The Rise of Market-Based Job Search Institutions and Job Niches for Low-Skilled Chinese Immigrants

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Increasingly, market-based job search institutions, such as employment agencies and ethnic media, are playing a more important role than migrant networks for low-skilled Chinese immigrants searching for jobs. We argue that two major factors are driving this trend: the diversification of Chinese immigrants' provinces of origin, and the spatial diffusion of businesses in the United States owned by Chinese immigrants. We also identify some new niche jobs for Chinese immigrants and assess the extent to which this development is driven by China's growing prosperity. We use data from multiple sources, including a survey of employment agencies in Manhattan's Chinatown, job advertisements in Chinese-language newspapers, and information on Chinese immigrant hometown associations in the United States.

Keywords: employment agencies, networks, Chinese immigrants, ethnic media, job niches

Immigration scholars have long noted that immigrant groups tend to concentrate in certain occupations as they adapt to the U.S. labor market (Eckstein and Peri, this issue). Historically, Irish immigrant women were known to work as housemaids, Jewish immigrants specialized in the garment industry, and Italian immigrants were heavily represented in the construction business (Lieberson 1980; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Rischin 1962; Waldinger 1986, 1994). Chinese immigrants, one of the oldest immigrant groups in the history of the United States, are no exception. In their early settlement in the United States, Chinese immigrants were known to concentrate in two major occupations: restaurant work and laundry work (Chen 2015; Siu and Tchen 1988; Sung 1967). Restaurant-related work was cited as one of the occupations pursued by Chinese immigrants in the United

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States as early as the 1860 census (Kwong and Miščević 2005).

Some have argued that discrimination by mainstream society limited Chinese immigrants' occupational choices. After all, the first discriminatory immigration law in the United States, passed in 1882, targeted Chinese immigrants. Today, however, the occupational patterns of Chinese immigrants have fundamentally changed. Chinese immigrants can be found in diverse occupations, from engineers in Silicon Valley to professors in academic institutions, from workers in state or federal government to soldiers who fought in Iraq. Compared to Mexican immigrants in the United States, Chinese immigrants occupy two labor market niches: high-skilled jobs, on the one hand, and low-skilled jobs, on the other. Data from the 2013 American Community Survey (ACS) reveal that 42 percent of Chinese immigrants worked in high-skilled occupations and 46 percent in low-skilled occupations.[1] Only about 10 percent of Chinese immigrants worked in restaurant-related jobs.

Our article focuses on low-skilled Chinese immigrants because upward mobility is often a challenge for them, owing to low levels of education and sometimes lack of legal status (Eckstein and Peri, this issue). One major occupation we study is the Chinese restaurant business, which employs a great many immigrant workers. By some accounts, there are more than 40,000 Chinese restaurants in the United States—more than McDonald's, Burger King, and Wendy's combined (Lee 2008). Besides the large number of Chinese restaurants, several large Chinese restaurant chains—such as Panda Express (now operating 1,500 restaurants in the United States) and P. F. Chang's—have changed the landscape of the Chinese food service industry in the United States.

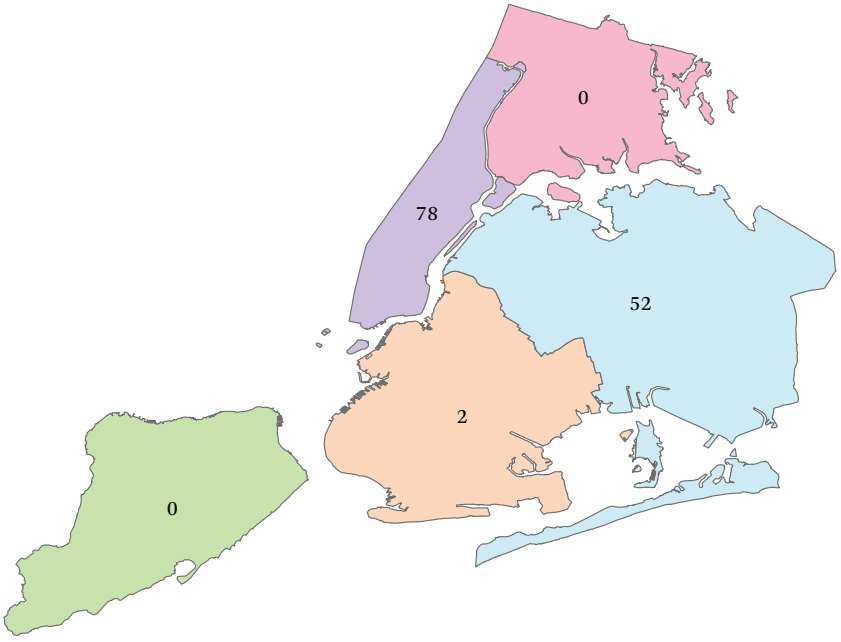
The purpose of this article is threefold. First, in documenting the continuing significance of restaurant work among a large number of low-skilled Chinese immigrants, we argue that the recruitment mechanisms for employing these immigrants in restaurant work have changed from traditional migrant networks to market-based institutions, such as employment agencies, the media, and the Internet. Second, using data from a variety of sources, we show that this change in the recruitment process has been driven by two major forces—the diversification of the provinces of Chinese migrant origin and the spatial diffusion of businesses owned by Chinese immigrants. Our third goal is to explore some emerging new Chinese immigrant job niches and evaluate the extent to which these niches are driven by the growing prosperity of China, as manifested in the growing number of Chinese tourists and China's investment in the United States. We also discuss the potential implications of the market-based institutions now used to recruit Chinese immigrants. Will they lead to Chinese-owned businesses becoming more akin to modern organizations than to traditional mom-and pop-operations? Most of the other articles in this issue use either a qualitative or a quantitative approach (Eckstein and Peri, this issue); we combine the two approaches, and we also rely in some cases on nontraditional data sources.

THE EMERGENCE OF MARKET-BASED JOB SEARCH INSTITUTIONS

One key difference between immigrants who work in niche jobs today and immigrants who worked in niche jobs forty years ago is the change in the methods they used to find their jobs. In particular, today's low-skilled Chinese immigrants rely on market-based institutions more than earlier immigrant cohorts did. In carefully observing the Chinese community in New York, we have noticed some major, sociologically interesting changes. Strolling through Chinatown in Manhattan, Flushing in Queens, or Sunset Park in Brooklyn, we frequently see, among the dazzling signs of restaurants, driving schools, legal services, and hometown associations (HAs), the signs of employment agencies (EAs). We have also become aware of the growing presence of EAs in the Chinese immigrant labor market through Chinese-language newspapers and Chinese yellow pages. In New York City alone, our online search came up with 132 EAs (excluding some duplicated entries). The lion's share of EAs are

1. Authors' calculations from 2013 ACS data.

Figure 1. Distribution of Employment Agencies by New York City Borough, 2016



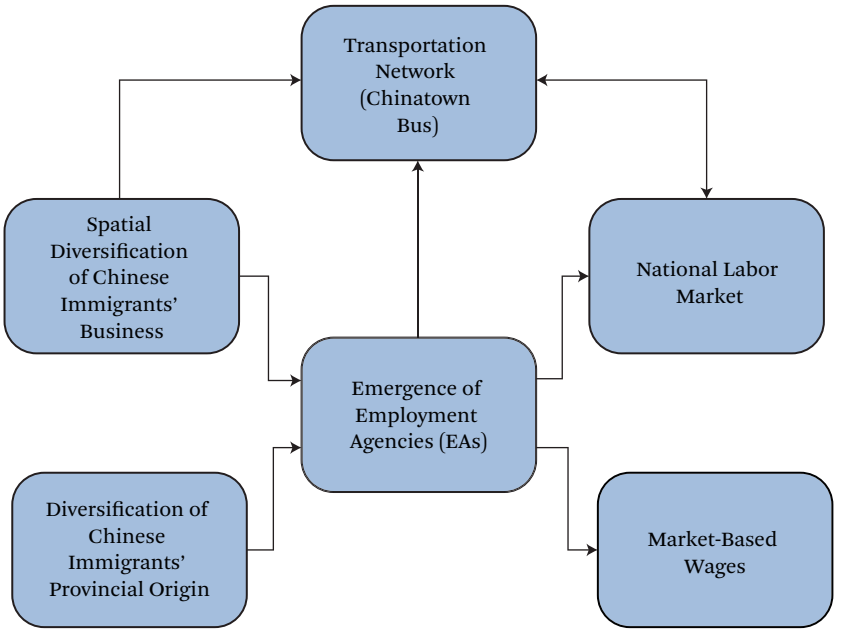
Source: Authors' compilation from "List of Employment Agencies by New York City Borough," 2017, available at: http://newyork.jinti.net/yellowpages/309_l0/ (accessed May 15, 2017).

located in Queens and Manhattan (see figure 1), and in Manhattan the vast majority are located in Chinatown, a main settlement area for low-skilled Chinese immigrants. The mushrooming of EAs is not only an East Coast phenomenon; a similar development has been reported in Los Angeles (Dolnick 2011). As students of immigration, we believe that this new pattern of job recruitment deserves our attention and further exploration.

NETWORK-BASED VERSUS MARKET-BASED JOB SEARCH PROCESSES

Much of the earlier sociological research on immigration focused on the so-called enclave economy, such as is found in Chinatown in Manhattan or among Cuban immigrants in Miami (Portes 2010; Wilson and Portes 1980; Zhou 1992). This literature continues and expands earlier work by Ivan Light (1984) and others who have explored the issues of immigrants and ethnic enterprises in the United States. Light's earlier work sought to explain variations in entrepreneurship by immigrant group, and he stressed the role of ethnic and class resources in the formation of immigrant enterprises. Subsequent sociological studies by Alejandro Portes (2010) and others (for example, Sanders and Nee 1987; Waldinger 1986) aimed to examine whether ethnic enclaves represent not simply a means of survival but an alternative vehicle for economic mobility. There is a consensus between the two strands of literature that immigrant workers become spatially concentrated in neighborhoods with an immigrant labor market based on a strong sense of immigrant identity and connection. For example, earlier immigrants who settled in Manhattan's Chinatown came mainly from Guangdong Province and spoke the same dialect. In this scenario—an immigrant group originating from the same place and being spatially concentrated in a particular neighborhood—migration networks work effectively to allocate immigrant labor for jobs in restaurants and laundry shops (the traditional Chinese immigrant job niches) (Massey, Goldring, and Durand 1994). Today the increase in the

Figure 2. Theoretical Framework



Source: Authors' compilation.

number of EAs reflects not only dramatic changes in the job search process for immigrants in the last two decades in the United States, but also changes in the size of immigrant groups, their origins, and the spatial diffusion of immigrant-owned businesses.

Figure 2 summarizes the logic and key components of our theoretical framework. Our core argument is that the emergence of EAs is a market-based response to two major forces: the diversification of Chinese immigrants' provinces of origins and the spatial diffusion of businesses owned by Chinese immigrants. This response has strong implications for both individual immigrants and the formation of a national labor market for low-skilled Chinese immigrants. For average low-skilled Chinese immigrants, we expect that market-based job searches will be more successful than searches conducted through a traditional migrant network. At the same time, the formation of a broad immigrant labor market has given rise to the establishment of national supply chain networks and immigrant-based transportation systems (such as Chinatown Bus). In turn, the national supply chain networks and transportation systems further strengthen and expand the broad labor market for Chinese immigrant workers. In the following sections, we elaborate our key arguments and present systematic empirical evidence.

DATA COLLECTION FOR THE STUDY

We have relied on multiple data sources for this study. The first is our own previous study of employment agencies in New York's Chinatown (Liang et al. 2015). We surveyed a total of thirty-two EAs in Chinatown, obtaining information on type of job, location, and salary for each sampled EA. Most of these EAs were located between Canal Street and East Broadway in Lower Manhattan rather than along Mott and Canal Streets, the traditional area of settlement for Cantonese immigrants. The majority of today's low-skilled Chinese immigrants no longer come from Guangdong Province but from Fujian Province, and they tend to settle along East Broadway. Another source of data for the present study is a 2004 survey of Chinese immigrants containing detailed information on respondents' job history, such as job changes, workplace location, and wages (for a detailed discussion of this survey, see Liang et al. 2008). We use these survey data to examine

how immigrants' wages and wage growth are related to the job search methods they use.

The third data source is the Chinese-language newspaper *World Journal*. We use information on all job listings published on a day in February 2004, a day in February 2016, and another day in April 2016. Some employers posted one ad for several jobs. So, for example, we generated four positions in our data from an ad for a travel agency that needed four workers. For our analysis, we use two pieces of information from these job ads: types of jobs and locations of jobs.

To understand the growing diversification of the provincial origins of Chinese immigrants in the United States, we needed information on these provinces of origin, but this information was difficult to obtain. Typical data sources such as the U.S. census and the American Community Survey do not contain information on the province or state of immigrant origin. Thus, in collecting data on Chinese immigrant organizations, we assumed that the establishment of immigrant organizations from a specific Chinese province reflected a major increase in immigration from that province to the United States.[2] Given that most immigrant associations are headquartered in large cities or states with large populations of immigrants, we focused on Chinese immigrant organizations in New York City, Washington, D.C., California, and Texas.

We began the process by searching for 同乡会, the Chinese term for "hometown association," in selected locations (such as New York City). We looked through ten pages of search results looking for specific names of associations in that location. Sometimes we would find a useful link to an association's website and be able to obtain information on the year the association was established. Sometimes we found one website listing Chinese immigrant associations in a selected location (such as Washington, D.C.). Then we would search for reports on the anniversary events associated with each Chinese immigrant association in that location because they would help us identify the year the association was established. For example, an immigrant association having a twentieth-anniversary celebration in 2016 would have been established in 1996. When we could not find such information, we phoned or emailed the manager or another staff member of the Chinese immigrant association to inquire about the year of the association's founding.

Overall, the four data sources complement each other and provide a comprehensive portrait of the linkages among the diversification of Chinese immigrant origins, the spatial diffusion of Chinese immigrants, and the rise of market-based job search institutions. We should also mention some caveats: these data do have limitations. For example, our survey of employment agencies does not include jobs advertised in the *World Journal*. This limitation is overcome somewhat by our inclusion of the jobs posted in the Chinese-language newspaper. Likewise, our use of job information contained in the *World Journal* during the two months (February and April) may overlook potential seasonal variations. Finally, the information on Chinese immigrant associations obtained from the Internet is likely to be incomplete and to underestimate the number of Chinese immigrant associations in the United States.

THE INCREASING DIVERSIFICATION OF CHINESE IMMIGRANTS

In 2015, the U.S. Census Bureau reported that China had replaced Mexico as the number-one immigrant-sending country to the United States, as measured by migrant flow (Shah 2015).[3] The more than 150,000 Chinese immi-

2. The history of Chinese immigrant associations in the United States is consistent with this assumption. The Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association was established in 1883 as the number of Chinese immigrants from Guangdong Province was increasing significantly (see the association's website at http://www.ccbanyc.org/eindex.html, accessed August 31, 2017). Likewise, the Fukien Benevolent Association of America (http://www.usfujian.com/viewthread.php?tid=21, accessed August 31, 2017) was established in New York City in 1942 because more and more immigrants from Fujian Province were arriving in the United States.

3. The Census Bureau defines an "immigrant" as a foreign-born person who was in a foreign country one year earlier and was living in the United States at the time of the American Community Survey.

grants who came to the United States in 2012 were recorded in the American Community Survey of 2013 (U.S. Census Bureau 2013). In 1990, there were 681,000 Chinese immigrants in the United States, and by 2000 that number had nearly doubled, reaching 1.2 million. By 2013, according to ACS data, there were 2 million Chinese immigrants, which is clearly an underestimate: a significant number of undocumented Chinese immigrants are often not counted in the official data.

To most casual observers, all Chinese immigrants are the same, or at least not that different. In reality, however, there are significant variations between the Chinese immigrants we observe today and Chinese immigrants thirty or forty years ago. Most Chinese immigrants in the United States before 1965 came from Guangdong Province in southern China and spoke Cantonese (Nee and Nee 1974; Sung 1967). They were often seen in Chinatowns in different cities and either worked in restaurants and laundry businesses or ran grocery stores and gift shops.

Today immigrants from China are fundamentally different and represent much broader origins in China—an immigration trend that has been recently reported on by National Public Radio (Wang 2016). In April 2016, the humorist Calvin Trillin (2016), a longtime *New Yorker* contributor, wrote a poem complaining that Americans could not keep up with the different Chinese regional cuisines. "Have they run out of provinces yet? / If they haven't, we've reason to fret." The poem may be innocent and humorous, but it actually created something of a global controversy: commentators from both the United States and China joined the debate (Li 2016; Ramzy 2016). The English edition of the influential *Global Times,* a newspaper published in China, ran its own poem, which began: "Have they run out of xenophobia?" (Li 2016).

That controversy aside, the mainstream media clearly take notice of the unmistakable immigration story: immigrants from different provinces and regions of China to the United States are becoming increasingly diverse. For scholars, the challenge is to document this diversification systematically. In the federal data collection system, we can obtain information on Chinese immigrants from the U.S. census and the American Community Survey and administrative data from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. But none of these data sources identifies Chinese immigrants' province of origin in China. To overcome this challenge we decided to use data on Chinese immigrant hometown associations in the United States, on the assumption that a higher number of HAs for immigrants from certain provinces in China represents a larger volume of immigrants from these provinces. Of course, this approximation may not be entirely accurate.

Table 1 shows recent changes in Chinese immigrant hometown associations in the United States. The top panel reveals increasing provincial diversification over time in four major immigrant locations in the United States: New York City, Washington, D.C., California, and Texas. In 1965 in New York City, for example, three Chinese provinces were represented among Chinese immigrant hometown associations. By 2015, New York City HAs represented twenty-three provinces in China (out of thirty-one). Similar findings are revealed for Chinese immigrant HAs in Washington, D.C., California, and Texas. The lower panel of table 1 shows the total number of Chinese immigrant HAs in each location. We identified twelve HAs in 1965 in New York City that represented immigrants from three provinces of China. In addition to comparing HAs across time in New York City, it is informative to make comparisons between cities. Compared to New York City HAs, for example, HAs in Washington, D.C., represent more provinces in China (twenty-eight versus twenty-three). But this is only part of the story: New York City in 2015 had 130 HAs, nearly four times the number in D.C., suggesting that Chinese immigrants in the D.C. region may be more diverse, but there are many more Chinese immigrants in New York City than in D.C., as is consistent with the official account (Hooper and Batalova 2015).

Table 2 gives us more detailed information on how the change in HAs differs by province of origin. First, let us compare Guangdong and Fujian Provinces, using New York City as an example. In 1965, clearly the most important immigrant-sending province was Guangdong,

Table 1. Distribution of Chinese Hometown Associations in the United States, by Year

Year	Number of Chinese Provinces with Hometown Associations			
	New York City	Washington, D.C.	California	Texas
1965	3	0	1	0
2000	12	11	14	6
2010	15	21	22	10
2015	23	28	26	16
Year	**Number of Chinese Hometown Associations**			
	New York City	Washington, D.C.	California	Texas
1965	12	0	2	0
2000	33	9	18	4
2010	47	22	36	9
2015	130	36	57	19

Source: Authors' compilation.

Table 2. Distribution of Hometown Associations of Selected Chinese Provinces in the United States, by Year

Province/Year	Number of Chinese Hometown Associations			
	New York City	Washington, D.C.	California	Texas
From Fujian				
1965	1	0	0	0
2000	4	2	2	1
2010	6	3	2	1
2015	75	3	2	2
From Guangdong				
1965	9	0	2	0
2000	11	0	3	1
2010	12	1	4	1
2015	13	2	4	1
From Zhejiang				
1965	0	0	0	0
2000	4	0	3	0
2010	6	1	7	0
2015	8	1	8	1

Source: Authors' compilation.

which was represented by nine HAs in New York City, compared to only one Fujian HA. By 2015, the picture had changed dramatically: now there were seventy-five Fujian-based HAs, compared to only thirteen Guangdong HAs. At the same time, the number of HAs representing immigrants from Zhejiang Province (located in coastal China) had increased in both New York City and California.

Chinese immigrants from different prov-

inces speak different dialects and are often embedded in their own networks. Even among immigrants from Fujian Province, a person from one Fujian town who runs a restaurant and needs to hire a worker might not know that someone from another town in Fujian is looking for a job. Thus, this Chinese restaurateur from Fujian Province, unable to staff his restaurant from his own small network of friends and relatives, has to look beyond it. In this case, the traditional network-based job search process has reached its limit. A different version of the strength of "weak ties" may apply here: job information and choice are limited for those immigrants who know only the job availability of those within their own province-of-origin network (Granovetter 1985).

THE SPATIAL DIFFUSION OF CHINESE IMMIGRANT ENTREPRENEURS

In addition to the diversification of Chinese immigrants' provinces of origin, we also observe spatial diffusion of Chinese immigrant entrepreneurs. Here we report results from a survey of eleven employment agencies that we carried out in Manhattan's Chinatown in 2011. Before discussing our findings from this survey, we give a brief overview of the history of EAs in New York City. In our interviews with owners of selected EAs, all mentioned that the first person to start an EA was Jackson Lee, an immigrant from Guangdong Province, although no one could say exactly when. In *New York Times* reporter Jane Lii's 1994 report on a case against Jackson Lee, however, a quote from Lee implies that his EA business started in 1969. This time frame is broadly consistent with the information from our interviews with other EA owners. For example, another EA owner, Mr. Yang, told us that when he first came to New York in 1973, he saw Jackson Lee's EA in Chinatown.[4] Mr. Yang also remembered that the fee for EA services was $30 at that time. (That today's fee of $30 to $35 is virtually unchanged after more than twenty years points to the fierce competition among modern EAs.) Although earlier EAs primarily provided services for immigrants from Guangdong and other Chinese immigrants, over time the number of EAs has expanded dramatically; now they cater mainly to immigrants from other provinces, such Fujian, and from northeast China. One key difference is that owners of EAs today are primarily immigrants from Fujian Province, because most restaurant owners in New York City are Fujianese immigrants.

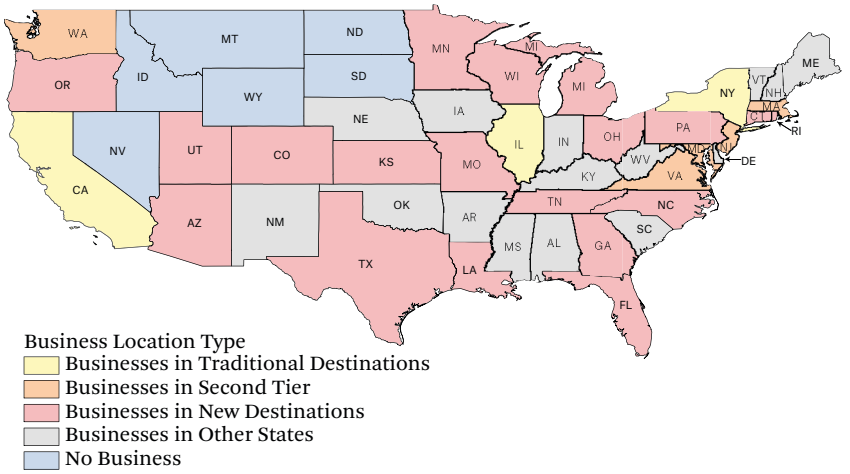
We obtained all of the job listings of the EAs we surveyed—over 2,000 jobs in total. All of these jobs were in businesses owned by Chinese entrepreneurs. Most of them were jobs in restaurants (serving both Chinese food and Japanese food). For the most part, job applicants were Chinese immigrants, but some Latino workers also used the services of Chinese immigrant EAs. Just as in high-end restaurants in Los Angeles, there is a hierarchy among restaurant workers in Chinese restaurants (Wilson, this issue), where Latino workers tend to work mainly as busboys.

For our survey, the most important job information posted at an EA was the phone area code for each job, which could be perceived to imply an immigrant business in operation within the geographical boundaries of that area code. Thus, this job information could be used to examine the spatial locations of immigrant-owned businesses. Figure 3 shows the spatial distribution across the United States of these immigrant-owned businesses in 2011. From a survey of employment agencies in Chinatown in Manhattan, we can study the spatial diffusion of Chinese immigrant–owned businesses (mainly restaurants) across the United States. In figure 3, we see that Chinese immigrant businesses can be found in nearly all U.S. states, excepting only Montana, Wyoming, South Dakota, North Dakota, Idaho, and Nevada.

One implication of the expansion of Chinese immigrant–owned businesses across the country is that the labor demand is high and constant and there are no sizable local populations of Chinese low-skilled workers to depend on to meet that demand. Given how widespread these job locations are, even if business owners could find people in their migrant networks who are looking for jobs, there is no guarantee they would be willing to move. Thus, the recruitment of restaurant workers for the

4. Our interview with Mr. Yang was conducted on June 4, 2016.

Figure 3. Distribution of Jobs in Chinese Immigrant–Owned Businesses in the United States, 2011



Source: Authors' Chinatown employment agency survey, 2011.

whole country is better served by reliance on market-based institutions such as EAs, which can cast a much bigger net to identify workers willing to take these jobs, rather than traditional migrant networks.

A CHINESE-LANGUAGE NEWSPAPER AND THE NEW IMMIGRANT JOB NICHES

The second market-based job search institution on which we focus is the Chinese-language newspaper *World Journal* (世界日报). Established in 1976, the *World Journal* celebrated its fortieth anniversary in 2016 and is the most influential Chinese-language newspaper in the United States, with a circulation of about 300,000 (Zhou and Cai 2002). The *World Journal*'s coverage is broad, from news in the United States and New York City's Chinese community to news from mainland China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, along with news on the economy and stock market. The *World Journal* also posts job openings. We use information from the *World Journal*'s job listings for three periods: April 2004, February 2016, and April 2016. Our decision to use data from these time periods was driven by the availability of job information for earlier time periods; we needed that earlier job data because we planned to examine any changes in job categories over time. Job information in the *World Journal* for 2016 was easier to obtain. We obtained data for two different months in 2016 to detect any seasonal variations.

Nancy Foner (2013), one of the immigration scholars who have studied ethnic media, reports that in New York City there are 198 magazines and newspapers published in thirty-seven languages; this high number of publications suggests the importance of ethnic media in many immigrant communities in New York City. In analyzing their systematic collection of information on ethnic media (including Chinese-language newspapers), Min Zhou and Guoxuan Cai (2002) ask whether ethnic media hinder or facilitate immigrants' assimilation into American society—for example, by providing information on purchasing a home or investing in education, or helping readers learn about American culture. Using information from two Chinese newspapers and interviews with nine Chinese immigrant women, Yu Shi (2009) examines the interaction between newspapers' discourse and the discourse of the working immigrant women among their readers.

None of these studies focus on the job search dimension of ethnic newspapers. As an information channel for job openings, newspapers differ from employment agencies. First, newspapers cover a much broader range of jobs, including not only restaurant jobs but all

Table 3. Job Advertisements in a Chinese-Language Newspaper, by Job Category, 2004 and 2016

	April 16, 2004		February 25, 2016		April 8, 2016	
	Number of Jobs	%	Number of Jobs	%	Number of Jobs	%
Nail salon jobs	238	19.80	453	31.20	171	16.16
Massage or tuina jobs	92	7.65	195	13.43	134	12.67
Restaurant jobs	408	33.94	348	23.97	340	32.14
Other jobs	464	38.60	456	31.40	413	39.04
Total	1,202	100	1,452	100	1,058	100

Source: World Journal, job advertisements in the New York City edition, April 16, 2004, February 25, 2016, and April 8, 2016.

other jobs that employers, large or small, are trying to fill. This broader coverage gives researchers a more comprehensive view of the immigrant labor market. Second, job ads in newspapers come and go quickly because employers have to pay for them and no one wants to pay more than necessary to advertise a job. The moment a job is taken, the ad is taken out of the newspaper. And finally, because newspapers cover diverse job categories on a timely basis, they are better positioned to capture new developments in the labor market—such as new labor market niches for immigrants.

In table 3, we present job distribution data that we collected from the *World Journal* for April 2004, February 2016, and April 2016. Interestingly, a higher proportion (31 percent) of nail salon jobs were advertised in February than in April (16 percent); salon owners were preparing for increased demand for nail services as the weather got warmer. Several additional observations can be made from table 3. First, for both years we see that restaurant jobs were among the most important job categories; this time-tested finding confirms that today's low-skilled immigrants continue to rely on restaurant jobs. Equally important, however, is another service job category: nail/massage/tuina. We combine these three types of jobs because all three are new jobs, not traditional niche-type jobs. Second, Chinese immigrants are latecomers in the nail salon industry, which was initiated by other Asian immigrants (Eckstein and Nguyen 2011). Recent reports suggest that Chinese immigrants are taking an increasingly larger share of this business in the market once dominated by Korean immigrants in New York City.[5] The declining share of Korean-owned nail salons is due to low immigration from Korea and low fertility in Korea combined with the unwillingness of second-generation Koreans to follow in their parents' footsteps. Third, a careful study of this job market shows that many nail salon jobs advertised in the *World Journal* are actually for nail salon businesses owned by Korean immigrants. This suggests that Chinese and Korean immigrants work together in the nail salon market.

The presence of Chinese immigrants in this market generated a great controversy in 2015 after a *New York Times* article reported violations of employees' labor rights by some nail salon owners, such as paying below minimum wage or requiring unpaid overtime (Nir 2015). That report prompted Governor Andrew Cuomo's immediate action to shut down some of these businesses and begin to implement new business standards and regulations, leading to many protests by Chinese and Korean business owners. In pursuing their case and publicizing

5. In the aftermath of Governor Andrew Cuomo's announcement of new regulations concerning the nail salon industry in New York State, nearly 500 Chinese nail salon owners showed up at meetings with state government officials (Zhu 2015). At present, most nail salon businesses in New York and along the East Coast are owned by Korean and Chinese immigrants (see Kang 2010; Yin 2016; Zhu 2015), while Vietnamese dominate this business on the West Coast (Eckstein and Nguyen 2011).

their side of the story, Chinese and Korean business owners have worked together to put pressure on the state to implement more practical and realistic policies so that their businesses can survive and workers can keep their jobs (Yin 2016; Zhu 2015).

From table 3 and detailed job distributions (not shown in the table), we also detect the influence of China's increasing economic prosperity on labor market niches in the United States. For example, the job categories of massage and tuina are clearly new job niches in the United States for low-skilled Chinese immigrants. Massage services have become very popular in China for the last three decades and accessible to middle-class customers. Anyone who travels to urban China can easily find massage services—both body massage and foot massage—everywhere, not only in fancy hotels but on street corners as well. The arrival of tuina in the United States from China is more recent. Tuina is a hands-on body treatment that uses Chinese Taoism to bring the eight principles of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) into balance.[6] In China, the services of tuina professionals are often offered in some hospitals and clinics as a way to treat body pain and discomfort. Sometimes tuina is combined with massage to give massage service more legitimacy. Chinese immigrant entrepreneurs brought these newly popular massage and tuina services from China to the United States, first offering these services in cities with large immigrant concentrations, such as New York. The initial business strategy was to target Chinese tourists and middle-class Chinese immigrants, but businesses offering massage and tuina have now expanded to other clients besides Chinese, in other locations.

Another consequence of the growing influence of China's prosperity is the global reach of Chinese tourists. From 2011 to 2014, China was ranked number one in international travelers, and Chinese tourist spending rose from $40 billion in 2008 to $140 billion by 2014—a nearly fourfold increase (Feng and Zhang 2015). Of course, the United States is one of the most popular destinations for Chinese tourists. The number of tourists visiting the United States from China rose to 2.2 million in 2014, from 270,000 in 2005 (U.S. Department of Commerce 2015). This increase in Chinese tourists has generated labor demand for tourist-related jobs in the United States. Our data from Chinese newspapers reveal that tourism- and travel-related jobs account for about 2.1 percent of all job listings (not shown in table 3). For example, one travel agency alone was hiring four new workers. Of course, our data reflect only the demand for new workers in this industry and do not account for the immigrants who already work in these jobs. Besides tour guides, tour bus drivers are in particularly high demand.

Chinese shoppers are also having an impact on immigrant labor market niches in the United States. Compared to travelers from other countries, Chinese travelers are said to be "aggressive shoppers" with an enthusiastic desire for designer products. Major department stores such as Macy's try hard to entice Chinese tourist shoppers, and Woodbury outlet stores have many signs written in Chinese for Chinese buyers. In almost every major designer store, at least one salesperson can speak Mandarin Chinese. (Some of these retail workers are included in the category "other" in table 3.)

China's growing economic power is also reflected in U.S. companies' increasing interest in doing business with China and their search for bilingual workers who can speak both English and Chinese. For example, many sales jobs posted include jobs in long-distance telecommunications, global trading, and international express shipping. The demand for international express shipping services especially is mushrooming because of strong Chinese demand for U.S.-made products. These kinds of companies are quite visible in places like Flushing and Chinatown in New York. The *World Journal* also advertises jobs in English, such as the many import-export business jobs that require applicants to be bilingual—another sign of the economic interdependence between the United States and China, the two largest economies in the world.

In tables 4 and 5, we focus on the two most important job categories for low-skilled Chi-

6. For more information on tuina, see the Wikipedia entry at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tui_na (accessed August 31, 2017).

Table 4. Massage and Tuina Job Advertisements in a Chinese-Language Newspaper, by Job Location, 2004 and 2016

	April 16, 2004		February 25, 2016		April 8, 2016	
	Number of Jobs	%	Number of Jobs	%	Number of Jobs	%
New York City	53	57.61	72	36.92	53	39.55
New York State (excluding New York City)	3	3.26	18	9.23	22	16.42
Other	36	39.13	105	53.85	59	44.03
Total	92	100	195	100	134	100

Source: World Journal, job advertisements in the New York City edition, April 16, 2004, February 25, 2016, and April 8, 2016.

Table 5. Restaurant Job Advertisements in a Chinese-Language Newspaper, 2004 and 2016

	April 16, 2004		February 25, 2016		April 8, 2016	
	Number of Jobs	%	Number of Jobs	%	Number of Jobs	%
New York City	187	45.83	159	45.69	172	50.59
New York State (excluding New York City)	62	15.20	62	17.82	76	22.35
Other	159	38.97	127	36.49	92	27.06
Total	408	100	348	100	340	100

Source: World Journal, job advertisements in the New York City edition, April 16, 2004, February 25, 2016, and April 8, 2016.

Table 6. Nail Salon Job Advertisements in a Chinese-Language Newspaper, 2004 and 2016

	April 16, 2004		February 25, 2016		April 8, 2016	
	Number of Jobs	%	Number of Jobs	%	Number of Jobs	%
New York City	165	69.33	138	30.46	60	35.09
New York State (excluding New York City)	65	27.31	196	43.27	81	47.37
Other	8	3.36	119	26.27	30	17.54
Total	238	100	453	100	171	100

Source: World Journal, job advertisements in the New York City edition, April 16, 2004, February 25, 2016, and April 8, 2016.

nese immigrants and examine their spatial distribution: jobs in nail salons, spas, and massage and jobs in restaurants. Confirming the findings from our employment agency survey, only about half of the job postings were located in New York City; the rest were located in other parts of New York State and other parts of the country. We should note that we are using the New York City edition of the *World Journal,* which also has Chicago and California editions.

Table 6 displays the spatial distribution of nail salon jobs. The nail salon business seems to have been diffused to other parts of New York State to a significant degree. In 2004,

nearly 70 percent of the job ads for New York City were nail salon jobs; by 2016, that proportion had declined to 30 to 35 percent. One possible explanation is that the diffusion of these jobs was accelerated by Governor Cuomo's tightening of industry regulations after the 2015 *New York Times* report. What table 6 also reveals is that, as with Chinese restaurant workers, the nail salon business is becoming a broad national labor market.

IMPLICATIONS OF A MARKET-BASED JOB SEARCH PROCESS

The rise of market-based job search institutions has several implications for immigrant job outcomes as well as our conceptualization of the immigrant labor market (Sassen 1995). First, we argue that traditional network-based job searches have advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, newly arrived immigrants are happy to get jobs through migration networks—that is, through friends, relatives, or shared hometown origins—but on the other hand, it is hard to negotiate wages for jobs obtained through networks if those wages are not consistent with market-based wages. Thus, immigrants obtaining jobs through networks may receive only the wages that employers can afford and are willing to pay, but not necessarily market wages. By contrast, jobs obtained through market-based institutions such as employment agencies and newspaper listings must pay market wages, for several reasons. First, with other employers also posting ads in employment agencies and newspapers, any employer that does not offer market wages is unlikely to receive job applicants (unless the job market is bad). Second, employers try to avoid high turnover rates, which are likely to occur if they do not offer market wages and their employees have an incentive to find better-paying jobs elsewhere. And third, because there is no prior connection between employers and job applicants—such as is the case in network-based employment—many applicants do not hesitate to negotiate for market-level wages or higher. For these reasons, we hypothesize that immigrants who obtain jobs through market-based job search institutions receive higher pay than they would in jobs obtained through migrant networks.

We test this idea using the 2004 survey of Chinese immigrants carried out by Zai Liang. We use logged wages for current job as the dependent variable. Job search methods include friends, relatives, neighbors, smugglers, employment agencies, newspapers, and direct applications to the employer. We group employment agencies and newspapers as market-based job search methods and classify the rest as network-based. We use ordinary least squares (OLS) regression to estimate the wage models and report the results in table 7.

As shown in table 7, immigrant men are paid more than immigrant women, and the duration of U.S. residence has a positive impact on wages; these findings are consistent with previous studies. We also find that age is negatively related to wages, probably, we suspect, because restaurant jobs are very labor-intensive, demand long hours, and are essentially a young person's game. Thus, older immigrants who stay in the restaurant business are not being rewarded as they would be in other businesses.

Surprisingly, there is no significant difference in wages between immigrants who obtained their current job through market-based institutions and those who relied on migrant networks. To further explore the linkage between job search method and wages, we use wage growth between the first job and the current job using job search method as one of the key independent variables. Here we find that wage growth for immigrants who found their current job through a market-based search method is significantly higher than wage growth for immigrants who found their current job through migration networks. It seems that the immigrants who found their jobs through market-based institutions were better informed about market wages and better able to negotiate with employers than immigrants who got their jobs through migrant networks.

Beyond wages, we also argue that immigrants' use of market-based job searches is part of a larger movement in the immigrant labor market of employers relying increasingly on market institutions rather than migrant networks for their business operations. In the restaurant business in New York's Chinatown, we observe a set of businesses that support res-

Table 7. OLS Regression Predicting Logged Hourly Wage and Growth of Monthly Wage for Chinese Immigrants, 2004

	Logged Hourly Wage		Wage Growth	
Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	Coefficient	Standard Error
Age	0.03*	0.01	47.42*	21.46
Age*age	−0.0004**	0.00	−0.59*	0.25
Male	0.26***	0.04	354.20***	69.60
Married	−0.04	0.06	−73.89	92.99
With high school or higher education	0.05	0.05	53.31	74.63
Years in the United States	0.01*	0.00	19.87*	7.93
With legal status	0.04	0.04	27.72	63.36
Found job through market methods[a]	−0.07	0.04	139.26*	59.48
Poor English proficiency[b]	−0.15***	0.04	−193.89**	69.86
Working in restaurants	0.04	0.04	210.31**	67.47
Constant	1.20***	0.24	−855.12*	395.65
Adjusted R^2	0.265		0.263	
N	320		320	

Source: 2004 survey of Chinese immigrants by Zai Liang.

[a]The reference group for "found job through market methods" is "found job through social network."

[b]The reference group for "poor English proficiency" is "speaks English well or fluently."

*p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

taurant operations for the whole country: buses that send immigrants to work in different states, printing companies that create menus for Chinese restaurants nationwide, kitchen equipment stores that supply restaurants, companies that produce cashier systems and surveillance cameras, and so on. In other words, the operation of Chinese restaurants, traditionally a mom-and-pop operation, has begun to resemble the operation of a modern industrial organization. Moreover, the rise of market-based institutions has prompted us to reconceptualize our notion of the immigrant labor market. No longer confined to singular enclaves in one location, the immigrant labor market is now often national in scope (Liang et al. 2015; Sassen 1995)—as is clearly the case for both the restaurant and nail salon businesses, based on the evidence we present here.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This article began with the observation that there has been a rise in market-based job search institutions, such as employment agencies and newspapers, in the Chinese immigrant labor market. We argue that this increase is driven by two major forces. One is the changing pattern of Chinese immigration, as reflected in both the large size and, especially, the diversification of immigrant provinces of origin. To the extent that network-based job searches rely on kinship and friendship ties and shared community of origin, any employer relying only on the limited number of people from his or her own community of origin looking for a job may soon reach the limit of the labor supply. This is likely to happen as employees themselves become entrepreneurs, start their own businesses, and need workers. In fact, this is exactly what happens in the restaurant business. Most of the restaurant workers we interviewed dreamed of having their own business down the road. The diffusion of Chinese immigrant businesses across the country further complicates the recruitment process as businesses open in places with no local low-skilled Chinese immigrant population and find it difficult to persuade those living in locations with large immigrant populations, such as New York City, to move to faraway

places. These employers must rely on a larger potential pool of labor to recruit willing employees.

It is natural to wonder what the rise of market-based job search institutions means for average workers. Using Liang's 2004 survey of Chinese immigrants, we find that immigrants who obtained jobs using market-based institutions experienced higher wage growth than immigrants who obtained their jobs through migrant networks. This finding points to the limits of migrant networks and ethnic solidarity and the advantages of market mechanisms. One policy implication is that policymakers should design policies to help the employment agencies in the Chinese community and Chinese-language newspapers that are created by immigrants and immigrant entrepreneurs—for example, by providing guidelines for employment agencies to use in educating their employees. In the last few years, employment agency owners have reported that city government officials often visit their offices to see whether government policies and regulations are being followed and penalize agencies found not to be in compliance. In 2012, for example, officials from New York City's Consumer Affairs Bureau penalized employment agencies for failing to provide job assignment forms written in both English and Chinese and for not putting all labor contracts in writing (Wang 2012). Business owners complained that they did not know what policies should be followed in the first place. One agency owner complained that he had run his business for twenty years without knowing how contracts between workers and his agency should be written. Clearly, the city government could help these business owners by educating them about New York City policies that relate to employment agencies. In fact, under the strong encouragement of Governor Cuomo, New York State officials are already doing this for nail salon owners.

We also analyzed job listings in a Chinese-language newspaper, the *World Journal*. Not surprisingly, our findings confirm those from a survey of employment agencies that restaurant jobs continue to be the backbone of the low-skilled Chinese immigrant labor market. However, new niche jobs are emerging, such as nail salon jobs. In addition, we find evidence that the rising prosperity of China has implications for Chinese immigrant jobs in the United States. In particular, we show that the market for jobs that meet the growing needs of Chinese travelers to the United States is strong and likely to expand even further. Twenty years ago, Chinese visiting the United States were likely to be high-ranking officials, scholars, or upper-class citizens. Today China's international tourism industry has taken advantage of the growing economic wealth of the Chinese middle class, for whom travel to the United States and other countries has become more accessible. Jobs related to China's investment in the United States are also expected to grow. Chinese immigrants with English-language skills and cultural knowledge of both China and the United States are well positioned to take these jobs. Recently, the Asia Society released a report about China's investment in U.S. real estate (Rosen et al. 2016): between 2010 and 2015, both China and Chinese customers invested significantly in residential and commercial property in the United States. This is clearly good news for Chinese immigrants, both low-skilled and high-skilled, as job opportunities are likely to expand in sectors related to China's investment in the United States.

The spatial diffusion of Chinese immigrant businesses and increasing use of employment agencies to recruit workers have raised important theoretical questions about the study of ethnic enclaves such as Manhattan's Chinatown. Compared to Chinatown's traditional enclave economy, the new type of Chinese enclave we report on here continues to rely on Chinese immigrant labor but is no longer located in Chinatown in Manhattan. There are other striking differences as well. First, the new Chinese enclave economy serves mostly non-Chinese customers, raising interesting questions about intergroup contacts and assimilation. Moreover, some of these Chinese immigrant–owned businesses are located in minority neighborhoods, making the middle man minority thesis relevant as well (Min 1996). Second, we cannot use traditional measures to define an enclave economy, whether by residential location or job location in Chinatown, because most of the Chinese immi-

grant workers employed by today's Chinese immigrant–owned businesses do not work or live in Chinatown. However, Chinatown in Manhattan continues to play an important role as a transportation hub for immigrant workers, a center of supply chains, the home of Chinese-language media, a source of political mobilization, and the setting for social events and ceremonies such as weddings and the celebrations of hometown associations. This change in Chinatown's role is an important new development that deserves more attention from immigration scholars.[7]

We conclude with a methodological note for the study of immigration. As immigration scholars who specialize in quantitative research, we are used to relying on data from the U.S. census, national surveys—for example, the American Community Survey (ACS) and the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID)—and administrative data. Such research is extremely valuable for understanding key issues for immigrants, such as broad patterns of spatial location, occupations, and family, but it is also limited in some ways. For example, we can learn almost nothing about immigrants' origins in their home countries, whether at the state and provincial or regional level. At a time when immigration scholars are recognizing the importance of links between origins and destinations and of transnationalism (Liang and Chen 2004; Singley and Landale 1998; Waldinger 2015), it is important to bring migrant origins back into the discussion.

Addressing these concerns, we have attempted to try some new approaches. Using data on immigrant hometown associations to gauge the diversification of Chinese immigrants met with some success. For immigration scholars, gaining knowledge of migrant origins is extremely important because different provinces represent differences in levels of socioeconomic development (rich versus poor, working-class versus middle-class), differences in immigration history, differences in cultures of entrepreneurship, differences in dialects, and, of course, differences in food tastes (as Calvin Trillin noticed). Likewise, ethnic media can also make valuable contributions to our understanding of the immigrant labor market. Although ACS data can tell us the proportion of immigrants who work in service jobs, Chinese-language newspapers describe these jobs more specifically: restaurant workers, nail salon workers, tour company bus drivers, workers in Chinese banks in New York City, and clerks in international shipping companies. Job ads in the ethnic media also provide an up-to-the-minute picture of labor market demand, which is useful for detecting changes in the labor market.

Recognizing the limitations of our approach of using job information from only a few moments in time, we nevertheless hope that we have demonstrated the utility of this approach well enough to encourage future researchers to explore it further. We are optimistic, particularly in these days of "big data," that the rich data available in ethnic media can be fully utilized to advance immigration research.

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