



# Internet Use and Social Integration of Migrant Workers An Empirical Analysis Based on CGSS2017

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**Abstract.** Using the 2017 China General Social Survey (CGSS) data to examine the impact of migrant workers' Internet use on their own social integration from the perspective of Internet use. Using the multiple linear regression model to analyze the data, it is found that the Internet use of migrant workers can promote social integration.

**Keywords:** Migrant workers · Internet · Social integration

## 1 Introduction

With the rapid development of urbanization, migrant workers in cities have become a common way for modern Chinese farmers to make a living. In fact, migrant workers live in the city and their social identity is discriminated against by the society. They are faced with problems such as urban integration, household registration, social security, employment and rights and interests. The social integration of migrant workers is not only related to the construction of a harmonious society, but also brings severe challenges to social stability.

According to China Mobile Internet Development Report (2021), by December 2020, the number of Mobile Internet users in China had reached 986 million, and the Internet penetration rate was 70.4%. Among them, the size of rural Internet users is 309 million, migrant workers are the main force. What role the Internet plays in the personal life course of migrant workers and social development is a question worth discussing.

## 2 Related Literature Review

Social integration originated from a concept of social policy put forward by European academic circles when they first studied social exclusion. Chinese scholar Huang Kuangshi [1] analyzed the concept of social integration and sorted out foreign social integration theories. The research object of social integration is floating population and vulnerable groups. Different scholars subdivide floating children and “old drifters” according to the

age of floating population. According to urban household registration and occupation, floating population can be subdivided into urban migrants, migrant workers and so on. Floating population and vulnerable groups overlap, that is, some people are both floating population and vulnerable groups. In this overlapping part, groups with dual identity include migrant workers. Due to the large population of migrant workers in China, which has become a group that cannot be ignored in the process of urban construction, there are many social contradictions in the social integration of cities. Therefore, Chinese scholars also focus on the study of social integration of migrant workers. Yue Zhongshan, Li Shuzhuo et al. [2] constructed a conceptual system of social integration of migrant workers, which includes cultural integration, socio-economic integration and psychological integration. In terms of measuring social integration, Zhang Chunsheng et al. [3] pointed out that social integration should cover economic, social, cultural and psychological aspects, namely economic foothold, social adaptation, cultural integration and psychological identity. Zhou Hao [4] summarized domestic and foreign social integration theories and measurement indicators, and proposed that China's social integration includes five aspects: economic integration, cultural adaptation, social adaptation, structural integration and identity.

The Internet use of migrant workers is one of the important contents of network ethnography research. Anthropologists and communication scholars mainly focus on network platforms and other media, such as Kuaishou and Douyin [5, 6] migrant workers, to conduct group image research, group culture and identity research. Chinese scholars mainly conducted empirical studies on the use of the Internet by migrant workers, which involved employment and entrepreneurship, housing, income, community governance, social participation, citizenization and other issues of migrant workers [7–9]. Due to the widespread use of the Internet, the digital divide caused by some migrant workers has also attracted the attention of scholars. Scholars Wang Xun [10] worked in Guangdong province using qualitative research method to survey the manufacturing of a new generation of migrant workers in the field of mobile Internet use behavior, found that most of the new generation migrant workers have already completed the interest in mobile Internet access, part of the finished material access and skills access, but in the process of content access some serious problems. This verifies the specific reflection of the digital divide in this group. Through a case study in Beijing, scholar He Jing [11] found that Internet use has a significant impact on the social development of the new generation of migrant workers, which has both promotion and hindrance. Zhang Qiufeng [7] investigated migrant workers' Internet use behavior and believed that while migrant workers' Internet use had positive impacts on their employment, life, study and spirit, it would also have other negative impacts. Li Yizhi [12] used the 2018 Chinese Family Tracking Survey (CFPS) data and the endogenous transformation regression (ESR) model to analyze the impact of Internet use on the happiness of migrant workers, and the results showed that using the Internet can significantly improve the happiness of migrant workers. Most of the researches on migrant workers' Internet use are based on the individual level of migrant workers, but few researches on the connection between individuals and society.

There are few empirical studies on the relationship between the Internet use of migrant workers and the social integration of migrant workers. Therefore, based on

CGSS2017 survey data, this study attempts to investigate the impact of Internet use on the social integration of migrant workers, in the hope of obtaining the empirical explanation of the relationship between the Internet use of migrant workers and the social integration.

### 3 Data and Research Methods

Is adopted in this paper by the Chinese General Social Survey, namely CGSS2017. China General Social Survey is the earliest national, comprehensive and continuous academic survey project in China. The research object of this paper refers to the migrant workers, who live in cities with agricultural household registration and currently do non-agricultural work, according to household registration and occupation. According to this condition, the sample size of this study was obtained to be 1828. The data analysis tool used was SPSS.23.

#### 3.1 The Dependent Variable

Referring to the research indicators mentioned in the above review, this paper sorted out the measurement idea that social integration is divided into five levels: economic foothold, public participation, cultural integration, interpersonal communication and identity. Operationalization, according to the relevant questions in CGSS2017 questionnaire, is included into five levels: economic footing, public participation, cultural integration, interpersonal communication and identity. Specific problems and operations are shown in Table 2. By adding the 5 specific indicators of social integration, the comprehensive score of social integration is obtained, in which the lowest score is 0, and the highest score is 5. Then, the comprehensive score of social integration is divided into three levels: low integration, medium integration and high integration according to 0–1, 2–3 and 4–5 points.

#### 3.2 The Independent Variables

The independent variable of this paper is Internet use. According to CGSS2017 questionnaire, your use of Internet media in the past year, whether the main source of information is the Internet, and your idle use of the Internet in the past year, these three questions are processed by variables. The specific values are shown in Table 1.

#### 3.3 Mathematical Model

Multiple linear regression model is a linear regression model with multiple explanatory variables, which is used to explain the linear relationship between the explained variable and other explanatory variables. The multiple linear regression model is:  $y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \dots + \beta_p X_p + \varepsilon$ .

In this paper, Internet use, Internet as the main information source and leisure Internet use correspond to 1, 2, 3 respectively, and is the degree of social integration.

**Table 1.** Variable setting and processing instruction

Variable	The variable name	Variable processing and assignment
The dependent variable	Degree of social integration (the combination of 5 specific indicators of operational social integration)	Your family's economic status is local: Above average = 1, below average = 0
		Last neighborhood/village committee election: Participation = 1, non-participation = 0
		Have you participated in any cultural activities in your free time in the past year: Participation = 1, non-participation = 0
		How familiar you are with your neighbor: Familiar = 1, unfamiliar = 0
		In this society, you are in the social class: upper = 1, lower = 0
The independent variables	Use the Internet	Your use of Internet media in the past year: Used = 1, never used = 0
	The Internet is the main source of information	Internet is the main source of information. If yes = 1, no = 0
	Use the Internet at your leisure	In the past year, you have used the Internet in your free time: Yes = 1, never = 0

#### 4 The Empirical Analysis

The multiple linear regression model is estimated as shown in Table 2. Through this model, this paper finds that using the Internet and taking the Internet as the main information source has a significant impact on the social integration of migrant workers. Internet use was associated with higher levels of social integration, significant at 0.001. The Internet, as the main source of information, had a higher degree of social integration, significant at 0.001. Migrant workers who use the Internet in their spare time have a higher degree of social integration (0.1). Therefore, migrant workers' Internet use can promote social integration.

**Table 2.** Multiple linear regression model of migrant workers' internet use and social integration

		Low fusion	Moderate fusion	Highly integrated
Internet use	Using the Internet	0.009** (0.037)	0.053** (0.042)	0.000*** (0.025)
	The Internet is the main source of information	0.822 (0.025)	0.185 (0.028)	0.000*** (0.016)
	Leisure Use of the Internet	0.771 (0.032)	0.119 (0.036)	0.029* (0.022)
The model summary	(Constant)	0.000***	0.026*	0.000***
	Ad R <sup>2</sup>	0.011	0.003	0.011
	F	7.859	3.100	7.967

Note The brackets are standard error, \* P < 0.1, \*\* P < 0.01, \*\*\* P < 0.001

## 5 Conclusion

Migrant workers can better integrate into the city by using the Internet. To this end, the government should attach importance to the role of the Internet, speed up the network to reduce fees.

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