, W. & Yongxing, G. (2015) focus on the relationship between the new generation (Generation Y or Millennials) Chinese employee’s participation in management, supervision, and decision-making, and their work satisfaction. In the first stage, the authors interviewed a selection of key HR managers. Then, the authors conducted a survey questionnaire and obtained 684 respondents working in nine large car-manufacturing enterprises in China. According to the research finding, the new generation (Generation Y or Millennials) of Chinese employee’s participation in management, specifically focusing on monitoring and helping to shape decision-making in Chinese companies, has a significantly positive impact on their satisfaction at work. Also, the authors suggest that Chinese companies should focus on improving the existing or implementing new employee involvement systems, particularly encouraging higher levels of involvement in management, supervision, and

decision-making, and to encourage new generation employees to develop a willingness to become involved in these activities.

The study has impressive data support. However, it explores the Chinese employees in China, not the US. Due to the difference in social environments, Chinese employees in the American workplace likely have dissimilar insights.

***Workforce Diversity and Job Satisfaction of the Majority and the Minority: Analyzing the Asymmetrical Effects of Relational Demography on Whites and Racial/ Ethnic Minorities. (Choi, S. 2016)***

Choi, S. (2016) examines how racial and ethnic composition affects the job satisfaction of racial/ethnic minority and white employees, and how differently white and racial/ ethnic minority employees respond to variations in the demographic composition within federal agencies. After analyzing the data from the 2008 Central Personnel Data File (CPDF) and the 2008 Federal Human Capital Survey (FHCS), the author notices that: 1) The racial/ ethnic minorities will report lower job satisfaction when the proportion of whites in an agency increases; 2) The overall job satisfaction of employees will be higher when the proportions of Whites and racial/ethnic minorities in an agency are better balanced; 3) The racial composition of an agency will have asymmetrical effects on White and racial/ethnic minority employees in the federal agency; 4) Employees will report higher job satisfaction when more organizational support for diversity is available; 5) Employees will report higher job satisfaction when they feel that they are treated more fairly.

However, the study is limited to employees of the federal government, and therefore the results may differ in the other organizations. Also, the study does not consider racial/ethnic differences. People of different racial/ethnic groups may respond differently to demographic composition.

***Exploring the Effect of Organizational Culture on Job Satisfaction, Case of Namvaran Consulting Engineers, Managers Company. (Karim, J. & Sajjad, R., 2016)***

Karim, J. & Sajjad, R. (2016) focus on the effect of different dimensions of organizational culture on job satisfaction. Based on the Denison Model of organizational culture (Denison et al., 2004), the authors conducted several interviews with employees of Namvaran Consulting Engineers, Managers Company (hereinafter “NCE”), to collect the sample. These interviewees are not only managers or directors of important areas, but are employees at every level. Then, the authors find that all of the organizational culture traits have a positive effect on job satisfaction. Also, the authors suggest that companies pay more attention to “Empowerment” and “Capability Development” to improve job satisfaction, because the interviewees showed their highest interest in these two dimensions of the organizational culture. On the other hand, the authors claim that “Customer Focus” negatively impacts employees’ job satisfaction.

However, since the authors only conduct several interviews in one company, “NCE,” I doubt the data may not be strong enough to support the viewpoint. Besides, the study does not include the race/ethnicity and generation of the interviewees.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

#### **The Quantitative Research**

In February 2020, I created an online survey for my capstone using the Qualtrics program. I broadcasted the confidential survey through the network of Organizational Dynamics program of the College of Liberal and Professional Studies at the University of Pennsylvania via email listserv as well as the social media platform (e.g., WeChat, LinkedIn). There were a total of 147 respondents throughout two weeks.

The principal aims of my study are as follows: 1) to investigate the influential factors of job satisfaction of Chinese employees in the American workplace, and 2) to compare the difference in the influential factors of job satisfaction between the Chinese and non-Chinese employees (the respondents who did not select “Chinese” as their race/ethnicity in the survey).

For the online survey, I designed 15 questions with skip logic. In the first question, I asked about the respondents’ work location. If the respondent selected the country other than the US, the survey would end automatically, because I tried to narrow my research study on the people working in the US only. Then I asked about their race, generation, and how many years of work experience they had. These three questions were for demographics because I tried to understand the brief background information of my respondents.

Next, I asked which type of organization the respondents were working at and what situation made them choose their job? The reason I asked these two questions was

that I wanted to know the influential factors of their career choice. The traditional Chinese family wishes their children to get an “iron rice bowl,” which means a stable or even a lifelong occupation that provides steady income and welfare (“Iron Rice Bowl,” n.d.). Thus, the organizations which are fully or partly funded by the government, such as government agency and educational institution, are the most popular employers in China. I wondered if Chinese employees in the US would also be influenced by the traditional perspective of their family or not.

Then, I asked how satisfied were the respondents with their organization’s culture and how satisfied were they working for their current organization. The main reason I asked these two questions was that I wanted to address their job satisfaction and compare the satisfaction status between Chinese and non-Chinese employees.

Next, I asked my respondents to rank the top 3 factors that they value most in the workplace, and if someone selected “other” as an answer, the survey would ask him/her to indicate the detail. The key reason that I designed the question was that I wanted to figure out the top 3 dominant factors leading to their positive experience in the workplace. And I would like to have a comparison study in the answers between Chinese and non-Chinese employees.

Then, I asked the respondents if they felt included in their current organization. Diversity and inclusion (D&I) in the workplace was always one of the hottest topics in the HR industry. Still, in the recent few years, it has become a major goal for many organizations (Martic, 2019). “Diversity” can mean so many different things, including the innumerable ways in which human beings are different. “Inclusion” is a generic term, implying from how welcome we feel to leveraging diversity to sentiments like “can’t we

just get along?” (Donovan, M. & Kaplan, M. 2013). However, you can have demographic diversity but not be inclusive, and that is often what organizational leaders fail to realize (Gassam, 2019). The main reason I asked the question was that I wanted to know what percentage of Chinese employees feel included/excluded in their organization. And, I planned to have a comparative study between Chinese and other racial/ethnic groups.

Later, I asked the respondents to rank the top 3 factors that may cause them to leave their organization. And if someone selected “other” as an answer, the survey would ask him/her to indicate the detail. I designed the question because I wanted to figure out the top 3 significant reasons leading to a turnover. And I would like to have a comparison study in the answers between Chinese and non-Chinese employees.

At the end of the survey, I included an optional, open-ended question, asking if the respondents had any comments or insights about their experience in the American workplace. With the answer to the open-ended question, I could gather additional information, providing me an opportunity to discover something that I may have missed. (It could also let respondents expand on why they chose certain answers to the closed-ended questions and/or add complexity to their perspectives on job satisfaction.)

The limitations here are: 1) the survey data did not include the respondents’ gender, so it is impossible to have a cross-gender study; 2) the sample is restricted to respondents working in large metropolitan areas on the East Coast and the West Coast, including New York, Philadelphia, Boston, San Francisco, and Los Angeles.

## **The Qualitative Research**

In addition to this survey, I also completed interviews with nine Chinese employees in April 2020. They are my personal network. They are millennials, working for different types of organizations in the US, including the private sector, educational institutions, government, and international organizations. I sent a message with all questions through WeChat to ask them individually if I could interview them to collect data for my capstone study. I mentioned that all responses to the interview would be kept confidential and anonymous, and I would use a pseudonym in my research study instead of their real name and workplace. They agreed and made an appointment with me. The interviews were conducted over a voice call through WeChat and lasted 20-40 mins in length. I asked a total of nine open-ended questions.

The principal aims of my interview are as follows: 1) to gather deeper information about some survey answers, such as what makes them feel included/excluded in their organization? 2) to ask some questions that the online survey did not cover; I wanted to learn more about their professional expectations and perspectives about their occupation and to have more insights related to the survey findings, such as their viewpoints about leadership and career development.

My reasoning for choosing these people to interview is that 1) they are the first generation of Chinese immigrants; 2) they have diverse professional backgrounds, which was selected as a millennial representative of the specific industry that most Chinese respondents are working for based on the survey findings.



I try to learn from the shortcoming of research studies in my literature review (Chapter 2), especially to avoid collecting data from a single firm or industry. For example, the study of Au, A.Y.W., Garey, J.G.; Bermas, N.; Chan, M.M. (1998) concentrate on the process of acculturation and its influence on job satisfaction of Chinese immigrates working in the restaurant in New York City (Au, A.Y.W., et al. 1998). However, the study has a small sample because the authors only include Chinese employees in Chinese restaurants, but not other types of restaurants.

The first question required respondents to provide a brief introduction of their professional background, including job title, organization, years of experience, and the reason they chose the job. The question was designed to gather profound information on the survey answers. In particular, I wanted to know if Chinese employees that work in the government sector and educational institutions were because of the traditional Chinese perspective about the “iron rice bowl.”

Then I asked the interviewees whether their current workplace met their expectations. I asked the question because I wanted to better understand what they like/dislike in their organization, and how these feelings could affect their retention at their current workplace.

Next, I asked the interviewees whether they felt included in their workplace, and in what ways they felt included/excluded? The reason to ask the question was to gather deeper information about some survey answers and study how Chinese employees wish to be treated and included at work.

Then, I asked the interviewees whether they liked their role/occupation. It was a question that the online survey did not cover. I also asked the interviewees the reason they like/dislike their role/occupation.

Next, I asked the interviewees whether they felt they are on the right track to a higher position, whether they felt supported by their leader and their perspectives about the organization's leadership. I asked these questions based on the survey findings, which I am going to explain in detail in Chapter 4.

Later, I asked the interviewees whether they had received any training and development in their current job from the leader or organization. It was a question that the online survey did not cover.

The last two questions I asked were: How long do they plan to stay in their organization? Where do they see themselves in the next five years? Both questions were about career development, and I asked these questions based on the significant findings in the survey, which I am going to analyze thoroughly in Chapter 4.

The limitation here is that they are all millennials, so they may not represent the viewpoint of other generations of Chinese employees.

CHAPTER 4  
DATA INTERPRETATION

After distributing the survey, Qualtrics recorded and tracked each respondent's answers. I was able to review the data from backstage. Among all the 147 respondents, 44.9 percent are Chinese, 43.54 percent are Whites, 2.72 percent are Asians but not Chinese, 6.8 percent are African American, 0.68 percent are American Indian, and 1.36 percent are Latinos. (see Table 1)

Table 1: Race demographic

Race	Choice	Count
Chinese	<i>44.90%</i>	66
White	<i>43.54%</i>	64
Asian but not Chinese	<i>2.72%</i>	4
Black or African American	<i>6.80%</i>	10
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	<i>0.00%</i>	0
American Indian or Alaska Native	<i>0.68%</i>	1
Hispanic or Latino	<i>1.36%</i>	2
Other	<i>0.00%</i>	0
Total	<i>100%</i>	147

For the personal interviews, I recorded all commentary with the interviewees' verbal consent. To protect interviewees' privacy, their real name and workplace are anonymous in my research study, and I will use a pseudonym to represent them. Our conversation was conducted in Chinese, but I translated their words into English and quoted them as the data.

My nine interviewees included five males and four females. They are all Chinese millennials who were born between 1980-1995. Six people work in private sectors in

various industries, one person worked in a government agency, one person worked in an educational institution, and another person worked for an international organization.

In this chapter, my analysis is divided into three parts: 1) Chinese experience; 2) Non-Chinese experience; 3) The comparison between two groups.

### 1) Chinese Experience

There were 66 Chinese respondents, accounting for 44.9 percent of all the respondents. Among them, 3.03 percent of Chinese respondents are baby boomers (born between 1944-1964), 4.55 percent are Gen X (born between 1965-1979), 83.33 percent are Millennials (born between 1980-1995), and 9.09 percent are Gen Z (born between 1996-2015). (see Table 2)

Table 2: Generation demographic of Chinese employees

Generation	Choice	Count
Baby Boomer (Born between 1944-1964)	3.03%	2
Gen X (Born between 1965-1979)	4.55%	3
Millennial (Born between 1980-1995)	83.33%	55
Gen Z (Born between 1996-2015)	9.09%	6
Total	100%	66

Besides, 46.97 percent of Chinese respondents reported having less than 5 years of work experience whereas 34.85 percent have 5-9 years of work experience, 6.06 percent reported 10-14 years of work experience, 6.06 percent have 15-19 years of work experience, 1.52 percent have 20-24 years of the work experience, and 4.55 percent reported having over 30 years of work experience. (see Table 3)

Table 3: Years of work experience of Chinese employees

Years of Work Experience	Choice	Count
0-4 years	46.97%	31
5-9 years	34.85%	23
10-14 years	6.06%	4
15-19 years	6.06%	4
20-24 years	1.52%	1
25-29 years	0.00%	0
over 30 years	4.55%	3
Total	100%	66

According to the survey data, 61.54 percent of the Chinese respondents work in the private sector in the US. Only 3.08 percent of respondents worked in the government agency, and 7.69 percent work in the educational institution. My interviewee Ted works for a government agency in Queens, NY as a claim specialist. He has worked for his organization for 15 years; he started there right after college graduation. He revealed that the traditional Chinese perspective acutely influenced him, so he decided to pick “Iron Rice Bowl,” referring to a stable job in the state with a steady income and advantageous welfare. (“Iron Rice Bowl,” n.d.; Wang, J. & Xie, Y. 2015.).

### **Why do they choose their job?**

Half of the Chinese respondents asserted that they chose their job because they always had an interest or passion in it. Rachel, an HR manager in a mid-size consulting firm in Manhattan, NY, said she always had a passionate interest in the HR field. In my survey findings, 19.35 percent of Chinese respondents reported they were encouraged by other people. Jane, who has worked for a prominent college in Philadelphia, PA as a

program manager for 5 years, told me that she was encouraged by her friend to take the job. In comparison, 11.29 percent of Chinese survey respondents claimed that they picked their job by coincidence. Cindy, a manager in a global insurance company in Flushing, NY, also shared that she entered the industry unintentionally. Only 6.45 percent of Chinese survey respondents disclosed that they took the job because they had no better choice at that moment. It is worth noting that 8.06 percent of Chinese employees selected their job because the organization provided an employment visa (e.g., H1B, G4, etc.).

### **Are they satisfied with their organization?**

About 80.85 percent of Chinese survey respondents indicated that they were “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied” with their current organization. My interviewee Cindy, a manager in a global insurance company in Flushing, NY, has worked for her organization for almost 7 years. She explained that she was very satisfied with her company, because the company has a transparent and fair path to promotion, making her feel confident with her career prospects. Another positive example is Sam, who is the manager of a travel company in Manhattan, NY. He revealed that he was satisfied because the company paid him well and provided an infinite space for his career. In comparison, just 12.77 percent of Chinese employees reported feeling neutral at their respective places of employment. My interviewee Rosa is currently working for an international organization as an HR consultant within the policy team in Manhattan, NY. She is happy that she can develop various skills by taking advantage of her organization. But, she does not like the location of her department, which is outside of the main building; she often feels distant from her coworkers and “abandoned” sometimes. Lastly,

only 6.39 percent of Chinese survey respondents reported being “somewhat dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied” with their organization. Jane, who is a program manager at a prominent college in Philadelphia, PA, told me that she is unhappy with her salary, and she doesn’t feel motivated because her organization had no possible incentives, such as performance-based incentive pay for the employees.

### **Are they satisfied with their organizational culture?**

Regarding organizational culture, 74.46 percent of Chinese survey respondents felt “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied.” My interviewee, Rachel is an HR manager in a mid-size consulting firm in Manhattan, NY, where she has worked for 6 years. In her commentary, she explained that she perceives her company as employee-centered, treating the talent very well. For example, during the pandemic, her company made the decision earlier on to require them to work remotely; this occurred before the shelter-in-place order took effect. Also, Rachel likes how the company offers a lot of employee benefits, including an 80-hour paid leave plan during the pandemic, so employees can have time to take care of their families. She claimed that she felt to be valued by the company. However, only 17.02 percent of Chinese employees remained neutral on this issue. Tom is a senior design leader in an influential IT company in Atlanta, GA. He has worked there for almost 15 years. He shared that he was delighted with the good teamwork and congenial working atmosphere in his organization. However, he still struggled with the tough work-life balance. Jimmy expressed similar sentiments. As a mechanical engineer and data scientist for an innovation center at an Asian-based company in Boston, MA, Jimmy appreciated that his company provides employees a lot

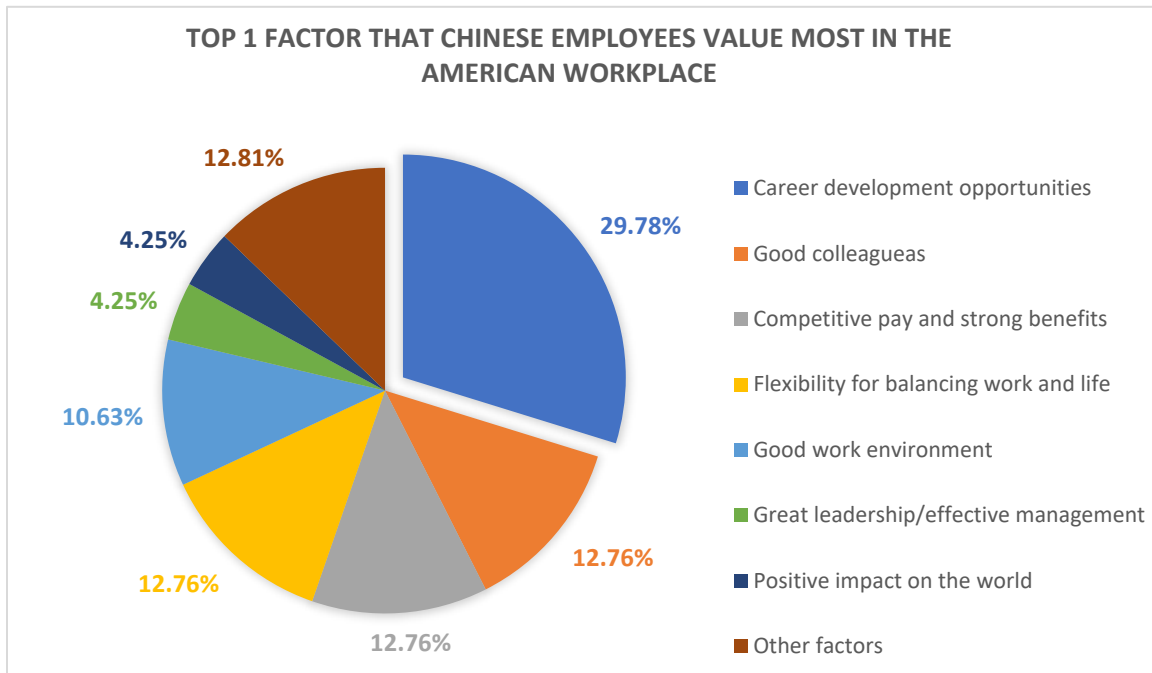
of opportunities to develop diverse skills. Still, he was despondent over the bureaucratic management system in his organization, leading to slow communication and difficulty in innovation. Lastly, 8.51 percent of Chinese employees reported being “somewhat dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied” with their organizational cultures. In her commentary, Jane, a program manager in a prominent college in Philadelphia, PA, alluded to why that may be. Jane disliked the office politics at her workplace and found it fatiguing to have to participate in them.

### **The top 3 factors that Chinese employees value most in the American workplace**

According to the survey, 29.78 percent of Chinese employees consider “career development opportunities” as the top factor that they value most in the workplace. Indeed, “career development opportunities” is the highest frequency of occurrence of the word that my interviewees referred to during the interviews. All my nine interviewees consider it closely linked to their job satisfaction. Whereas 12.76 percent of people reported that “good colleagues,” “competitive pay and strong benefits,” and “flexibility for balancing work and life” are three most popular factors that they value most in the workplace. Other survey respondents think “good work environment,” “great leadership/effective management,” and “positive impact on the world” are the most significant factors in the American workplace. (see Figure 1)

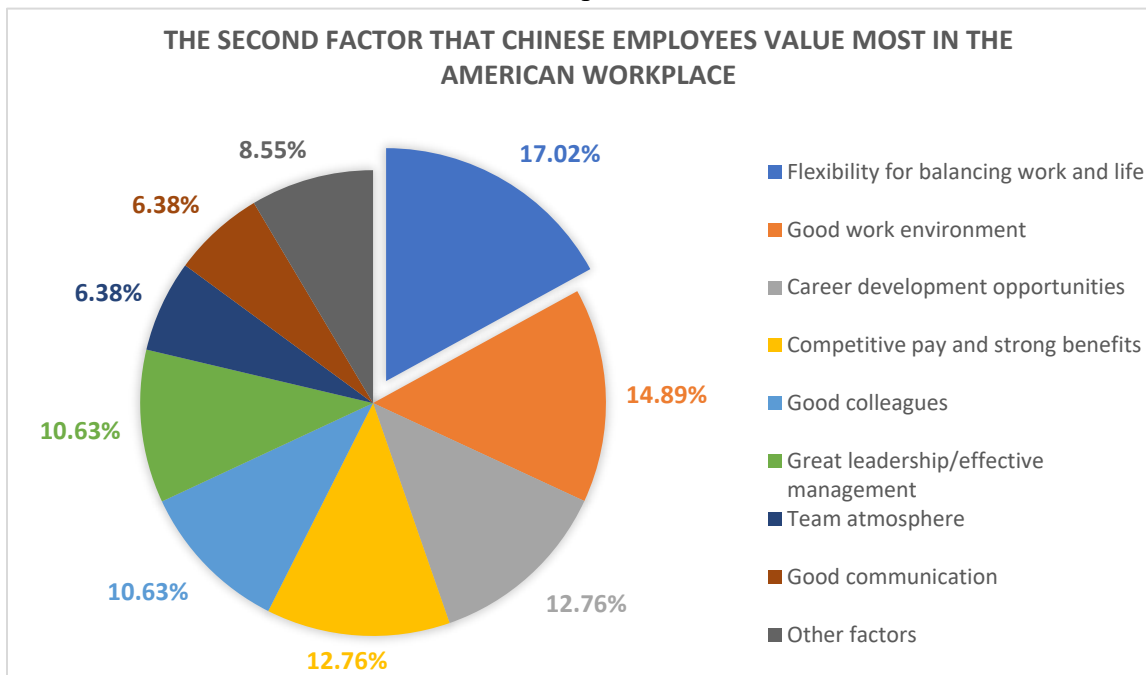


Figure 1 □ Top 1 factor that Chinese employees value most in the American workplace



As shown in Figure 2, 17.02 percent of the Chinese employees considered “flexibility for balancing work and life” as the second most important factor that they value in the workplace. Tom, a senior design leader at an influential IT company in Atlanta, GA, shared that he was not content with the tough work-life balance in his workplace. Of the survey respondents, 14.89 percent reported that they had a “good work environment.” In contrast, 12.76 percent reported being satisfied with “career development opportunities,” and “competitive pay and strong benefits” at their places of employment. As indicated in Figure 2, “good colleagues,” “great leadership/effective management,” “team atmosphere,” and “good communication” are key factors that Chinese employees value in the American workplace. (see Figure 2)

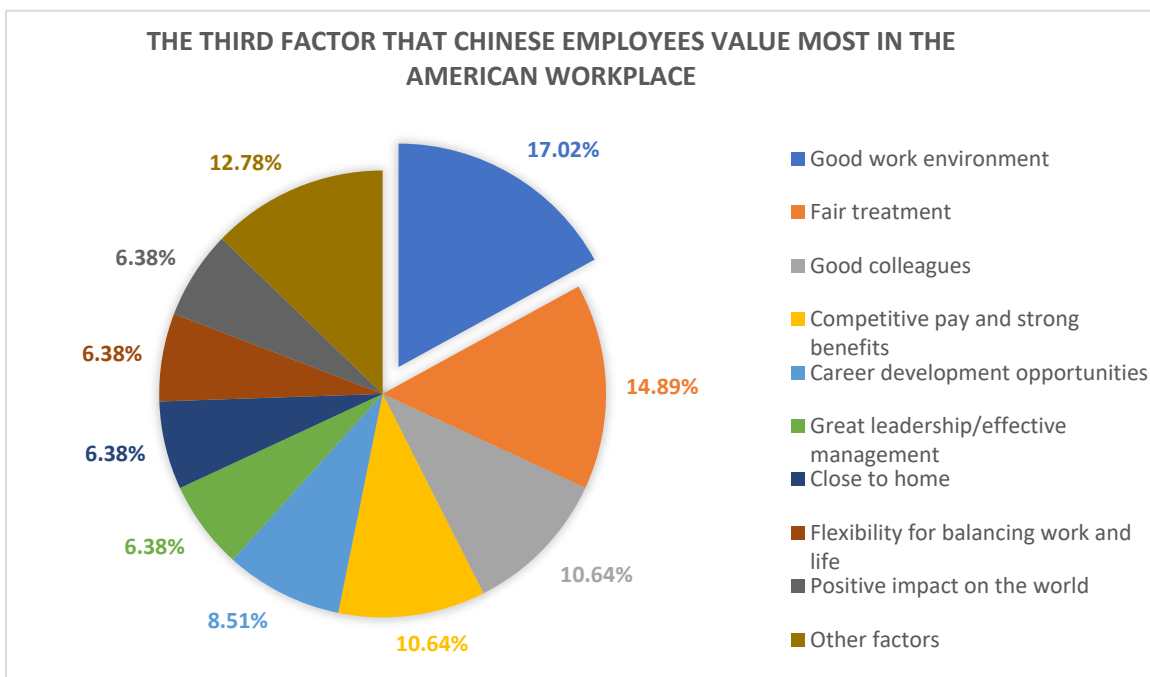
Figure 2: The second factor that Chinese employees value most in the American workplace



The third factor that Chinese survey respondents reported as important for job satisfaction is “a “good work environment” at 17.02 percent, and 14.89 percent indicated “fair treatment” as essential. According to a national survey (by Lien, P. 2004) of 1,218 adult Asian Americans in 2000, 92 percent of respondents indicated that they had been treated unfairly at work because of their ethnicity, and 40 percent indicated that discrimination occurred in the workplace when it came to getting promotions and moving up in the company (Lien, P. 2004). As a senior design leader in an influential IT company in Atlanta, GA, Tom felt lucky because he perceived that his organization treats all groups equally concerning career promotions. And, he did not see any “bamboo ceiling” in his workplace that excludes him from obtaining a leadership position (“Bamboo Ceiling,” n.d.).

Related to the survey data, 10.64 percent of Chinese employees selected “good colleagues” and “competitive pay and strong benefits.” Also, “career development opportunities,” “competitive pay and strong benefits,” “close to home,” “flexibility for balancing work and life,” and “positive impact on the world” are the factors that Chinese employees value in the American workplace (see Figure 3). My interviewee Ted, who works for a government agency in Queens, NY as a claim specialist, says he like his job because it is stable; it offers strong benefits, and the office is close to home.

Figure 3: The third factor that Chinese employees value most in the American workplace



### **The top 3 reasons for Chinese employees' turnover in the American workplace**

Concerning why Chinese employees leave their jobs, 26.09 percent of Chinese survey respondents consider “lack of growth and progression” as the top reason. My interviewee Jimmy is a mechanical engineer and data scientist in an innovation center of

an Asian-based company in Boston, MA. He said he would only work for his organization for 2-3 more years because he did not see any promotion possibility there. He did not feel that he could get a higher position in his workplace. Another example is Cindy, a manager in a global insurance company in Flushing, NY. She shared that she would like to work for her organization forever because there are plenty of growth and promotions opportunities. Besides, 19.57 percent of Chinese survey respondents explained that they often leave because they “get a better offer from other organizations,” and 10.87 percent of Chinese cite having a “negative relationship with colleagues or management.” My interviewee Rachel, an HR manager in a mid-size consulting firm in Manhattan, NY, does not plan on leaving her organization unless she has a negative relationship with leadership, impacting her career development. Also, “unfair pay and benefits,” “feel undervalued,” and “bad work environment” are other top factors causing Chinese employees’ to resign. (see Figure 4)

Figure 4: The top 1 reason for Chinese employees’ turnover in the American workplace

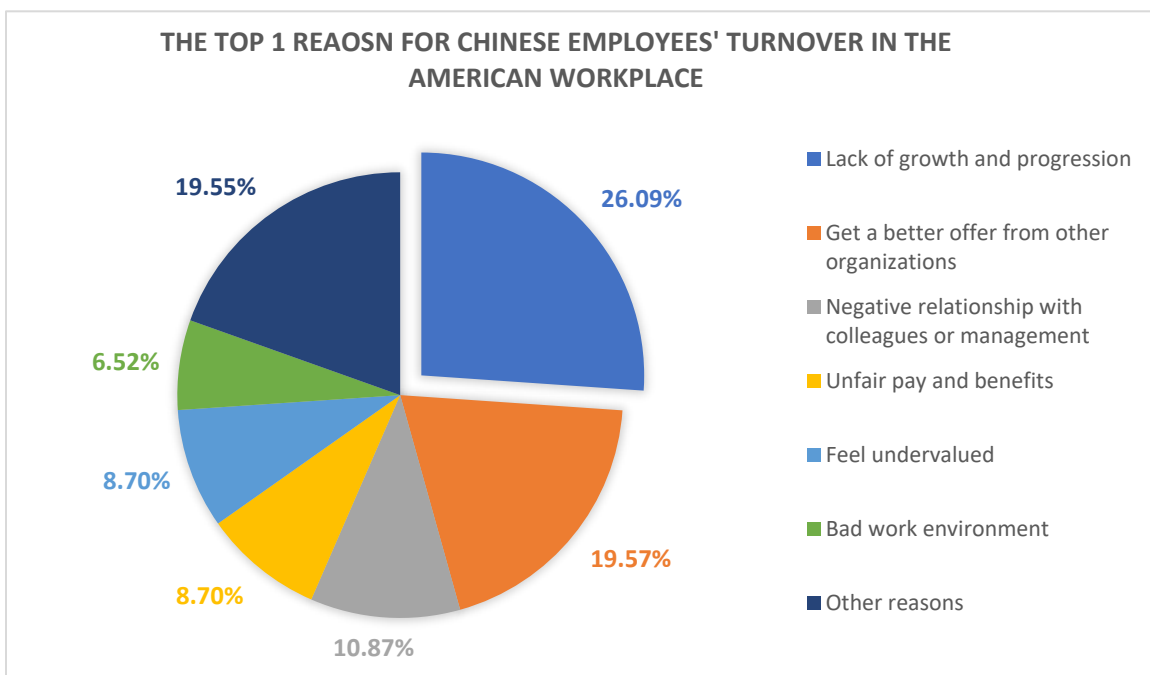
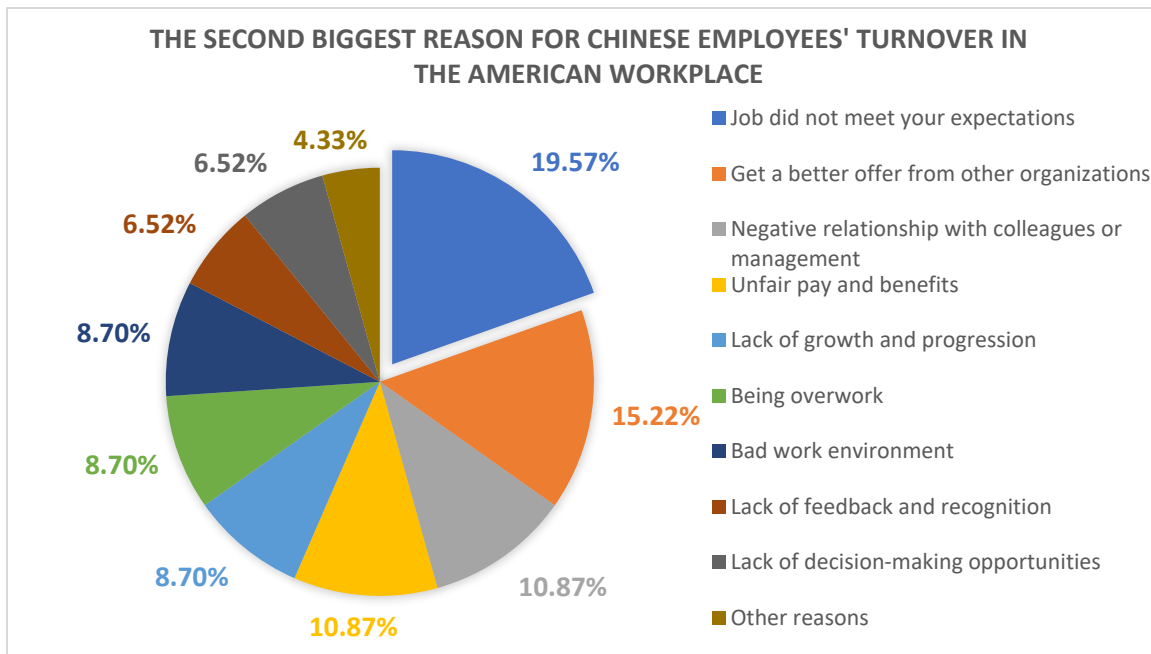


Figure 5 shows that 19.57 percent of Chinese survey respondents believe the “job did not meet your expectations;” this is the second most important reason for leaving the current organization. My interviewee Jane is a program manager in a prominent college in Philadelphia, PA. She told me that she plans to change jobs soon because her current workplace does not pay her enough and she is dissatisfied with the management. As a banker in a top investment bank in Queens, NY, Charles would like to stay in his organization because he is in a great position financially and career-wise. Only 15.22 percent of Chinese survey respondents indicated that they would leave if “get a better offer from other organizations,” whereas 10.87 percent reported that “negative relationship with colleagues or management,” and “unfair pay and benefits” would encourage them to leave their respective workplaces. Also, “lack of growth and progression,” “being overworked,” and “bad work environment,” are the other top factors causing Chinese employees to resign. (see Figure 5) My interviewee Ted works for a government agency in Queens, NY as a claim specialist. He said he was unhappy with the overload in his job, but he would never quit because he wants to keep the “iron rice bowl.”

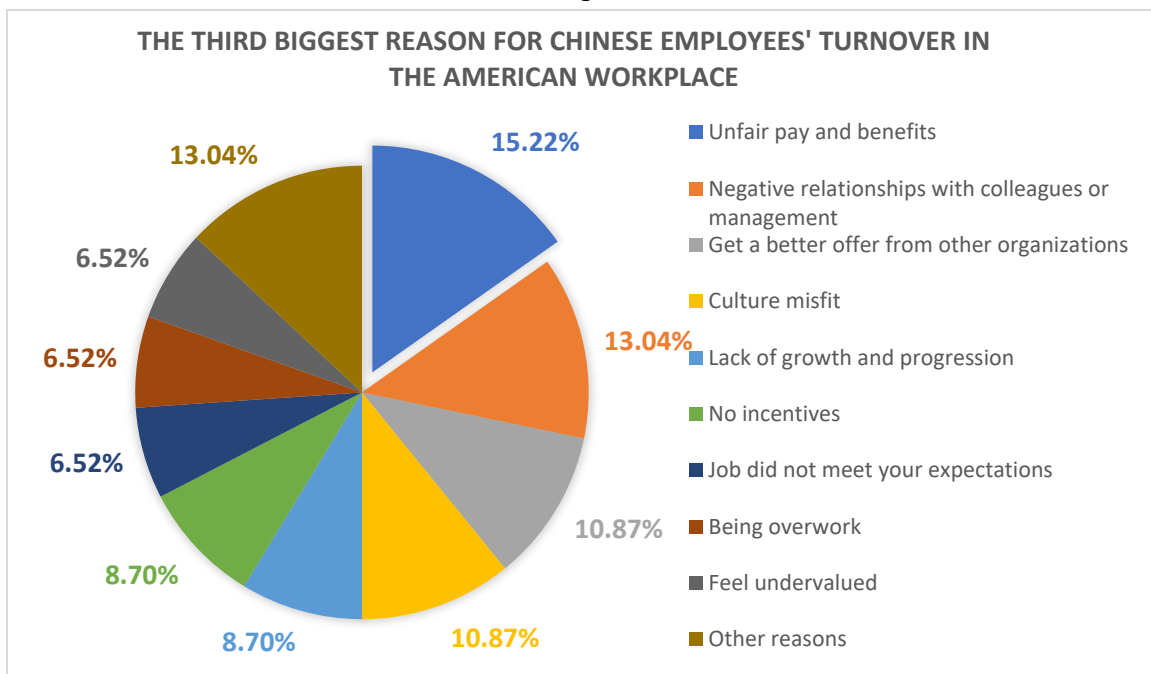
Figure 5: The second biggest reason for Chinese employees' turnover in the American workplace



As shown in Figure 6, 15.22 percent of the Chinese employees take “unfair pay and benefits” as the third biggest reason for leaving their current organization. My interviewee, Charles is a banker in a top investment bank in Queens, NY, and he would consider leaving his organization only if he was unsatisfied with the compensation. Moreover, 13.04 percent of Chinese survey respondents cited “negative relationships with colleagues or management” 10.87 percent reported that they would leave if they “get a better offer from other organizations,” and “culture misfit.” Also, “lack of growth and progression,” “no incentives,” “job did not meet your expectations,” “being overworked,” and “feel undervalued” are the top factors that the respondents reported as the third most important reason for leaving. (see Figure 6)

According to the study by Ogbonnaya, C., Daniels, K. & Nielsen, K. (2017), the performance-related incentive pay was positively associated with job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and trust in management. (Ogbonnaya, C. et al. 2017). As a program manager at a prominent college in Philadelphia, PA, Jane complained that her organization has no incentives, making her feel less motivated.

Figure 6: The third biggest reason for Chinese employees' turnover in the American workplace

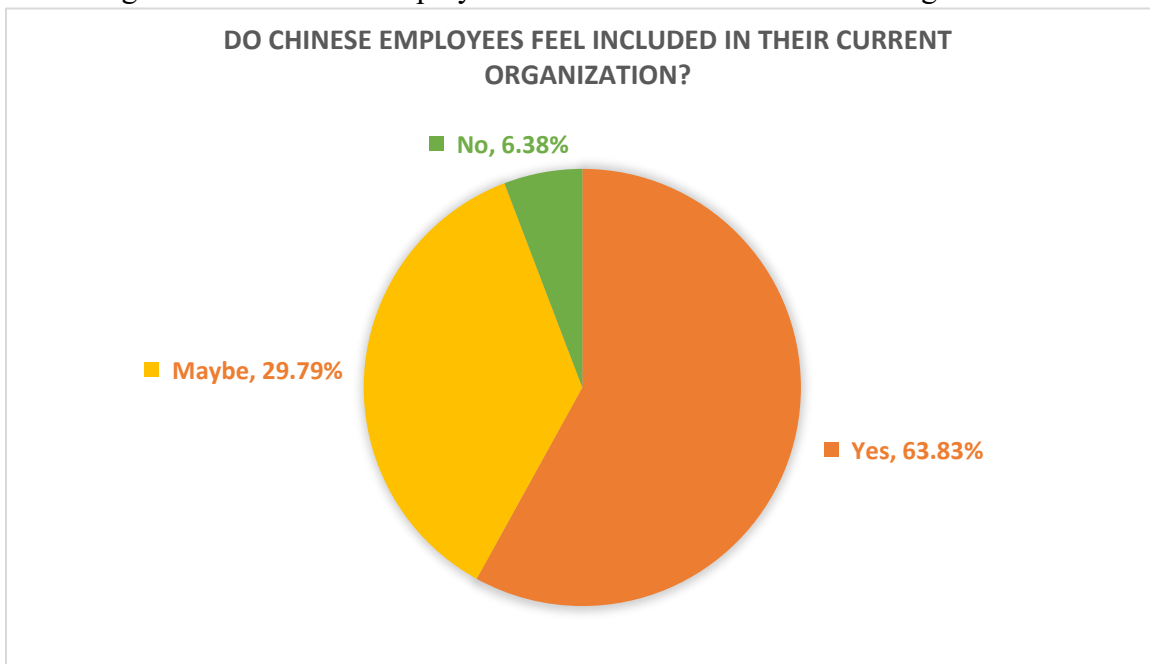


### **Do they feel included in the organization?**

According to the survey, 63.83 percent of Chinese employees in the sample feel included in their organization, 29.79 percent of them feel they “maybe” included, and 6.38 percent of them do not feel included. (see Figure 7) My interviewee Rachel, an HR manager in a mid-size consulting firm in Manhattan, NY, explained that she felt included

because her voice is heard and valued in her organization. And, she felt she was “visible” because her leader or colleagues always recommended her to join in important projects. As a banker in a top investment bank in Queens, NY, Charles stated that his organization is focused on D&I (Diversity and Inclusion) programs. Thus, he felt comfortable working in such a harmonious work environment. Rosa remains neutral in this question because she felt included in her team but not in her organization. As an HR consultant in an international organization in Manhattan, NY, she does not have the same pay and benefits as other fix-term staff. There are a lot of policy restrictions for consultants, including the area access and promotion opportunity, which she felt are inequitable. As a program manager in a prominent college in Philadelphia, PA, Jane did not feel respected because her organization consistently asks her to “code-switch” (Sherald, J. 2018) to fit their culture, instead of “including” her. According to Jane, she would be judged when the difference occurred.

Figure 7: Do Chinese employees feel included in their current organization?





## 2) Non-Chinese Experience

Among all the 147 respondents, 44.9 percent are Chinese, 43.54 percent are whites, 2.72 percent are Asians but not Chinese, 6.8 percent are African American, 0.68 percent are American Indian, and 1.36 percent are Latinos. (see Table 1)

Table 1: Race demographic

Race	Choice	Count
Chinese	44.90%	66
White	43.54%	64
Asian but not Chinese	2.72%	4
Black or African American	6.80%	10
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.00%	0
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.68%	1
Hispanic or Latino	1.36%	2
Other	0.00%	0
Total	100%	147

Among them, 45.68 percent of non-Chinese respondents are baby boomers (born between 1944-1964), 28.40 percent are Gen X (born between 1965-1979), 23.46 percent are Millennials (born between 1980-1995), and 2.47 percent are Gen Z (born between 1996-2015). (see Table 4)

Table 4: Generation demographic of non-Chinese employees

Generation	Choice	Count
Baby Boomer (Born between 1944-1964)	45.68%	37
Gen X (Born between 1965-1979)	28.40%	23
Millennial (Born between 1980-1995)	23.46%	19
Gen Z (Born between 1996-2015)	2.47%	2
Total	100%	81

As indicated in Table 4, 46.97 percent of non-Chinese respondents have less than 5 years of work experience. 34.85 percent have 5-9 years of work experience, 6.06 percent have 10-14 years of work experience, 6.06 percent reported 15-19 years of work experience, 1.52 percent have 20-24 years of the work experience, and 4.55 percent have over 30 years of work experience. (see Table 5)

Table 5: Years of work experience of non-Chinese employees

Years of work experience	Choice	Count
0-4 years	6.17%	5
5-9 years	4.94%	4
10-14 years	8.64%	7
15-19 years	3.70%	3
20-24 years	8.64%	7
25-29 years	17.28%	14
over 30 years	50.62%	41
Total	100%	81

Non-Chinese survey respondents selected their current job for various reasons; 46.05 percent claimed that they had an interest or a passion in their career field, whereas 15.79 percent of the non-Chinese employees said they were encouraged by a parent/ friend/ teacher/ relative or someone else. In comparison, 23.68 percent of the non-Chinese employees reported that they got into their career by coincidence and 2.63 percent said because they had no better choice. Also, 11.84 percent of non-Chinese reported that they chose their job for other reasons: to follow family tradition, because of skills learned in the college and decided to pursue as a career, attracted by the benefits of the position.

### **Are they satisfied with their organization?**

Overall, 80.28 percent of non-Chinese employees are “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied” with their current organization. 11.27 percent, however, remained neutral and 8.45 percent reported that they are “somewhat dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied” with their organization.

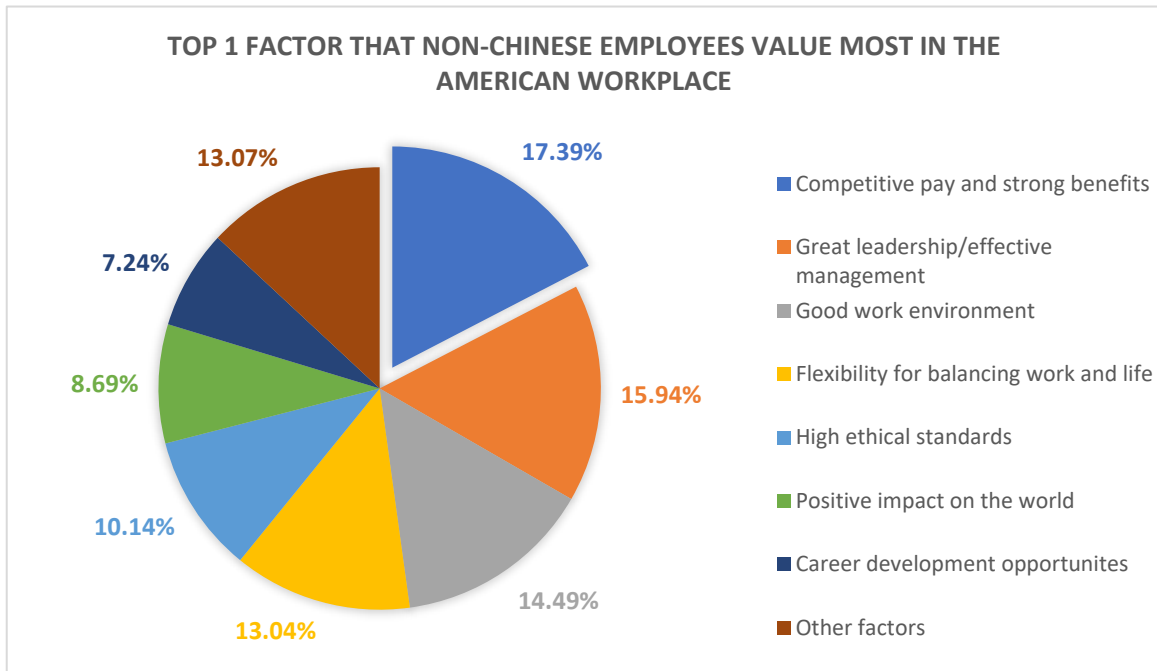
### **Are they satisfied with their organization’s culture?**

Concerning the satisfaction of organizational culture, 70.43 percent of non-Chinese employees are “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied” with their organizational culture. Comparatively, 12.68 percent of them remain neutral, and 16.9 percent of them are “somewhat dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied” with their organizational culture.

### **The top 3 factors that Non-Chinese employees value most in the American workplace**

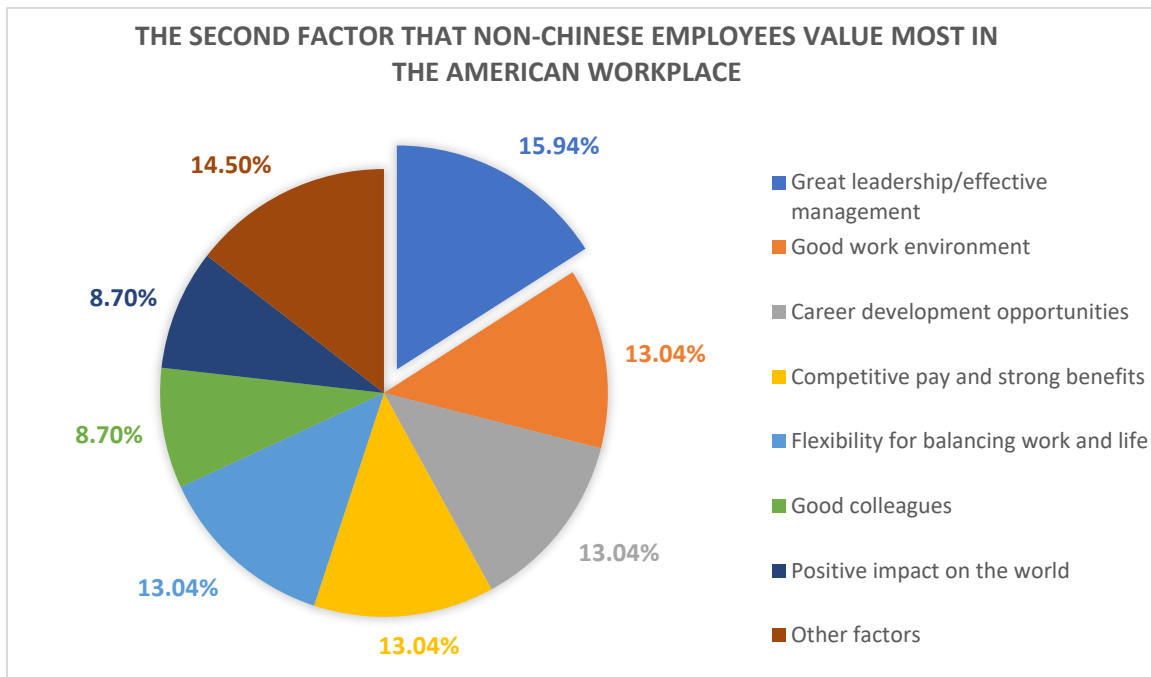
For non-Chinese employees, 17.39 percent of them consider “competitive pay and strong benefits” as the top factor that they value most in the workplace. This compared to 15.94 percent of respondents who supported “great leadership/effective management.” Just 14.49 percent of respondents consider a “good work environment” to be the most significant. Also, “flexibility for balancing work and life,” “high ethical standards,” “positive impact on the world,” and “career development opportunities” are other key factors that non-Chinese employees value most in the workplace. (see Figure 8)

Figure 8: Top 1 factor that non-Chinese employees value most in the American workplace



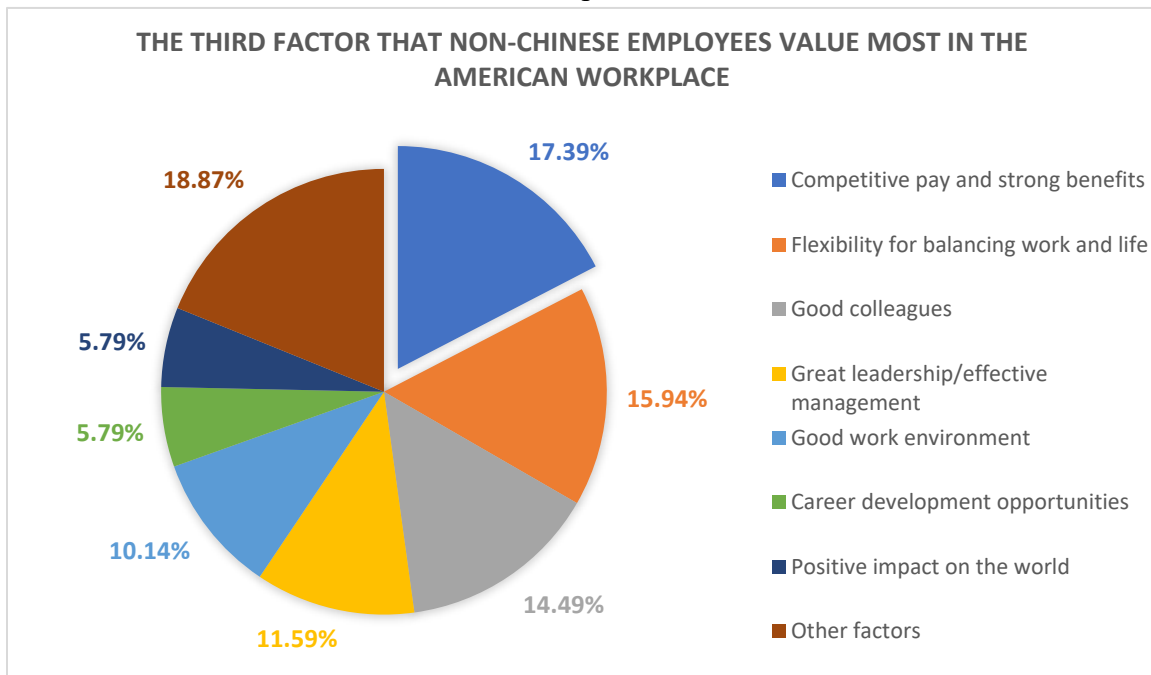
For non-Chinese employees, 15.94 percent believe that “great leadership/effective management” as the second most important factor that they value most in the workplace. But, only 13.04 percent of respondents supported having a “good work environment,” “career development opportunities,” “competitive pay and strong benefits,” and “flexibility for balancing work and life.” Also, “good colleagues,” and “positive impact on the world” are the two factors that non-Chinese employees value as the second most important factor they value. (see Figure 9)

Figure 9: The second factor that non-Chinese employees value most in the American workplace



As presented in Figure 10, 17.39 percent of the non-Chinese employees accept “competitive pay and strong benefits” as the third most important factor that they value most in the workplace followed by 15.94 percent of respondents who value “flexibility for balancing work and life,” and 14.49 percent who value “good colleagues.” Also, “great leadership/ effective management,” “good work environment,” “competitive pay and strong benefits,” and “positive impact on the world” are four factors that non-Chinese employees value as the most important factor in the organization. (see Figure 10)

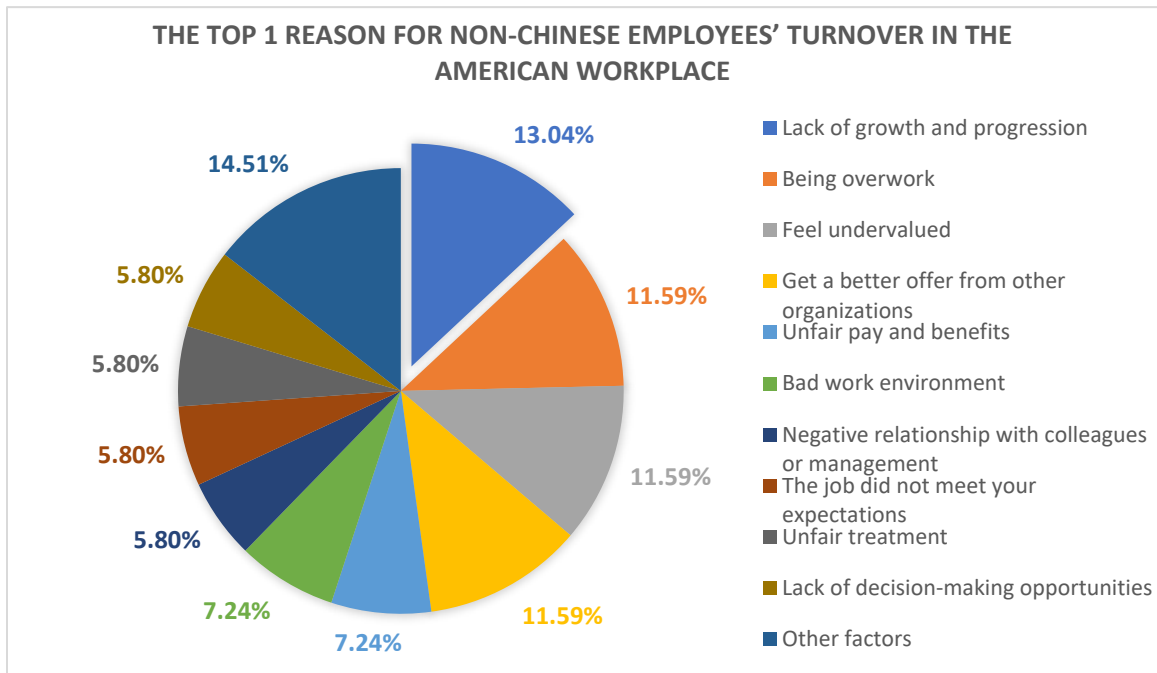
Figure 10: The third factor that non-Chinese employees value most in the American workplace



### **The top 3 reasons for non-Chinese employees' turnover in the American workplace**

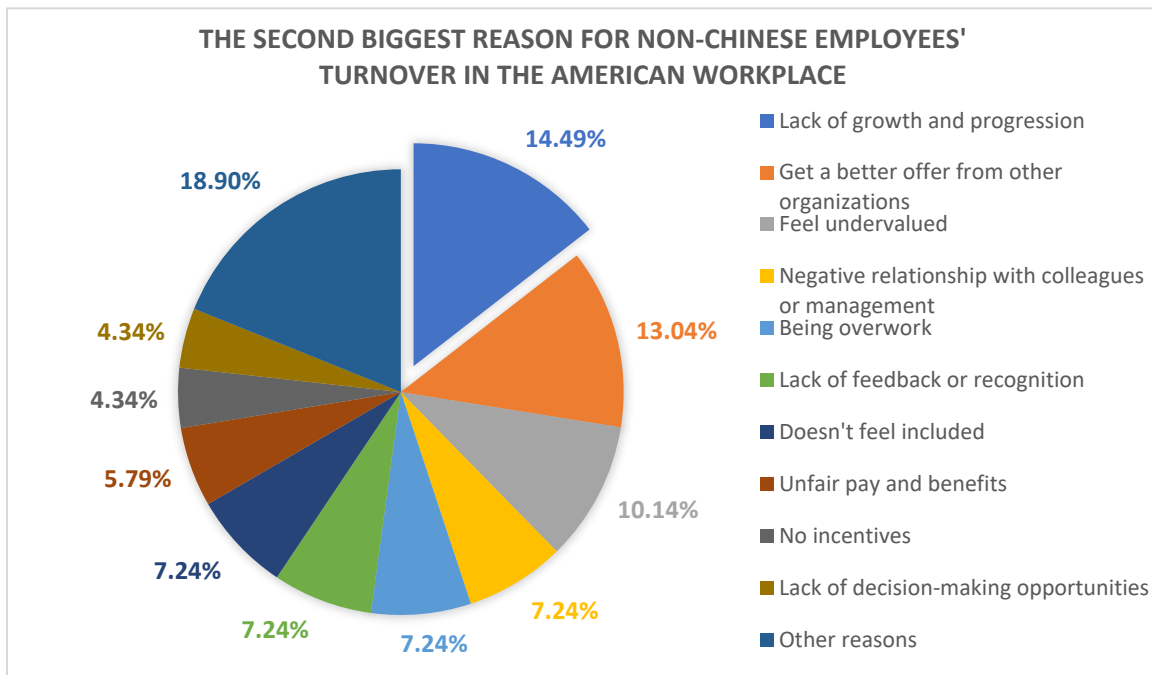
Regarding the top reason why non-Chinese employees' leave, 13.04 percent of non-Chinese respondents consider "lack of growth and progression" as their top reason for leaving their current organization and 11.59 percent of respondents felt that "being overworked," "feeling undervalued," and "getting a better offer from other organizations" as responsible for turnover. In contrast, 7.24 percent of non-Chinese selected "unfair pay and benefits," and "bad work environment." Also, "negative relationship with colleagues or management," "the job did not meet your expectations," "unfair treatment," and "lack of decision-making opportunities," are other top factors that respondents believe would prompt their resignation. (see Figure 11)

Figure 11: The top 1 reason for non-Chinese employees' turnover in the American workplace



For non-Chinese employees, 14.49 percent of them take “lack of growth and progression” as the second biggest reason for leaving their current organization, and 13.04 percent of respondents reported that they would leave if they “get a better offer from other organizations,” followed by 10.14 percent who would leave should they “feel undervalued.” Just 7.24 percent of non-Chinese workers consider “negative relationships with colleagues or management,” “being overworked,” “lack of feedback or recognition,” and “doesn’t feel included” as their second biggest reason for a turnover. Also, “unfair pay and benefits,” “no incentives,” and “lack of decision-making opportunities” are other salient factors that the non-Chinese workers believe as their second most important reason for leaving the current organization. (see Figure 12)

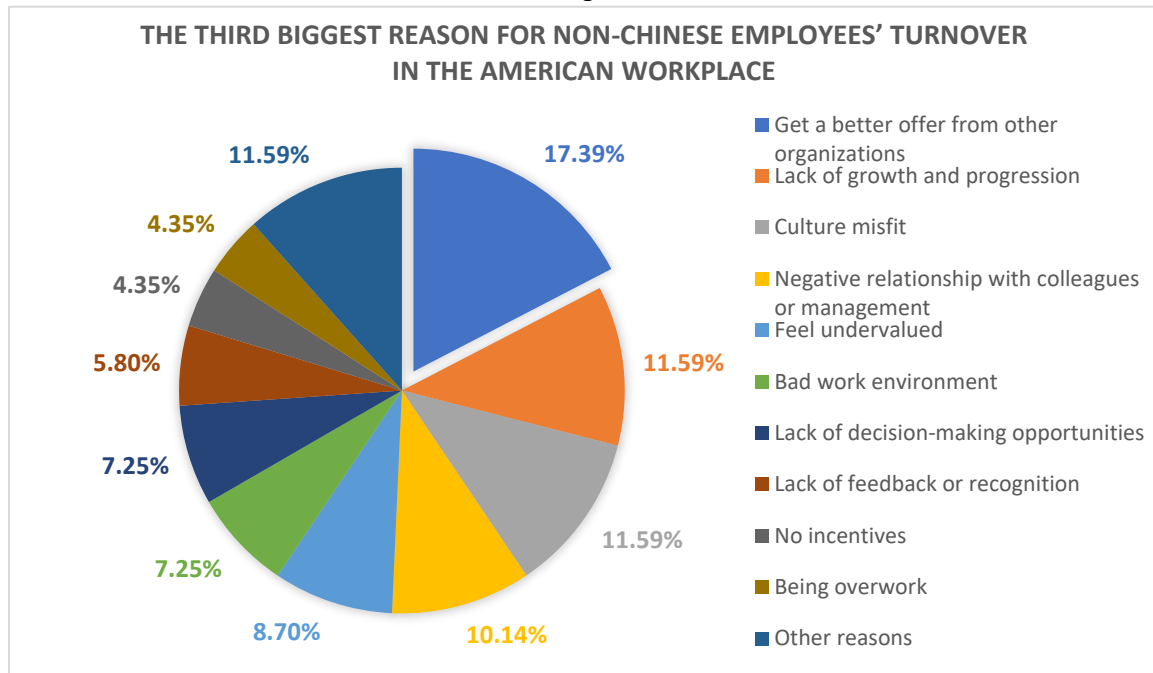
Figure 12: The second biggest reason for non-Chinese employees' turnover in the American workplace



For non-Chinese employees, 17.39 percent of them think “get a better offer from other organizations” as the third biggest reason for leaving the current organization. However, 11.59 percent of respondents reported that “lack of growth and progression,” and “culture misfit” could prompt them to leave. Comparatively, 10.14 percent of non-Chinese workers felt that “negative relationships with colleagues or management,” and 8.7 percent would leave if they “feel undervalued.” Only 7.25 percent of people chose “bad work environment,” and “lack of decision-making opportunities.” Also, “lack of feedback or recognition,” “no incentives,” and “being overworked” are three factors that the non-Chinese workers take as the third reason for leaving their current organization. (see Figure 13)



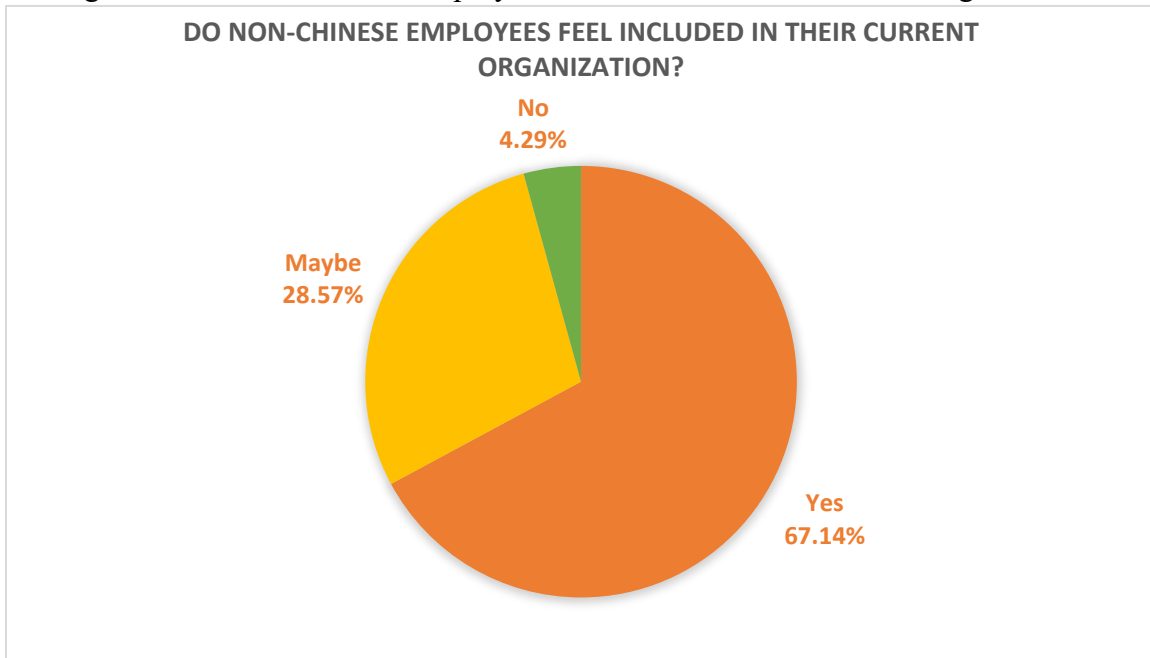
Figure 13: The third biggest reason for non-Chinese employees' turnover in the American workplace



### **Do they feel included in the organization?**

Regarding inclusion in the organization, 67.14 percent of the non-Chinese employees reported that they are included in their organization, 28.57 percent of them feel they “maybe” included, and 4.29 percent of them feel they are not included. (see Figure 14)

Figure 14: Do non-Chinese employees feel included in their current organization?



### 3) The Comparison Between Chinese And Non-Chinese Group

After comparing the data between Chinese employees and non-Chinese employees, I have some key findings:

- i. The “Iron Rice Bowl” is no longer an attractive career choice for the majority of Chinese employees in the US.

According to the traditional Chinese perspective, jobs in the state sector – “Iron Rice Bowls” – are widely perceived as highly desirable because they offer advantageous benefits (including but not limited to housing benefits and generous pensions), and immunity from layoffs (Wang, J. & Xie, Y. 2015; Fish, E. 2015). Besides, the official job “inside the system” is also popular in China, representing the job in the organizations that are all fully or partly funded by the Chinese government, including public schools,

universities, clinics, hospitals, libraries, performing groups, research institutes, and media organizations. Because it means a secure job with a stable income and good welfare.

Therefore, traditional Chinese parents wish their children to get an “Iron Rice Bowl” or a decent job “inside the system” after graduation in China.

However, these are no longer attractive career choices for the majority of Chinese employees in the US. According to the survey report, the majority of Chinese respondents (61.54 percent) work in the private sectors in the US. Only 3.08 percent of Chinese respondents work in a government agency, and 7.69 percent work in the educational institution in the US. The main reason may be that the non-profit pay scale is typically far from excessive, especially compared to salaries in the for-profit organization in the US (Fritz, J. 2020).

ii. An employment visa (e.g., H1B, G4, etc.) may be the reason for Chinese employees to take their job.

According to the survey report, 8.06 percent of Chinese employees declared that they pick their job because the organization sponsored an employment visa (e.g., H1-B, G4, etc.). However, none of the non-Chinese employees said so.

H1-B visas are the most common type of employment visa in the US and are tied to a specific employer and are valid for three years; there is an option to extend it for three years after that. According to the US State Department, Chinese nationals accounted for about 15 percent of H1-B visas issued in 2019 (Shen, L. 2020). Now, as the difficulty and complexity of acquiring a visa have increased, with longer wait times and

more scrutiny, some of the international talent in the US are uncertain about their future in the U.S. As a result, they are less likely to switch jobs as their ability to live in the U.S. is tied to their visa and employment status (Monllos, K. 2020). Therefore, Chinese employees are more likely to work for organizations that sponsor the work visa.

iii. Non-Chinese employees have a higher dissatisfaction rate than Chinese employees with their organization and organizational culture.

According to the survey data, the satisfaction rate in both Chinese and non-Chinese groups are very close. However, compared to Chinese employees, more non-Chinese employees are dissatisfied with their current organization and organizational culture. (see Figure 15, Figure 16)

No business can be successful without the workforce, except for small businesses that are owned and operated by only one person. According to Nataly Kogan, the founder of the learning and technology platform Happier.com, satisfied employees are happy to come to work and willing to go the extra mile for their employers because they love their jobs (Keogh, O. 2019). As a result, “job satisfaction” has long been one of the main areas of concern for human resource managers of many organizations.

When employees are more satisfied, they’re more productive. Satisfied workers are less likely to leave the organization, which means retention will increase, and the company may be able to spend less time recruiting and training new hires (DeMers, J. 2016). On the other hand, emotions, both positive and negative, actually spread among employees like viruses. People’s feelings could easily influence each other in the group

(Barsade, S. 2014). The emotion, words, and behavior of an unhappy employee may affect others in the organization, leading to a larger scale of dissatisfaction. Certainly, we could not guarantee the 100 percent of employees are satisfied with the organization or organizational culture. Still, there's no doubt that the organization has a more positive impact with more percentage of satisfied employees.

Indeed, there are many influential factors on job satisfaction. One of the factors that have a great impact on job satisfaction is organizational culture, which refers to a series of attitudes and behaviors adopted by employees of a certain organization, affecting its function and total well-being (Belias, D. & Koustelios, A. 2014). "Job satisfaction" and "Organizational culture" are two of the widely studied topics in the field of human resource management and organizational behavior. Because of the direct relation of each of these topics to human's nature and psych, different theories and models are proposed to model and quantify both of these (Karim, J. & Sajjad, R. 2016).

According to the survey data, non-Chinese employees value more in aspects such as pay/benefit, leadership/management, work environment, work-life balance, career development opportunity. The other primary reasons causing turnover among non-Chinese respondents are: lack of growth and progression, being overworked, feeling undervalued, negative relationship with others. Also, one anonymous non-Chinese employee mentioned in the last open-ended question of the survey that, there is often a very competitive environment in America. The employee is rated and ranked vs. the rest of the workgroup, so the people are incentivized to try to "beat" other colleagues rather than "collaborate." The anonymous respondent said he/she is lucky to work in a culture

where collaborating is part of excelling. He/she believes that the “culture fit” is a big reason for job satisfaction.

Figure 15: The Comparison between Chinese and non-Chinese employees in the satisfaction of the organization

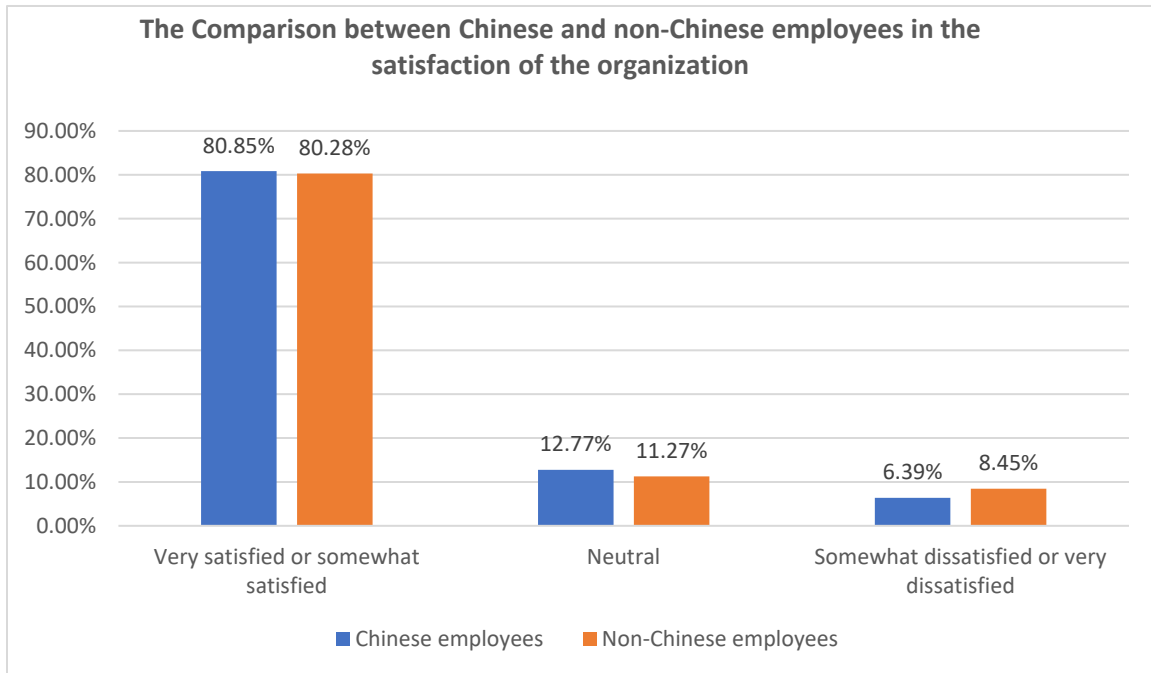
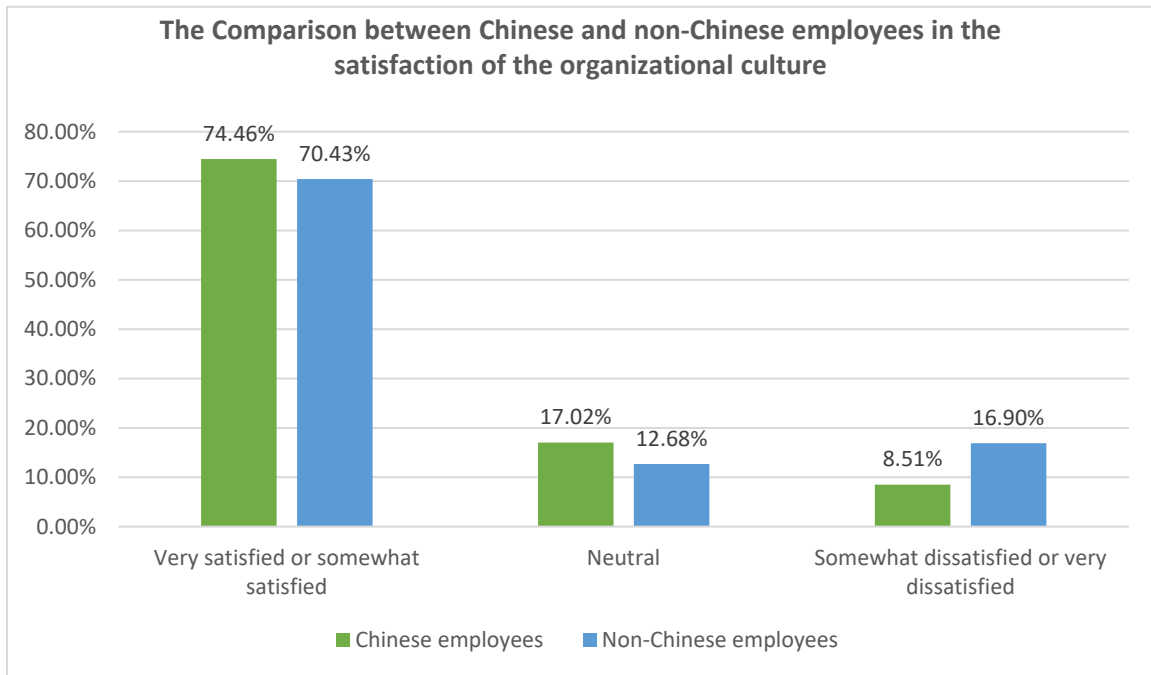


Figure 16: The comparison between Chinese and non-Chinese employees in the satisfaction of the organizational culture



iv. Compared to non-Chinese employees, Chinese employees value “career development opportunities” more, but put less value on “great leadership/ effective management” in the American workplace.

According to the survey data, “career development opportunities” is the factor that the Chinese employees rank high on the list that they value most in the American workplace. Likewise, “career development opportunities” had the highest frequency of occurrence of words that my interviewees referred to during our conversation. Almost all my interviews consider it to be intrinsically linked to their job satisfaction.

On the other hand, “great leadership/effective management” is the factor that the Chinese employees rank low on the list that they value most in the American workplace.

It may be because Chinese employees are slightly affected by the traditional Confucian-based ethnic culture. Confucianism values hard work, endurance, collectivism, and personal networks (guanxi). According to the Confucian-based ethnic culture, Chinese employees are expected to devote themselves to, and take full responsibility for, the job, work diligently, and generally align their values and goals with those of the organization (Lu et al. 2011). As a result, long work hours are common in China (Smyth et al. 2013). Besides, people occupying the inferior role (such as child, younger brother, subordinate), are expected to be obedient and loyal to their relative superior (such as the parent, elder brother, boss). And elders and superiors are expected to be generous and kind towards their relative inferiors (Chen, Tsui, & Farh, 2002; Yeh, C. 2019 ). Therefore, Chinese employees may not feel as free as their western colleagues to judge leadership/management in the workplace.

But that doesn't mean the Chinese employees did not pay attention to the leadership/management. All my interviewees shared their perspectives about leadership in their organization. As a banker in a top investment bank in Queens, NY, Charles claimed that he does care about the leadership a lot because it is associated with his career development. According to him, he could not likely get a promotion without a good leader.



v. Both Chinese and non-Chinese employees consider “lack of growth and progression” as the main reason for leaving the current organization.

According to the survey data, the predominant reason causing both Chinese and non-Chinese employees’ turnover is “lack of growth and progression.” Coincidentally, according to the Global Talent Monitor’s report on workforce activity in 2Q18, lack of future career development remains a key driver of employee attrition, which was cited by 40 percent of departing employees as a dissatisfying factor in their job. Meanwhile, 28 percent of employees are actively seeking a job, and 42 percent are passively open to new opportunities (Morris, S. 2018).

Growth opportunity is crucial to the employees, and there are various ways that the organization can offer to help people to grow beside a physical job promotion, for example, the training program. During my interviews, several interviewees mentioned the internal/external training programs that their organization offered to the employees. Like Cindy, who is a manager in a global insurance company in Flushing, NY, she said her organization encourages employees to take diverse internal/external training courses. Rachel, an HR manager in a mid-size consulting firm in Manhattan, NY, also mentioned that her organization offers specific internal training as well as sponsoring external courses.

vi. Compared to non-Chinese employees, a higher percentage of Chinese employees feel excluded in the American workplace.

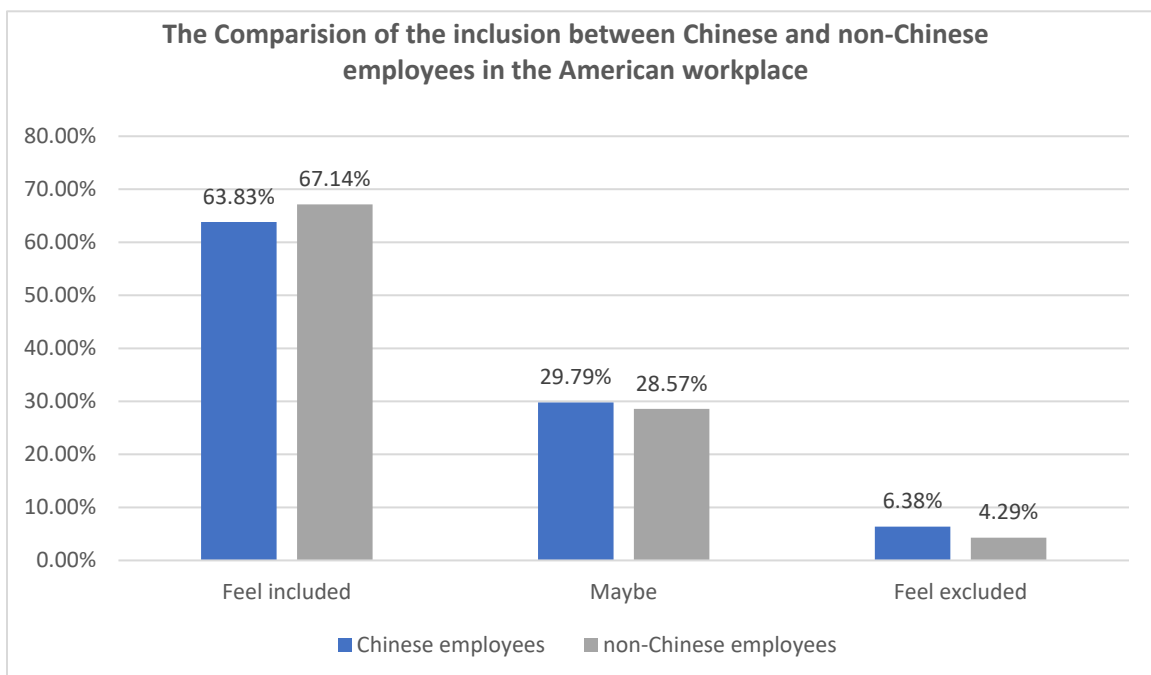
According to the survey data, more Chinese employees feel excluded in the American workplace than non-Chinese employees. (see Figure 17) Five of my nine interviewees claimed that they did feel included in the organization. One person remained neutral. And three people asserted that they did not feel included in their workplace.

In this era of technology and globalization, many American organizations are making an effort to succeed in diversity in the workplace by hiring employees from diverse backgrounds, regardless of race, religion, culture, ethnicity, cultural background, sexual orientation, religion, languages, education. Diversity in the workplace delivers considerable benefits: more understanding and respect for cultural differences, increasing productivity, improving creativity, improving employee engagement, better service for customers and partners, and reducing conflict (Nintex, 2016). However, diversity is only a lip service without inclusion (Harris, L.W. 2019).

What does inclusion mean? According to the Deloitte study, it contains four elements: 1) fairness and respect; 2) valued and belonging; 3) safe and open; 4) empowered and growing (Bourke, J. & Dillon, B. 2018). Equity is the basis for inclusion. The employees feel included when they are treated fairly with respect, but without discrimination. Second, people feel included when others value them, and they have a sense of connectedness with the group. Moreover, people feel included when they feel safe to express their perspective frankly without fear of embarrassment. Last but not least, people feel included when they feel inspired to grow.

All the five interviewees, who claimed that they felt included, mentioned that they are valued, respected, and fairly treated by others in the organization. Their organizations paid close attention to implementing D&I (Diversity and Inclusion) programs. In contrast, the three interviewees who asserted that they did not feel included in their workplace, disclosed that others did not respect their culture, and there was no bias training in their organizations.

Figure 17: The Comparison of the inclusion between Chinese and non-Chinese employees in the American workplace



## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

There are about 2.23 million Chinese working in the U.S., but they are often “invisible” in research studies about the workplace. When I was doing my capstone study, I could not find sufficient existing studies about them. It is embarrassing. Therefore, my capstone study aims to fill the gap.

Job satisfaction has long been one of the main areas of concern for human resource managers of many organizations. Job satisfaction refers to the employees’ perceptions of their working environment, relations among colleagues, earnings, and promotion opportunities (Belias, D. & Koustelios, A. 2014). My capstone study focuses on the influential factors of job satisfaction of Chinese employees in the American workplace.

The findings from this study reveal that Chinese employees generally have a higher satisfaction rate with their organization and organizational culture than non-Chinese employees. And, Chinese employees attach importance to career development in the workplace, even more than the paycheck. They will leave the organization when there is a lack of growth and progression. Besides, as the first generation immigrants, especially for those whose immigration took place in adulthood, they had been socialized to the Chinese cultural norms (Tan, T.X. 2014). Therefore, Chinese employees put less value on the leadership/management in the organization with the influence of the traditional Confucian-based ethnic culture, comparing to their non-Chinese peers.

Yet, there's a higher percentage of Chinese employees who do feel excluded in the American workplace, relative to non-Chinese employees. Diversity is meaningless without inclusion (Saad, T. 2018). Likewise, many studies show Asian Americans, including Chinese, are suffering from workplace discrimination. In particular, Asian Americans have a lower ratio of high-status leadership positions, comparing to Whites (Hyun, J. 2005; Woo, D. 2000; Lai, L. & Babcock, L. C. 2013).

Although the findings of this study contribute new knowledge to fill in the blanks of research study on the Chinese employees in the American workplace, several limitations need to be addressed. One of the main limitations is the generalizability of the results because I do not include a cross-gender or cross-generational study of Chinese employees in the American workplace. Therefore, the research outcomes can not explain the difference between genders and generations of Chinese employees. Also, due to the limitation of my samples, there is no cross-gender or cross-generational study between Chinese employees and non-Chinese employees. Future studies could consider expanding the number of samples to do the cross-gender study and cross-generational study.

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## APPENDIX A

### Capstone Survey in Qualtrics

Q1: In which country are you currently working? (single answer)

- USA
- China
- Other

Condition: If the “USA” is not selected, the survey will end automatically.

Condition: If the “USA” is selected, the survey will skip to Q2.

Q2: What's your race? (single answer)

- Chinese
- White
- Asian but not Chinese
- Black or African American
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Hispanic or Latino
- Other

Q3: In what generational time frame were you born? (single answer)

- Baby Boomer (Born between 1944-1964)
- Gen X (Born between 1965-1979)
- Millennial (Born between 1980-1995)
- Gen Z (Born between 1996-2015)

Q4: How many years have you worked? (single answer)

- 0-4 years
- 5-9 years
- 10-14 years
- 15-19 years
- 20-24 years
- 25-29 years
- over 30 years

Q5: What is the type of your current organization? (single answer)

- Corporation
- Government
- Non-governmental Organization
- Political Organization
- International Organization

- Armed forces or Military
- Charity
- Not-for-profit Organization
- Partnership
- Cooperative
- Educational Institution
- Hybrid Organization
- Voluntary Organization
- Other

Q6: What situation made you choose your current job? (single answer)

- I've always had an interest or a passion for this career or type of job.
- I have a parent/ friend/ family member/ teacher or someone else who encouraged me to get into it.
- By coincidence
- I have no better choice.
- The organization sponsors an employment visa (e.g. H1B, G4, etc.)
- I don't know.
- Other reason

Condition: If “Other reason” is selected, the survey will skip to Q7.

Condition: If “Other reason” is not selected, the survey will skip to Q8.



Q7: You clicked "other reason," please indicate what makes you choose your current job.

Condition: If the text box is not Empty, the survey will skip to Q8.

Q8: How satisfied are you with your organization's culture? (single answer)

- Very Satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

Q9: Overall, how satisfied are you working for your current organization? (single answer)

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

Q10: Please rank the top 3 factors below that you value the most in the workplace. (Drag one item on the left side and drop it into the box on the right side)

Items	Rank
Good work environment	
Good colleagues	
Career development opportunities	
Great leadership / Effective management	
Team atmosphere	
Good communication	
Competitive pay and strong benefits	
Close to home	
Flexibility for balancing work and life	
Fair treatment	
High ethical standards	
Positive impact on the world	
Recognition	
Inclusion	
Culture Fit	
Other	

Condition: If “Other” is selected, the survey will skip to Q11.

Condition: If “Other” is not selected, the survey will skip to Q12.

Q11: You clicked "other", please indicate what you value most in the workplace.

Condition: If the text box is not empty, the survey will skip to Q13.

Q12: Do you feel included in your current workplace? (single answer)

- Yes
- Maybe
- No

Q13: Please rank the top 3 factors below that may be your reason for leaving your current workplace. (Drag one item on the left side and drop it into the matching empty box on the right side)

Items	Rank
Negative relationship with colleagues or management	
Culture misfit	
Lack of growth and progression	
The job did not meet your expectation	
No incentives	
Being overworked	
Lack of feedback and recognition	
Unfair pay and benefits	
Bad work environment	
Unfair treatment	
Doesn't feel included	
Feel undervalued	
Lack of decision-making opportunities	
Get a better offer from other organization	
Other reason	

Condition: If “Other reason” is selected, the survey will skip to Q14.

Condition: If “Other reason” is not selected, the survey will skip to Q15.

Q14: You clicked "other reason", please indicate your reason for leaving the organization.

Condition: If the text box is not empty, the survey will skip to Q15.

Q15: Do you have any comments or insights about your work experience in an American workplace? (Optional)

## APPENDIX B

### Interview Questions for Chinese employees

- 1) A brief introduction to your work background.
  - i. What is your title?
  - ii. What is your organization?
  - iii. How long do you work?
  - iv. What situation made you choose your job?
  
- 2) Does your current workplace meet your expectations? Why? Why not?
  
- 3) Do you feel included in your current organization?
  - i. If yes, where do you feel included?
  - ii. If no, in what ways do you feel excluded?
  
- 4) Do you like your role? Why?
  
- 5) Do you feel you are on the right track to a higher position? Why?
  
- 6) Do you feel supported by your leader? How do you feel the leadership in your current organization?

7) Have you received training and development in your current job from your leader or organization?

8) How long do you plan to stay in your current organization? Why?

9) Where do you see yourself in the next 5 years?