When Chinese Youths ‘Meet’ Globalisation and Commercialisation
From the Perspective of Structural Effects

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Structural factors to shape youths’ consumption practices

- Metropolitan cities
- Family background
- Elite University
Data source

- Panel study of Chinese University Students and Graduates 2013
- 12 universities scattered in China mainland, including key universities, ordinary universities and vocational colleges
- Total sample size 7,875 and average response rate of 73.9%
- Data on purchase and use of mobile phones
More smart phones with affluent family background

- Own both ordinary and smart phones:
  - 3000 and below: 14
  - 3001-7000: 22
  - 7001-10000: 30
  - Above 10000: 30

- Own smart phones only:
  - 3000 and below: 64
  - 3001-7000: 66
  - 7001-10000: 66
  - Above 10000: 66

- Own ordinary phones only:
  - 3000 and below: 54
  - 3001-7000: 13
  - 7001-10000: 7
  - Above 10000: 4

- Don’t own mobile phones:
  - 3000 and below: 1
  - 3001-7000: 0
  - 7001-10000: 0
  - Above 10000: 0
Higher percentage of International big brands in developed cities
But, in terms of what they want…
Better-off family background, more addicted to mobile phones

- Feel uncomfortable if I do not bring phone with me
- Feel anxious if my phone cannot connect to the internet
- I often play with the phone during class or meetings
- It's hard to get away from the phone when not using it
- My schedules, work and entertainment all rely on the phone
Higher father’s education, more positive influence from mobile phone

- Cause distraction in class
- Cause distraction when studying
- Become less intimate with family and friends
- Cause financial burden
- Increase knowledge and information

Education Levels:
- Primary school or below
- Junior school
- High school/vocational school
- Vocational college
- University
- Postgraduate and above
More significant in ‘self-referential’ orientation
Better-off family background, more enthusiastic about ‘face’ consumption

I have 'face' when using it – the motive of buying the mobile phone
Higher father’s education, less enthusiastic about ‘face’ consumption

I have 'face' when using it
– the motive of buying the mobile phone

- primary school or below: 28%
- junior school: 31%
- high school/vocational school: 36%
- vocational college: 42%
- university: 40%
- postgraduate and above: 39%
When Chinese youths ‘meet’
globalisation and commercialisation

- Addiction to mobile phones are significant among Chinese university students
- The percentage of owning smart phones is high
- International vanguard brands are the most popular with Chinese university students; Chinese young, cool brands at reasonable price are rising
- In purchase of mobile phones, Chinese university students are generally rational, moderate and are keen on the ‘self-referential’ orientation
The structural effects …

- Students from better-off family background or live in metropolitan cities are more involved in modern consumer culture.
- Those from less well-off background or live in smaller cities are stick to frugality and utility.
- Family’s cultural capital have impact on material culture and consumer orientation of Chinese youths.
Comments and Feedback?

Thank you very much!

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