



## Career Imagination, Transnational Distinction, and Family-mediated Migration Infrastructure: Chinese International Students to the UK

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### Abstract

To explore what it means to be educationally mobile in contemporary China, this paper draws on findings from three projects that examine, respectively, Chinese international students' career imagination, their construction of transnational distinction and their family-mediated migration infrastructure during COVID19. Employing theoretical tools from Bourdieu, the sociology of time, and the notion of migration infrastructure, I will argue that middle-class (or even upper middle-class) transnational Chinese families' cognisance with field-specific rules and their abundant economic, social and cultural capital have played pivotal roles in facilitating these students' pursuit of time, career, and mobility autonomy. This paper highlights the class-based advantages of these researched families and argues for a temporally sensitive approach towards researching international student mobility. This paper is partly based on the author's articles published in *Time and Society*, the *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, and *Chinese Sociological Review*.

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