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**LIFESTYLES OF CHINESE MANAGERS COMPARED WITH
COMPARABLE ASIAN AND U.S. MANAGERS**

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Lifestyles of Chinese Managers Compared With Comparable Asian and U.S. Managers

The following statement continues a series of monographs published at The Business School, The University of Michigan. Previously, publications have appeared under the following titles: "A Managerial Profile: the Woman Manager" (1985); "A Managerial Profile" (1984); "The Newly Promoted Executive: A Study in Corporate Leadership" (yearly, 1983-1987); "A Managerial Profile: The Asian Manager" (1987b); and "A Review of Managers in U.S. Industries (1987a). The following statement is limited to Chinese managers' lifestyles which is fourth in a series of four--the others pertaining to their career paths, education, and sociological patterns--and is prefaced by almost identical background material as stated in the other three research statements.

All the above studies, including the 436 Chinese managers described in this statement, responded to similar questionnaires in order to permit both longitudinal and cross-comparisons. Accordingly, the final data base resulted in an N of 436 Chinese managers, 282 males and 150 females (4 did not indicate their sex), who were compared with 6,223 U.S. managers; 319 Asian¹ managers; and 8,720 U.S. top-level executives such as Chairmen, Presidents, and Vice-Presidents. Data summaries of the monographs have appeared in scholarly journals, professional association publications, and in newspapers and periodicals in the U.S. and in foreign countries.

Two goals underlie the research described in the following pages:
(1) to create a lifestyle profile of selected Chinese managers,

particularly those located in Beijing, and (2) to compare that lifestyle profile with comparable Asian and U.S. managers who responded to similar questions.

If those two goals are met, the preeminent goal will result in better understanding of and communication between those managers who have significant business interchanges across national boundaries. Understanding both similarities and differences in education levels across all groups creates opportunities for improved commercial relationships and understanding between people. To achieve these goals, the following statement focuses on five background subjects and four lifestyle patterns as based on a completed management questionnaire emphasizing lifestyle ages, health related behaviors, physiological comparisons, and quality of life indicators.

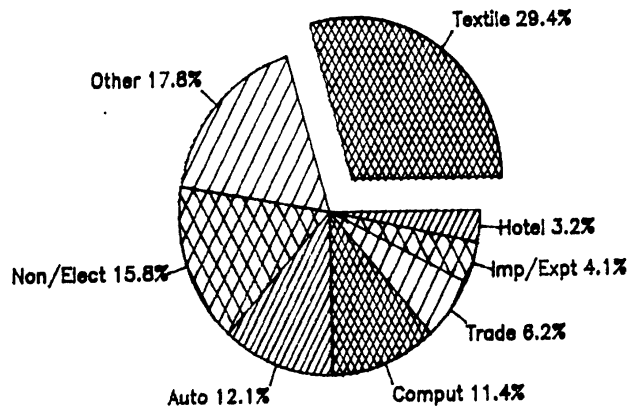
BACKGROUND

Industries Represented

Over thirty-one manufacturing and non-manufacturing Chinese industries are represented in the sample. Because the focus was upon specific industries, the majority of responses came predominantly from seven which closely participated in the study: Textile Manufacturing (29.4 percent); Non-electrical Machinery (15.8 percent); Automotive Manufacturing (12.1 percent); Computer Technology Manufacturing (11.4 percent); Wholesale Trade (6.2 percent); Import/Export Services (4.1 percent); and Hotel Management (3.2 percent).

The remainder of the sample (17.8 percent)--often with few persons in the group--came from diverse categories such as the government, education, and the legal area.

Chinese Industries Studied



Thus the data are more representative of manufacturing managers rather than non-manufacturing, somewhat influencing the conclusions drawn in later analyses. Simply for contrast, in 1952, 56.9 percent of the gross output value of China stemmed from agriculture and only 15.3 percent from heavy industry. By 1985 those data showed an agricultural decline down to 34.3 percent of gross output value but an increase in heavy industry to 35 percent. (Statistical Yearbook [China Stat], 1987, p. 20)

An interesting fact is that in only the textile industry do women managers outnumber the men: 51.2 percent to the males' 48.8 percent. Overall, the one-third female managerial presence is quite parallel to U.S. and Asian managers where 20 percent of the managerial workforce were women (Hildebrandt, Miller, Edington, 1987a, 1987b), but slightly lower than the data cited in the Statistical Abstract of the United States [Stat Abst U.S.], (1987), which suggest females hold 42.7 percent of the managerial and professional positions. In Great Britain 20 percent of the managerial workforce is women. (Davidson & Cooper,

Chinese women in the workforce in 1985 was 36.4 percent of the total labor force. (China Stat, 1987, p. 103)

If there is a bias toward sexual stereotypes and type of industry, it is that Chinese women are disproportionately represented in the textile field. On the other hand--and to the credit of China's insistence on the omission of sexual stereotypes across industry lines--women are represented in managerial positions in many industries.

Enterprise Size²

It is not difficult to aver that the data represent larger industries, a precise two-thirds (66.6 percent) of the managers coming from firms in excess of 2,700 employees. In part this skewed information is due to accessibility; the larger firms being easier to contact for purposes of the study.

There is currently discussion on how to measure the size of Chinese enterprises. Some suggest that on the basis of employee numbers 3,000 and above is large; 500 to 3,000 medium; and below 500 a small enterprise. We had no way of knowing the gross operating revenue of the enterprises studied, so the classifications which follow are more labor rather than capital-intensive. If classification were on the basis of gross operating revenue--a common measure for size in the U.S.--some Chinese feel a large company would gross in excess of 50 million yuan; a medium enterprise 5 to 50 million yuan; and a small one less than 5 million yuan. But no formal government statement for the moment is forthcoming.

An exact number of firms by employee number is seen in the following table.

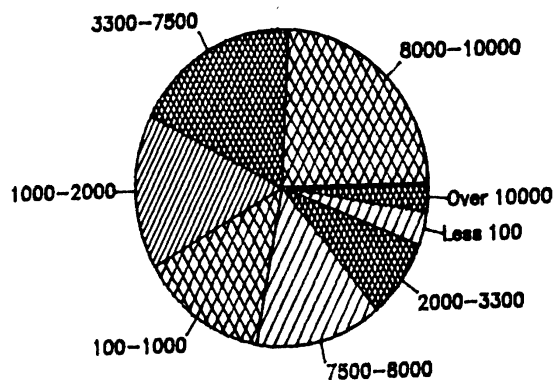
Table 1

Enterprise Size by Employee Number

<u>Employees</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Less than 100	3.4
100-500	10.0
500-1,000	4.0
1,000-2,000	15.8
2,000-3,330	8.0
3,330-7,500	18.2
7,500-8,065	14.0
8,065-10,000	23.5
Over of 10,000	<u>2.9</u>
	100.0*

*Rounding will sometimes result in percentages greater or less than 100%. In some instances a very precise number-of-employee figure was used by respondents, that common figure being given the managers by top management.

Enterprise Size--Employees



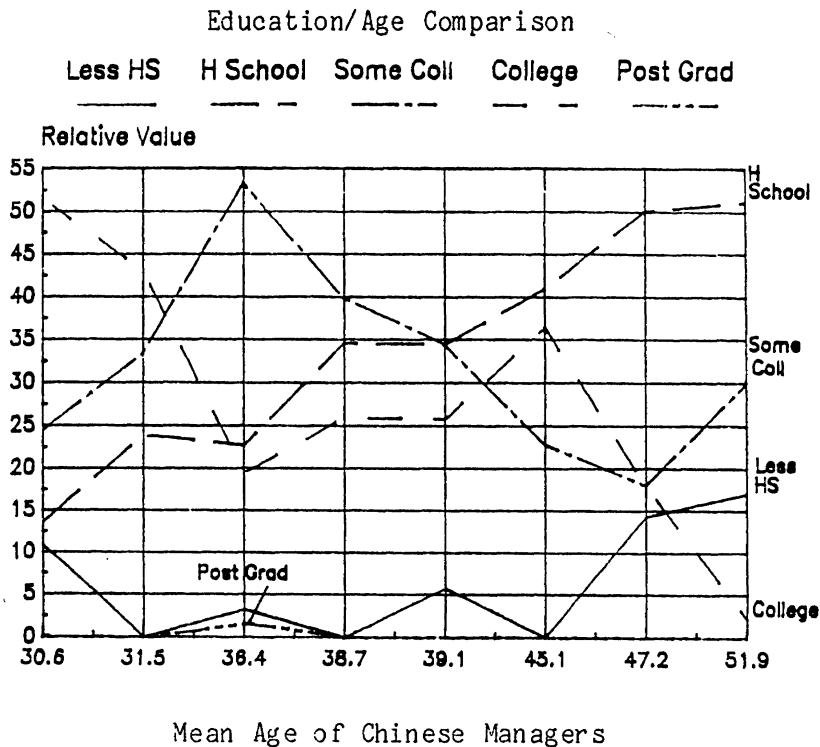
Chinese Managers

Time Spent With Present Enterprise

General Secretary Zhao Ziyang in speaking to the 13th National Congress of the Communist Party of China on October 25, 1987 made these statements:

Basically, the development of science and technology, the revitalization of the economy and indeed the progress of the whole society all depend on improving the quality of the work force and training large numbers of competent personnel. Education is of fundamental importance to the fulfillment of our great long-range mission. We must therefore continue to stress the strategic role of education and do a better job of tapping intellectual resources. As the economy develops, the state should increase year by year the funds allocated for education, while continuing to encourage people from all walks of life to raise money to set up new schools. We should stick to the principle that education must serve socialist modernization. [Zhao, 1987]

Educational data, correlated with the years spent with the present employer—in the manufacturing and non-manufacturing categories noted in question one—suggest that none of the managers with an enterprise in excess of 25 years had a post-graduate³ degree. For example, in 1952 there were only 2,763 graduate students (China Stat, 1987, p. 629) compared with 87,331 enrolled in 1986. Moreover, within that same span of years, nearly a third (31.3 percent) had less than a high school



education. Predictably, with China's increased national emphasis on education, the younger managers--mean age 31.5, and employed in a company less than one year--obtained an undergraduate education (42.9 percent). Those young employees with an enterprise 1-5 years--mean age 30.6--have the highest undergraduate degree percentage, 51.4 percent.

In other words, younger managers are better educated than their older counterparts. For instance, only 20 percent of the managers with a company in excess of 15 years obtained an undergraduate degree.

Yet a lack of mobility characterizes the Chinese manager: just over a quarter (27.7 percent) of them spending in excess of 21 years with the same enterprise. Asian and U.S. managers in excess of 21 years with a company had respective percentages of 2.8 and 12.7, the Asians suggesting thereby even more mobility than the U.S. Of the 141 managers working in Beijing, 95 percent of them were born in Beijing; thus, only 5 percent of the managers came from outside the city, for three potential reasons noted in the following paragraphs. Only 1.7 percent of Chinese female managers working in Beijing came from outside the city, again attesting to the axiom that females particularly born in Beijing work in Beijing.

A brief statement of the communist worker's dependence (Walder, 1985) on the enterprise is in order, for several factors do and often did have an influence on the longer time in grade of the Chinese managers when compared with other managerial systems.

(1). Economically a state-owned factory in China is influenced via central government planning, suggesting that a high degree of control over the enterprise and the employee is centrally administered. Thus

for a manager to leave his or her place of work is possible but economically infeasible for in so doing the manager would lose seniority--if he went to a collective or private enterprise--and have to begin anew in his or her other position. If another state enterprise would accept them the seniority would carry over, but to be accepted is no minor task. Additionally, a housing move most likely would be involved, moving to the housing units of the new unit; this too would require approval. Finally, to give up many state supported benefits--if one wished to move to a collective enterprise--could result in loss, for instance, of death benefits, minor dependent benefits, and usually a decrease in old-age pensions. Worker welfare via the enterprise is not an easy perquisite to omit, particularly because some enterprises are total working and living environments. (Schermerhorn, 1987; Nelson and Reeder, 1985) Economic reasons become forceful motivations for remaining in the same unit, regardless of personal likes or dislikes.

(2). Politically the Party has a parallel structure to the central government's structure and role within Chinese enterprises. Workers' political attitudes are observed and evaluated in addition to one's work, in part illustrated in a statement by Committee Secretary Xing Chungzhi (Top Cadres, 1987) of Hebei Province:

We are not accusing these young cadres of being good for nothing or that all of them are bad, but there really exists a problem of upgrading their ideological and political quality. Education in the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism is a most fundamental education which must never be overlooked.

Such a political oversight group includes a second form of employee control, influencing promotions, raises, and in some instances denying approval of leaving an enterprise.

(3). A third reason for lack of mobility is migration policies. Workers, managers included, may more easily move from larger cities as Beijing, Shanghai, or Tinanjin to medium sized cities, to smaller cities, to towns, to the countryside. But to move in reverse order is difficult, those constraints being enacted in the 1950's in an attempt to control large migrations to the cities, where were located the industries and larger cooperatives. Indeed, neighborhood committees keep track of the number of persons within a home/apartment to ensure no additional friends or family members move into the area.

In short, individual mobility may be desired, but the impediments imposed via central planning, the Party, and migration policies are exterior constraints over which the manager has little control, forcing him or her to remain in the same position much longer than in western countries.

Adding the factor of age produces no surprises: the older aged managers have been with a firm longer. Managers in excess of 30 years had a mean age of 51.9; those with the same enterprise 26 to 30 years had a mean age of 47.2.

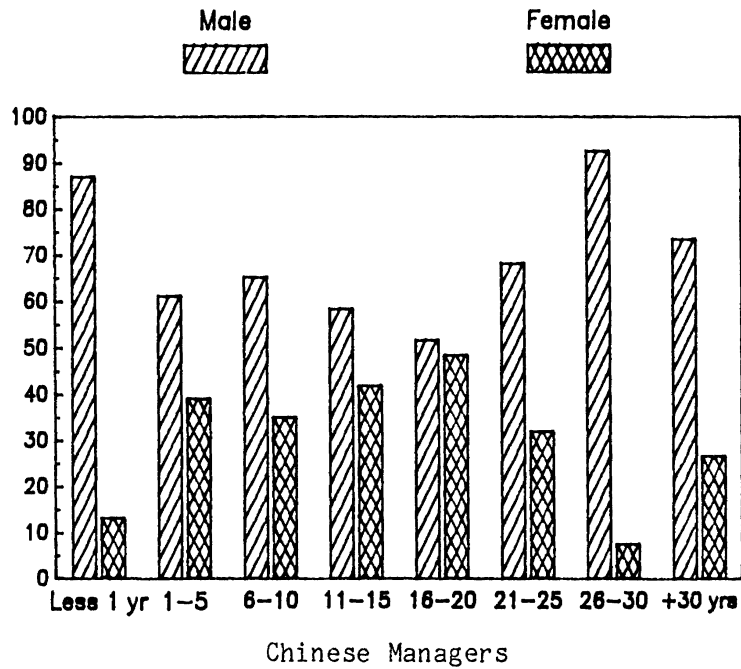
Table 2 lists the number of years with an employer along with the sex, mean ages, and education of the managers.

Table 2

Years with Enterprise, plus Age, Sex, Education

Years	Sex		Education					Age	
	Male %	Female %	Less than H.S.	H.S.	Some College	College degree	Post-Graduate	Mean	
Less than 1 yr.	5.3	87.0	13.0	--	23.8	33.3	42.9	--	31.5
1-5	30.4	61.1	38.9	10.8	13.5	34.3	51.4	--	30.6
6-10	14.5	65.1	34.9	3.2	22.6	53.2	19.4	1.6	36.4
11-15	8.3	58.3	41.7	5.7	34.3	34.3	25.7	--	39.1
16-20	13.6	51.7	48.3	--	34.5	39.7	25.9	--	38.7
21-25	10.1	68.2	31.8	--	40.9	22.7	36.4	--	45.1
26-30	6.5	92.6	7.4	14.3	50.0	17.9	17.9	--	47.2
Over 30	11.3	73.5	26.5	17.0	51.1	29.8	2.1	--	51.9

Years with Enterprise



Length of Time in Previous Position

Lack of mobility for the Chinese manager is further supported when viewing the time spent in a previous position. However, opportunities for promotion will increase if at least one of General Secretary Zhao's economic reforms and his managerial criterion for reward can be implemented:

Select qualified managers through competition, and reward or penalize them mainly according to the economic performance of the enterprises, including the increase or decrease in their assets, so as to help a large number of capable and daring entrepreneurs to emerge in the course of keen competition for markets. (Zhao, 1987)

Review of the data suggests that the level of education makes little difference as to the rate of promotability within a company as both lesser educated persons with at least a high school education and those with an undergraduate degree spent similar amounts of time in their previous positions.

Vividly different than their Asian counterparts, 27.4 percent of Chinese managers spent 15 or more years in a previous position, 13.8 percent, 11 to 15 years; and 10.7 percent, 6 to 10 years, suggesting that promotions and movements laterally or vertically come slowly when compared with other Asians. Only 6.9 percent of the Asian managers, for instance, were in their previous position 15 or more years.

Long lengths of time spent in previous positions are a result of the current managerial system. It is difficult to leave a company; it is difficult to move from one position to another; it is difficult to change any pattern once the worker has a given role within an industry. Nelson and Reeder (1985) assert that at least 90 percent of the Chinese workforce remains at the same position, only personnel selected for

managerial roles assuming different jobs for training purposes. One manager according to Nelson and Reeder (1985, p. 21) stated, "We believe a worker should do one kind of work. Some work is complicated. He will do it better and have better suggestions than if he knows only a little about several different jobs."

Three major options for moving out of an enterprise are possible:

(1). An employee proves him or herself so competent that they are asked to move from their present workplace--usually defined as a physical location--to another workplace within the same enterprise under the same ministry. For instance, a textile manager of factory #1 ultimately responsible to the Ministry of Textile could be promoted to a higher position in textile factory #2 as determined by leaders at a higher level. In other words, a higher level of authority most often makes the decision to promote an employee, the employee having little say in his or her change of position.

To move to another workplace in another enterprise under a different ministry is more difficult, regardless of managerial competence. A higher level authority must give approval of a change in position.

(2). Some managers selectively curry the favor of leaders, specifically the president and the Party secretary of the work unit, often through gifts and oral words of support. It is not unheard of for networks to flourish in some enterprises, promoting some employees who are looked upon favorably regardless of job competence. To incur disfavor from higher authority can have severe effects: perhaps slowing promotions, losing face, or even resulting in a job transfer (Chesanow, 1985).

(3) Employees below the age of 25 may want to apply for a college entrance examination hoping thereby to remove themselves from the enterprise position in which they currently work. If they pass the college entrance examination, the employees then attend college, at the end of which the government assigns them a new position--as based on several employee ranked choices--to an enterprise which is in need of their expertise.

Currently there is dissatisfaction among some students who pass their entrance examinations and obtain a higher education, especially in the U.S. China Youth News noted, "We are a country with a severe

shortage of qualified personnel. Yet in many places a large amount of talent is kept idle and wasted." (Gargan, 1987). For instance, some Chinese students worked hard to obtain an MBA degree and returned to China, but then were assigned managerial positions which did not make good use of their advanced business training. Indeed, currently within the U.S. there are over 30,000 Chinese students and visiting scholars, some of whom may delay their return for fear of not receiving a position commensurate with their advanced academic training. Recognizing the issue, top Chinese leaders including acting Prime Minister Li Peng, have given priority to investigating the problem. (Gargan, 1987).

Lack of job opportunities commensurate with academic training is also a criticism leveled by some current students of Chinese universities. Limited job opportunities and assignment of all but a few positions by the State (Ignatius, 1987) is causing increasing concern on college campuses. Increasingly, educated students, those who are potential managers and leaders by virtue of their education, seek more of a say in job allocation, an area affecting them directly.

Currently, Chinese readers are aware that changes are underway to permit educated students to select their own jobs after graduation. A recent meeting (January 1988) of the State Education Commission has implemented a new policy to begin in 1993 of supplying employers with information on higher educated students. On the other hand employers will supply the Commission with their employment needs. As a result, prospective students will be able to select a job based on those openings, and, after having passed an employment examination, will be able to sign an employment contract. Beijing's Quinhua University and

Shanghai's Jiaotong University will immediately try out the new system.
(College Graduates to Choose Jobs, 1988)

Special incentives will be offered those students who elect to work in remote and backward areas of the country.

It also seems that institutions of higher education will be influenced through students selecting their own positions. For instance, if many enterprises request students trained in certain subjects and the institutions have not offered those subjects, those students may have a more difficult time locating a job. Hence, institutions may begin to alter their curriculums to meet the needs of the enterprise.

It is therefore difficult to move out of a unit; there is rigidity in the system which encourages, indeed supports employees remaining life-long with the enterprise recommended to him or her by the government. Hence, Chinese managers, in comparison to their U.S. and Asian counterparts, are virtual captives in industries already selected for them. However, radical changes in the current lifetime job security structure (Bronfenbrenner, 1984) will apparently be met with resistance because the "iron rice bowl" (life-long job security) concept is now strongly entrenched in the workers.

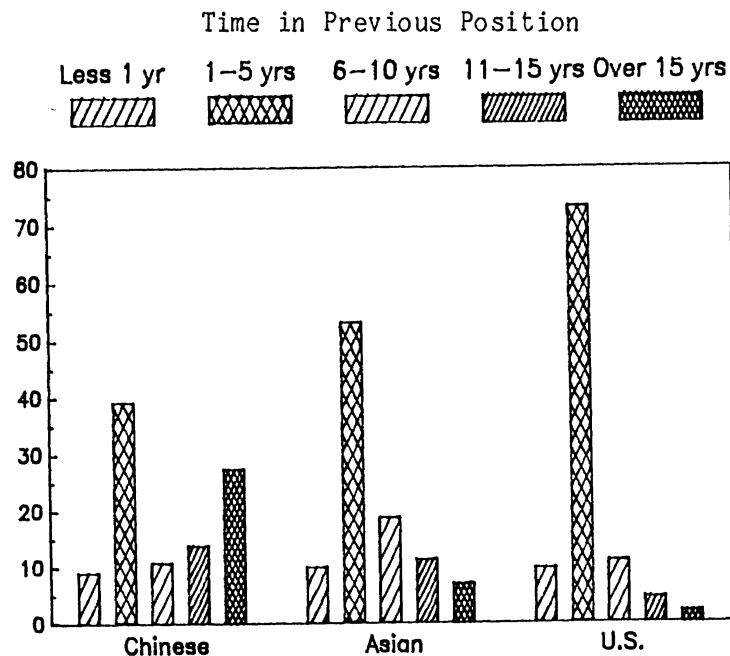
Nevertheless, there are winds of change blowing through Chinese enterprises. (Adoption of Labor, January 4, 1988) One variation is the contract concept whereby employees/managers contract on their own with an enterprise--say for as long as three years--for an agreed upon sum of money and other benefits. At the end of their contract they may be asked to remain or are released to search out another enterprise,

including possibly joint venture firms who because of the gradual liberalization of the labor market, may recruit competent people if housing and other perquisites are available. (How PRC Joint, January 18, 1988) Such changing of employer locations, while giving employees an opportunity to change positions also jeopardizes their life-long work concept and could result in a group of migrant workers/managers. Some argue that 3 percent of the contract workers are looking for new jobs, seeking new contract opportunities on the expiration of their previous contract. (Chip Off the Old Bowl, 1987).

Comparative data for time spent in a previous position appears in the following table.

Table 3
Time in Previous Position

Time	Chinese	Asian	U.S.
Less than 1 yr.	9.0%	9.9%	9.6%
1-5 yrs.	39.1	52.9	73.0
6-10 yrs.	10.7	18.6	10.9
11-15 yrs.	13.8	11.2	4.5
Over 15 yrs.	27.4	6.9	2.0



The Enterprise, Party and Government

We have suggested that a close linkage exists between the Party and the government in Chinese enterprises; thus, in turn, both could influence the career path of the managers within that structure.

Tracking Chinese managers' careers and lifestyle patterns path within that system requires a brief discussion of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the governmental structure in order to round out the pattern in which Chinese managers work and live.

Chinese Communist Party

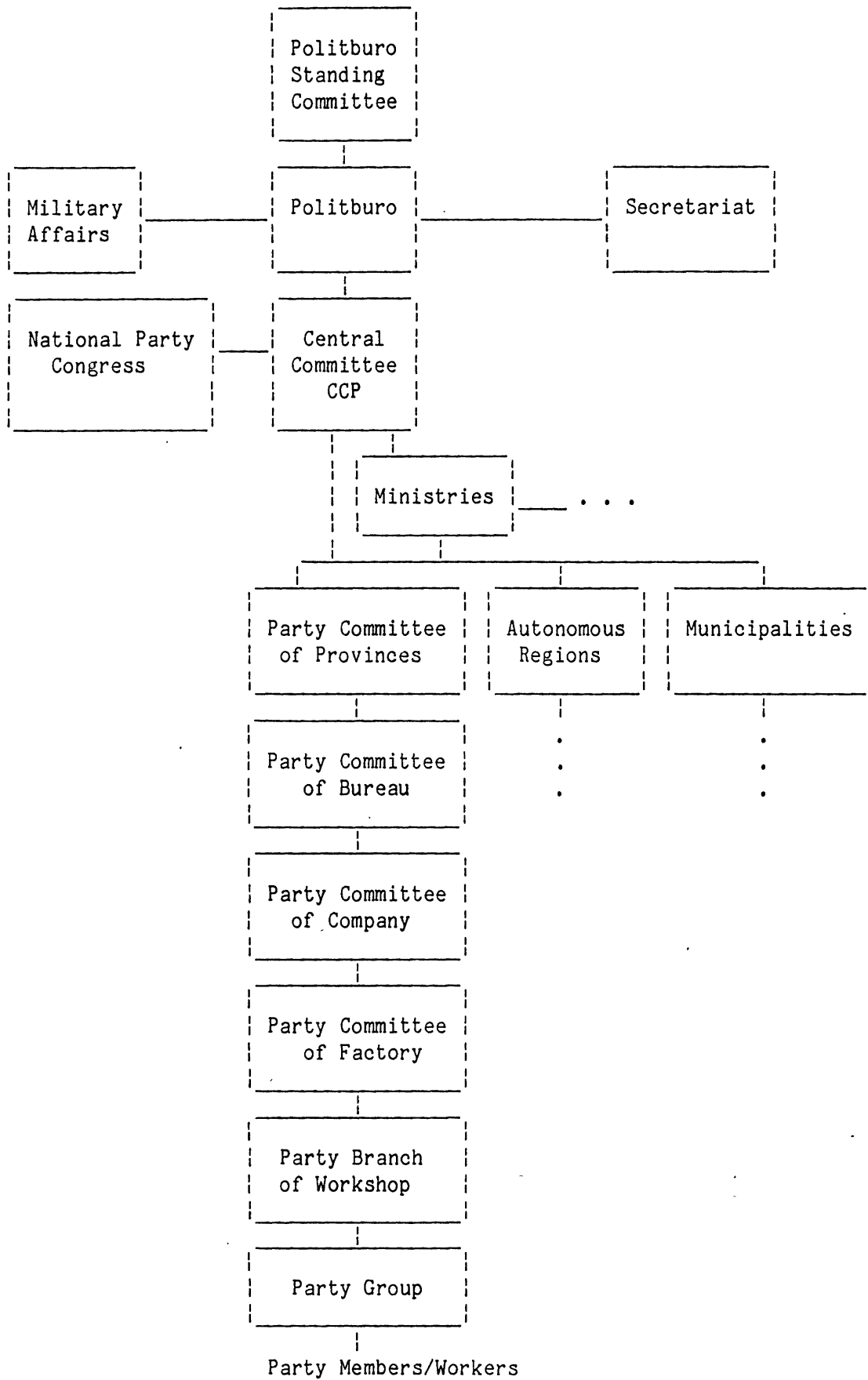
To understand the CCP and its influence in business, the following simplified diagram suggests a structure parallel to the government.

General Secretary Zhao heads a standing committee of the Politburo which in turn is responsible to the Central Committee of the CCP.

Central Committee doctrines are disseminated to the Ministries, the Bureaus, the Provinces, the Autonomous Regions, the Municipalities, the Companies, the Factories, the Workshops, and the Party Groups. On each level are located CCP members, each working to ensure adherence to and seeking support for the communist principles laid out by the top echelon Politburo Standing Committee.

Consequently, some CCP party secretaries are present in factories to act as oversight persons ensuring acceptance of political and ideological principles of the party. Few do manual labor, few engage in direct production activities, labor over a machine, or operate advanced technological devices. They instead are within factories for four core purposes:

Chinese Communist Party



- (1). To communicate higher level instructions and documents summarizing doctrines of the party, disseminating these throughout the organization, at all levels, to all workers.
- (2). To organize discussion cells wherein communist doctrines may be reviewed and communicated. An example would be that General Secretary Zhao's October 1987 speech could be reviewed and analyzed by factory members of the CCP and non-members.
- (3). To act as an oversight group, determining that the principles of the CCP are implemented and adhered to with minimum diversions. Some Chinese suggest that exactitude to communist principles is a requirement within any factory if that factory is to be truly communist. Adherence to four cardinal principles must also occur, as they are the political and ideological touchstones which a CCP member uses as a yardstick: (1) Keeping to the socialist road; (2) Upholding the people's democratic leadership; (3) Accepting leadership of the communist party; and (4) Accepting Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong thought.
- (4). To enlist new members of the factory into the CCP, and if the potential members are accepted, thereby enlarge the party base in the factory.

One can quickly see that this ideological path places individuals whose sole purpose within units is not to oversee production, rather obtain adherence to and support for communist principles. When 133 enterprises were asked (Han and Ma, 1981; Xiao, 1981) which factors contributed to the "good" performance of their enterprise, nonintervention of the Party committee in administrative matters was a positive factor. Thus Party intervention and its separation from enterprise functioning was an early theme, later carried forward by General Secretary Zhao (Zhao, 1987) in October 1987 along with six other points concerning needed reforms:

- (1). Separating Party and government
- (2). Delegating powers to lower levels
- (3). Reforming government organs

- (4). Reforming the personnel system relating to cadres
- (5). Establishing a system of consultation and dialogue
- (6). Improving a number of systems relating to socialist democracy
- (7). Strengthening the socialist legal system.

(Zhao, 1987)

Therefore, the government is aware of the current influence of Party secretaries and overlapping responsibilities. On the other hand, workers whose sole effort is directed at political/ideological persuasion recognize the importance of that position and are reluctant to give it up. In the current study 4.7 percent of the managers began their careers in the political/ideological category; that position represents a major divergence from Asian and U.S. managerial groups. More significantly, over one quarter (27.3 percent) of the Chinese managers later suggest that the political/ideology area is one of the fastest routes to positions of importance within an enterprise, a promotional track unheard of in the west, yet one which even young managers consider a significant avenue for their promotion. Lindsay and Dempsey (1985) include a revealing statement by a student:

Political education is an indispensable part of our motivating strategy. Because our country is poor, we have to educate people to cherish novel ideas as one of the motivating forces in their work while making every effort possible to improve people's livelihood.

We Communists believe that there is something else besides the satisfaction of people's basic needs, which can also motivate people to show what they really can do. So, we should never forget, while trying to satisfy the basic needs of the people, our political education of the people. We educate our people with Communist spirit, mobilize them with the spirit of self-reliance, and arouse their enthusiasm with patriotism.

Central Government Operation

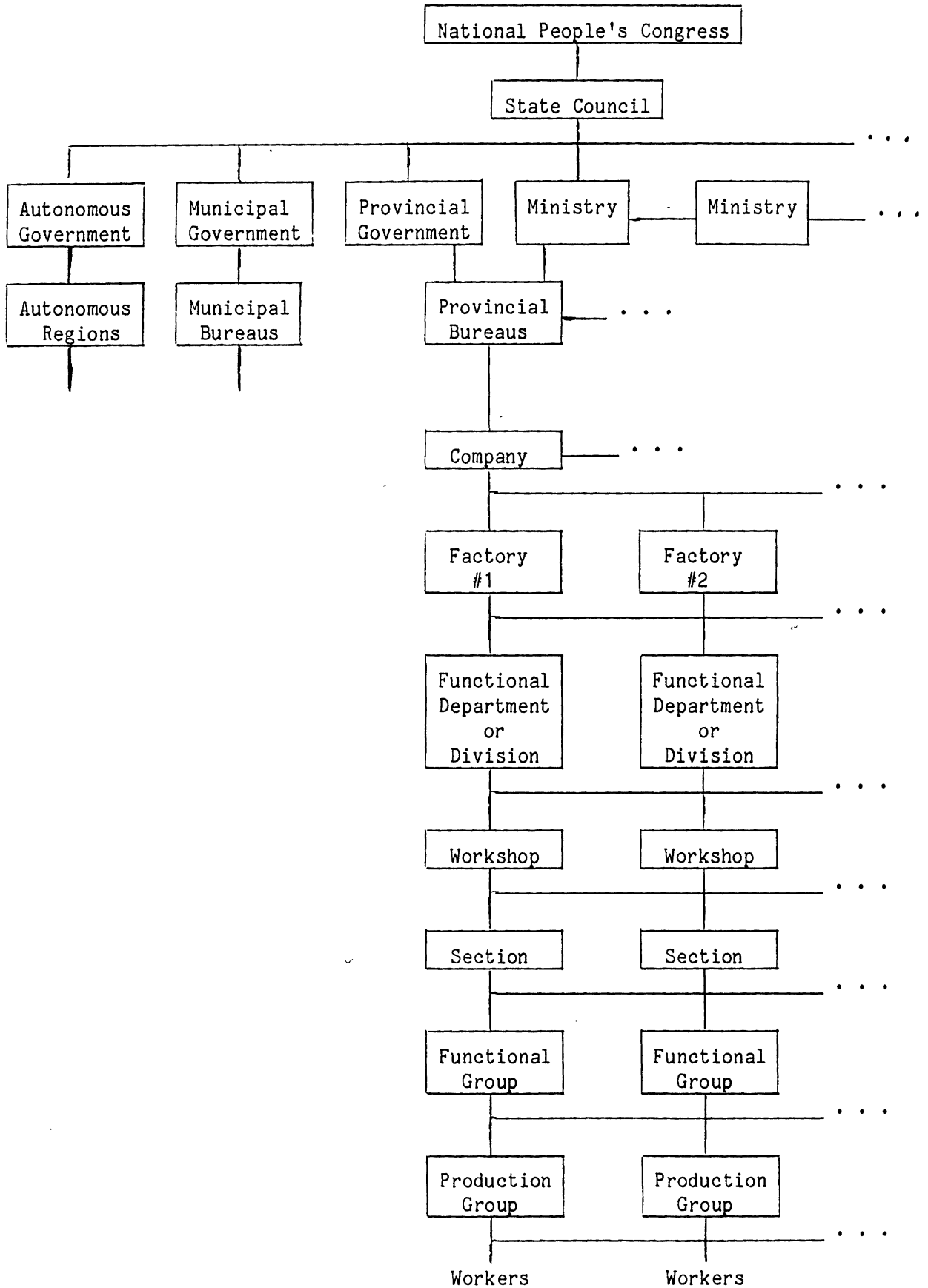
In order to see the interrelationships between the CCP and government operations, and the bureaucracy occasioned thereby, the following chart briefly lays out the structure.

Theoretically the National People's Congress is the ultimate governmental authority on the national or central government level. That authority, in turn, extends down to the 21 provinces, 5 autonomous regions, and the 3 municipal governments of Beijing, Shanghai, and Tianjin being treated as a Municipality. Day-to-day operations of the central government are handled through the State Council and the numerous Ministries, such as the Ministry of Textile Industry, Ministry of Light Industry, or the Ministry of Petroleum Industry, plus other commissions, committees, and bureaus. (Saich, 1981, p. 128) Thus, for example, some of the managers in this study are under the control of the Ministry of Textile.

At the next level--the autonomous regions, municipalities, and provincial governments--there is an almost parallel structure to that of the central government. (Jan, 1966; Richman, 1969) Day-to-day operations are handled by respective governments who in turn oversee many bureaus, comparable to the responsibilities of the Ministries. Beyond the Province, for instance, are somewhat parallel structures for the county and city.

Ultimately comes the company, i.e., it in a sense is the corporation in charge of similar types of factories producing similar products, and in a real sense relate to the various governmental levels described above. Take one example, that of the R&D (Research and

Central Government Organization



Development) function. At the Ministry of Textile level there are four institutes with 1,078 workers in this function alone; in the Ministry of Machine Building there are 61 institutes and 41,749 workers (China Stat, 1987, p. 662). In fact, as of 1986 there were 744 R&D agencies with a total of 336,062 workers under control of the State Council.

Within the factories are the functional departments or divisions-- e.g., production, sales, planning--and beneath them in decreasing size and more specialization are the workshops, sections, functional groups, production groups, and finally the workers. Most middle managers in this study came from the factory through the workshop level, or at the level we would call upper middle-management.

Even in this over-simplified presentation of the government's planning role in Chinese enterprises, it does not take long to see the stifling bureaucracy and diminished decision-making power of the managers as China makes progress in modernizing its management system. (Walder, 1985; Wang, 1986; Engle, 1986; Laaksonen, 1984; and Jones, 1984). Concern about the current bureaucracy was one of General Secretary Zhao's themes, "Chief among these [some problems in the current structure] defects are overconcentration of power, a serious degree of bureaucratism, and feudal influences that are far from eliminated." (Zhao 1987).

Managers thus face several authorities: the communist party of China which is present at all levels, and the central government planning through its ministries, bureaus, and commissions. It is this very overlapping, this party-government pluralism which produces managerial confusion that General Secretary Zhao wishes to change: "But

one long-standing problem has not yet been completely solved: the lack of distinction between the functions of the Party and those of the government and the substitution of the Party for the government." (Zhao, 1987) General Secretary Zhao's seven points reviewed previously in the discussion of the Communist Party of China are intended to remove some of the deficiencies engendered by the current structure.

To sum up, the preceding provided only a glimpse of the Party structure and the government's role in an enterprise. How the Chinese managers' lifestyle pattern fits into that overall structure is to what we will now turn.

LIFESTYLE CHARACTERISTICS

A positive conclusion concerning China's health as a whole is that life expectancy (Improving Health Care, 1985; Simon, 1985) along with intensive efforts at improving occupational health (Christiani, 1984) continues to improve. Life expectancy improved to age 65 for males in 1982 and for females to age 69. (World Development, 1984, p. 262). As based on the analysis of Simon (1985), since the mid-1950's the life expectancy has risen fully 20 years, to the high 60's. A concomitant to this favorable observation is a negative: according to insurance monitors (Improving Health Care, 1985) cancer, stroke, and heart diseases are becoming more prevalent. Indeed, recent statements in the Peoples' Daily (December 17, 1987) suggest that life-threatening diseases are on the increase in China. For instance, in 1974 workers diagnosed as having heart disease were 2.3 percent, in 1980 3.9 percent, and in 1982 had risen to 4.3 percent. Some of the health related

concerns in our study of Chinese managers are singled out by the Chinese writer as potential causes:

- Increase in life expectancy
- Increase in blood pressure
- Improper nutrition along with increased cholesterol level
- Smoking habits
- Environmental factors; type "A" personalities
- Sedentary occupations; middle aged and educated persons involved in little exercise

Fortunately, the number of Western (doctors trained in Western medical methods) and Chinese doctors (doctors trained in Chinese traditional methods, possibly with no M.D. degree) also continues to increase, from 1.244 million in 1981 to 1.440 million in 1986 (China Statistical, 1987).

With that background, our purpose is to compare the Chinese managers on a series of lifestyle measures with selected U.S. counterparts. Because most of the Chinese managers came from Beijing, an urban area, such a profile must be born in mind when reading the following description.

The Physical Fitness Research Center of the University of Michigan has for several years completed "Health Risk Appraisals" of U.S. firms. Currently that data base exceeds 200,000 employees, as based on responses to over 300 health related questions. Out of that data base were selected employees--many on the managerial level--on the basis of age, sex, and education who came closest to the Chinese managers. Using that criteria 8,720 U.S. managers were matched with the Chinese. Occasionally, some comments on stress and its relationship to lifestyles will be included.

1. Lifestyle Age

Some definitions are needed. Managers, in fact all persons, can be described in terms of three kinds of health risk ages:

chronological, appraised, and achievable:

Chronological: This description is the most commonly understood and is based on the day of one's birth.

Appraised risk age: This is a computation founded on the basis of the health risk questionnaires, calculating the known relationships between lifestyle habits, and the chances of dying as a result of those desirable or undesirable health habits.

Achievable age: This definition is the risk age he or she could possibly attain if certain recommended changes in lifestyle habits would occur.

If the Chinese managers accepted and then implemented desirable lifestyle changes, their risk of dying would be equal to age 33.8, or, 5 years less than their mean chronological age of 38.8. In other words, some current lifestyle habits and inherited illnesses (smoking, drinking, lack of exercise--to be discussed later), are considered undesirable, and in turn influence one's appraised and achievable ages.

And regardless of the cultural and lifestyle differences between the U.S. and China, the Chinese managers' projected death rate per 1,000 persons over the next 10 years was 4.1 years less than the U.S. sample.

Additional comparative statistics are in the following table.

Table 4

Risk Assessment

	Chinese Managers	U.S.
Average Risk Age		
Actual/chronological	38.8	38.9
Appraised	38.4	37.1
Achievable	33.8	33.8
Projected Death Rate		
Death per 1,000 persons over next 10 years (all causes)		
Actual/chronological	51.6	55.7
Appraised	56.3	52.1
Achievable	34.5	38.8
Projected Death Rate		
Death per 1,000 persons over next 10 years (heart disease)		
Actual/chronological	15.9	17.0
Appraised	22.3	14.0
Achievable	5.6	6.1
Projected Lifespan		
Age-predicted	78.2	78.3
Risk-related	78.2	79.2
Achievable	82.9	83.0

2. Health Related Behaviors

Smoking Habits

A visitor to China, absent any statistical input, would infer that Chinese as a whole, and managers particularly, smoke more than their compatriates in the U.S. Indeed, over one-third (35.9 percent) of the Chinese managers smoke an average of 17.1 cigarettes daily as compared with U.S. managers, 21.3 percent of whom smoke an average of 21.6 cigarettes daily. Few Chinese smoke cigars or pipes, the suggested reason being it is too costly and the taste too strong.

Conversely, while many Chinese managers smoke today 53.9 percent never smoked at all; in the U.S. reference sample 47 percent never smoked.

Concerns about smoking are slowly beginning to appear in China, denying such behavior in places as the Beijing railway station and some libraries. It will be interesting to see whether Chinese managers will decrease their smoking in the future as potential health problems become more known.

Drinking Habits

Nearly half (49.1 percent) of the Chinese managers in this sample drink, either beer, wine, or hard liquor. That statistic is similar to the U.S. reference sample, 53.5 percent of whom drink. Of the three categories, beer is the popular among the Chinese, for three reasons: it is cheaper, more readily available, and not as potent as liquor, accounting in part for them consuming a mean 8.1 bottles per week.

Persons interviewed in conjunction with the questionnaire suggest they smoke and drink to relieve both boredom and tension of the job, not unlike reasons given by other nationalities. It is not unusual for the Chinese manager to react any differently than his or her U.S. counterparts, at the end of the day enjoying a drink, most often in the privacy of his home. The pronoun "his" was deliberate: 67.7 percent of the male Chinese managers drink as opposed to only 24.1 percent of the females. Considerably more U.S. female managers drink (56.4 percent) than their Chinese counterparts (24.1 percent)

Based on correlations between lifestyle habits and appraised age, decreasing the smoking and drinking habits--considered a healthier

lifestyle by health appraisal experts--can lead to decreases in appraised ages and a decrease in smoking related illnesses, alcoholism, and absenteeism (Berry, 1981).

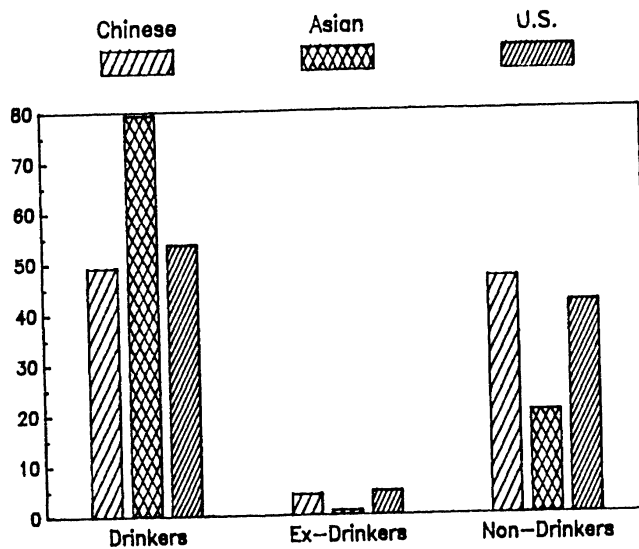
Alcohol consumption comparisons are in Table 5.

Table 5

Alcohol Use

	Chinese	Asian	U.S.
Drinkers	49.1%	79.2%	53.5%
Ex-drinkers	4.1	0.7	4.6
Non-drinkers	46.8	20.1	41.8
<u>Drinkers -- Drinks per week</u>			
Less than 7	64.8	N.A.	58.6
8-24	24.4	N.A.	33.8
Over 25	10.8	N.A.	6.8

Alcohol Use



Alcohol--Males

Alcohol--Females

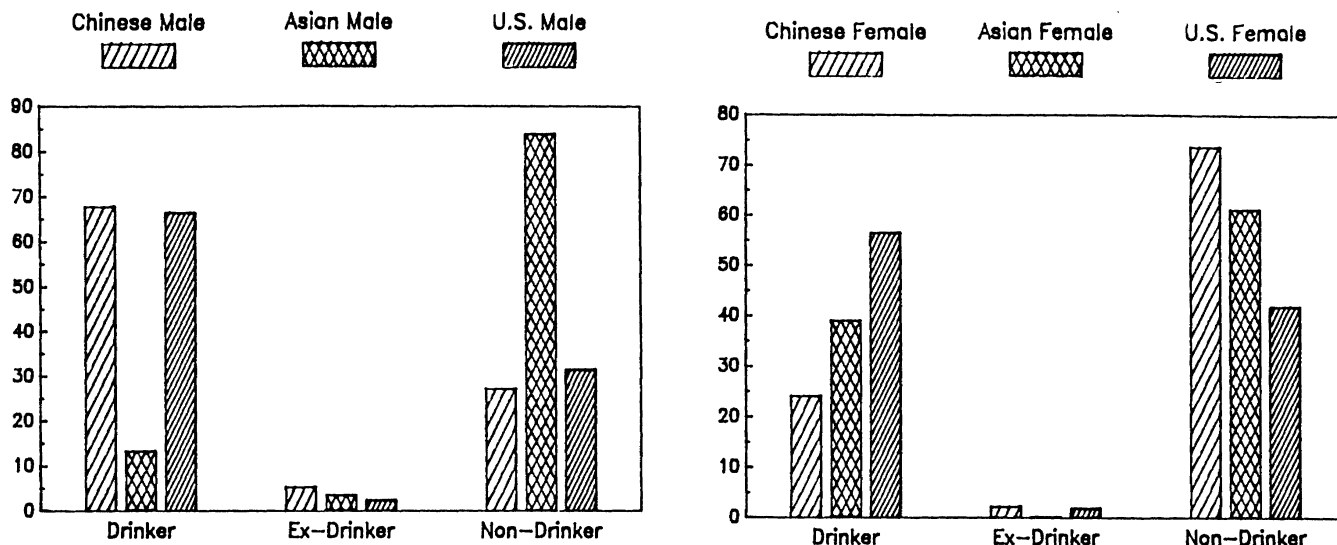
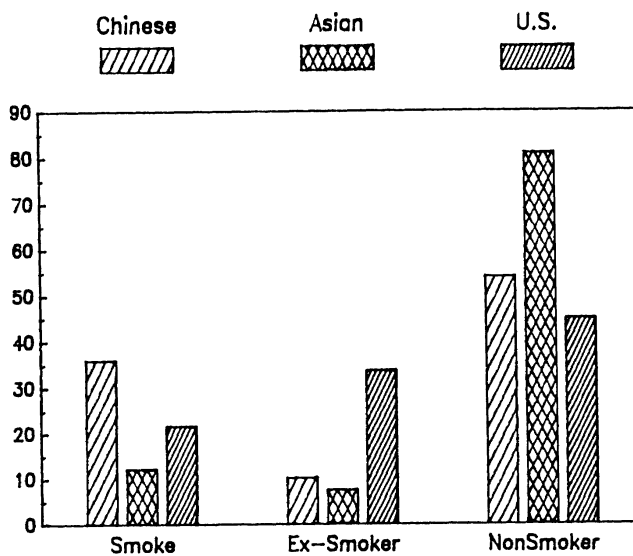


Table 6

Smoking

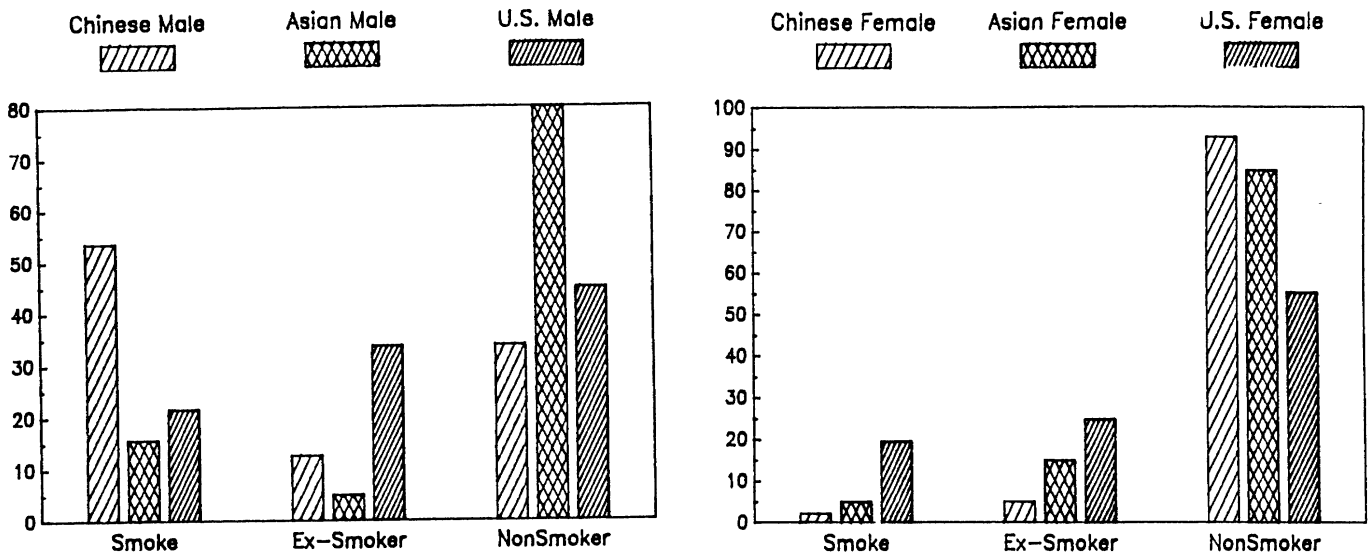
	Chinese	Asian	U.S.
Smoke	35.9%	12.0%	21.3%
Ex-smoker	10.2	7.4	31.7
Never smoke	53.9	80.6	47.0

Smoking



Smoking--Male

Smoking--Female



Physical Activities

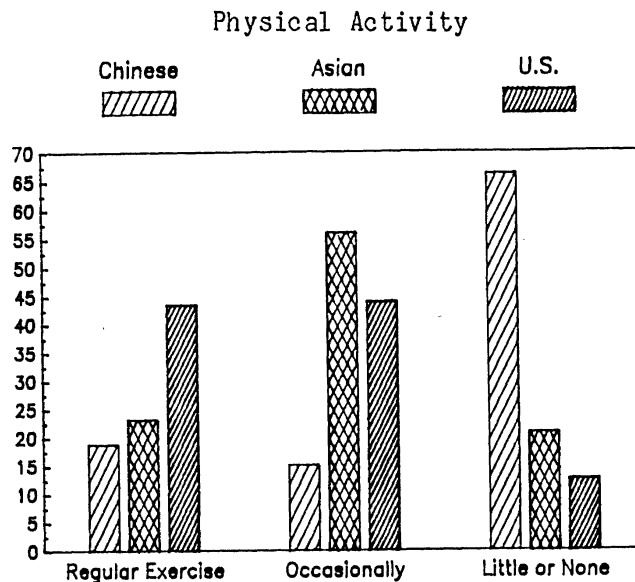
Managers in the U.S. recognize that as a nation increasing emphasis is being placed on fitness and wellness, in part due to some research that implies physical fitness and exercise lower stress. (E.g., Kramish, 1986b; Howard, 1985/1986) Organized physical activity in the U.S. workplace or in private clubs--aerobics, jogging clubs, bicycle clubs, physical rehabilitation centers--is not unusual. Two-thirds (66.2 percent) of the Chinese managers suggest they engage in little or no organized or formal physical activity as walking briskly, running, lifting, or carrying. Furthermore, only 18.8 percent of them engage in any sustained physical exercise outside of the workplace. One could argue, however, that such activity occurs in the workplace, but as a supplement to work activity there appears to be little conscious effort.

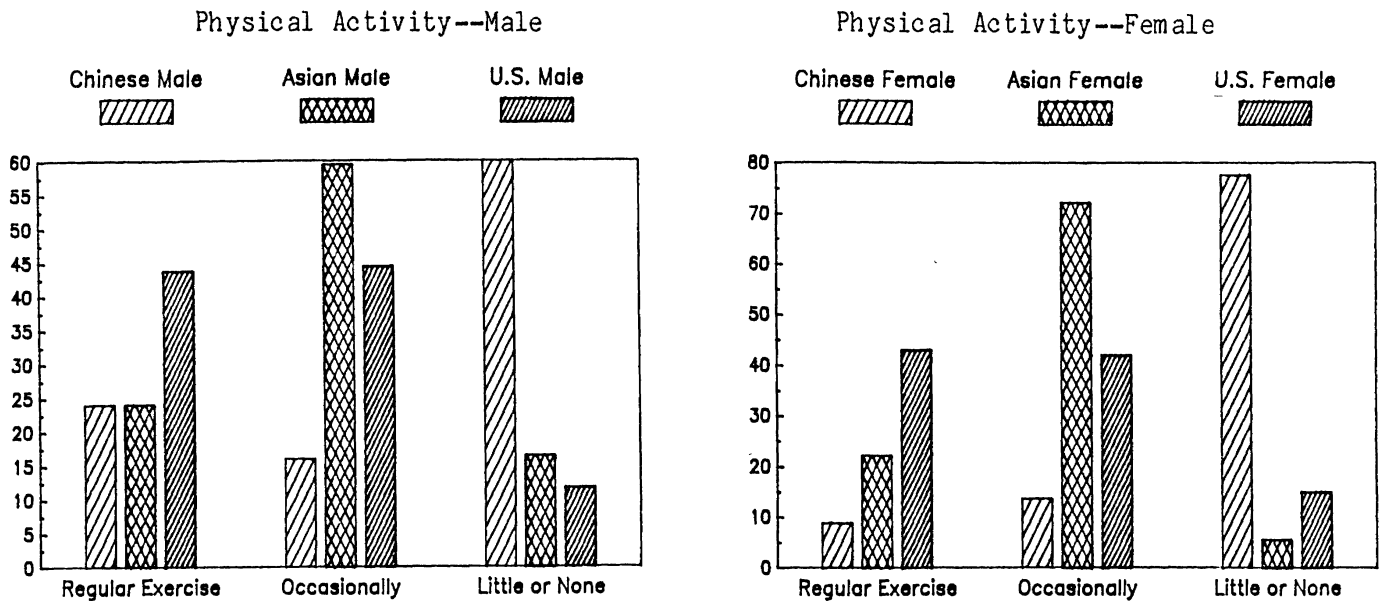
U.S. managers, in vivid contrast, regularly engage in physical activities (43.4 percent) suggesting they do so. Of the U.S. reference sample of 8,720, only 11.1 percent said they engage in little or no physical activity and 45.4 percent said they did so occasionally.

Reasons for the wide cultural variation are hard to quantify; several reasons seem apparent. There are first, to the two authors of this study, few public physical fitness clubs in China comparable to those in the U.S. While there is interest in keeping fit, such activity occurs in unstructured environments as the common half-hour bicycle ride to get to and from work.

Others suggest second, that with a six-day work week, eight hours a day, that activity includes enough physical exertion without adding additional planned physical activities.

A third reason is that people are too busy: shopping is done on foot or via the bicycle, waits in line are involved in many activities, and distances between activities are often great. Purchasing fresh vegetables daily, for instance, takes considerable time. There is, in short, little time for planned physical activity. What U.S. managers take for granted takes inordinate time and effort in China.





Sleeping Patterns

This last health-related behavior suggests that Chinese managers sleep less: 29.4 percent of them sleeping less than 6 hours per night compared with 22.7 percent for the U.S. reference sample. About half of the Chinese managers (49.3 percent) sleep seven hours per day—as do the U.S. managers (49.5 percent)—19.7 percent sleep eight hours a day, and 1.6 percent more than nine hours. Some managers suggest that the amount of time needed to accomplish life sustaining activities is longer than in the U.S. and that travel to and from work is time consuming, thus there is less time for sleep.

3. Physiological Comparisons

It is a common western assumption that the Chinese are shorter, weigh less, and probably have lower blood pressure and cholesterol levels. Clarification of these assumptions applicable to the Chinese managers follow.

Height

It is an Asian trait to be shorter than Western man, thus the mean height of the Chinese male and female manager was 5'5" and 5'2" respectively, decidedly shorter than the U.S. reference sample of males and females, 5'10" and 5'4" respectively. The shorter stature in part accounts for the Chinese managers' decreased weight.

Body weight

U.S. female managers would envy their Chinese counterparts where 63.6 percent of them are underweight as measured by the Metropolitan Life Tables. (Desirable Weights, 1959) The average Chinese female manager has a mean weight of 118.8 pounds as compared with 134.6 for the U.S. female manager. Height variations have been taken into consideration.

Again allowing for differences in height, Chinese male managers are likewise underweight: 51.4 percent fall into that category whereas only 16.2 percent of the U.S. male managers are underweight. The mean weight of the Chinese male was 145.2 compared with the U.S. male at 179.5. Unknown in both instances is the body frame, influencing overall weight. Body weight comparisons are found in Table 7.

Table 7

Body Weight

	Total	<u>Chinese</u> Male	Female	Total	<u>U.S.</u> Male	Female
Underweight	55.7%	51.4%	63.6%	27.5%	16.2%	48.3%
0-10% overweight	26.6	29.4	21.4	32.3	34.9	27.4
More than 10% overweight	17.7	19.1	14.9	40.2	48.9	24.4

Blood Pressure

One might assume that in a country where there is a steady emphasis on health and wellness that U.S. managers would be informed about their personal health on matters as blood pressure and cholesterol. Chinese managers are more aware of their blood pressure level than U.S. managers, 44.7 percent to 34.9 percent respectively. A suggested reason is that many workplaces have their own medical facilities; a manager can quickly receive basic medical treatment quite like the U.S. manager. Regardless, both groups of managers appear to let their blood pressure data in the hands of their doctors.

Additionally, of the Chinese managers who knew their blood pressure, only 7 percent were above the commonly accepted safe level of 140 whereas 24.2 percent of the U.S sample were in that group. Mean systolic and diastolic blood pressure for the Chinese and the U.S. reference sample was 117.6, 121.5 and 78.3 and 77.5 respectively.

Cholesterol Levels

Both Chinese (93.3 percent) and the U.S. sample (84.9 percent) do not know their cholesterol levels. One can make the assumption that that information is known by the doctor and when levels become abnormally high the patient is informed. While the sample is small for the Chinese, those who did know their cholesterol level had a mean reading of 247.5, quite high and potentially predisposing the Chinese managers to both coronary heart disease and stroke, attributes commonly associated with high cholesterol and smoking habits. (McMichael, 1978). That cholesterol reading compares with the sample U.S. level of 211.4.

4. Quality of Life Indicators

Research in the U.S. continues to suggest the problems and dangers associated with stress. (See particularly the excellent analysis by Kasl, 1978; Cooper and Marshall, 1976; and Glowinkowski and Cooper, 1986) This study does not assess the level of stress in Chinese managers, who although do not specifically indicate their stress level, suggested orally that tensions of the on-going changes in their enterprises, the government, and the Party do impact upon them. It is also a given that the common denominator among managers and other business persons in diverse industries (e.g., Loo, 1984; Parker & DeCotiis, 1983; Owens, 1986) is stress, regardless of nationality, and when not controlled can lead to illness and other disfunctions.

A vast amount of research and literature is available on the topic of employee stress, defined by one writer (Levitt, 1982) as "those events or conditions which are experienced as a threat to any facet of one's well being...and can threaten such aspects of human existence as one's physical condition, financial status, self-image, beliefs, aspirations, expectations, and interpersonal relations." Some feel stressors are addictive (Holmes and Rahe, 1982), suggesting that China's contemplated economic and industrial changes may increase managerial stress factors.

Two edited works reviewing the stressors in employees and management are found in Cooper and Payne (1978) and Gowler and Legge (1975). Data base searches suggest hundreds of additional references relevant to the stress factor. More important than identifying specific stressors, however, are the moderators which counteract those

influences. These are what industrial psychologists and health researchers call moderators of stress, that is, actions and activities which prevent stress turning into strain. Blanchard, Edington, and Blanchard (1986) state that these moderators "are the same ingredients people talk about when they are asked to describe peak periods in their lives--times when they were feeling exceptionally good, feeling on top of the world," as seen in the following four quality of life indicators evaluated by the Chinese managers.

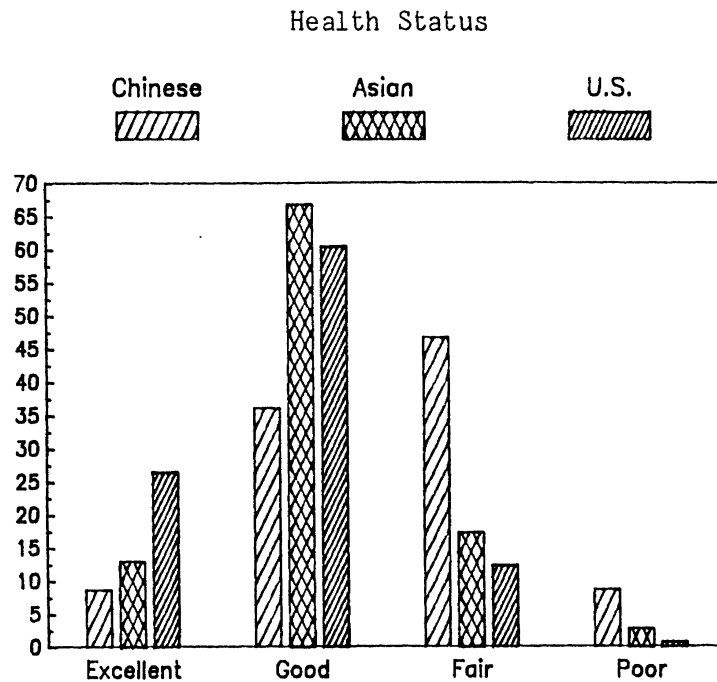
Self-Reported Health Status

One of the better predictors of a person's long-term health is the perception of his present health; the more positive the response the more positive a portent for the future. Both the Chinese and Asian managers rate their health perception as "excellent" much lower than their U.S. counterparts, 8.6 percent, 13 percent, and 26.5 percent respectively. More Chinese managers feel they are in poor health (8.6 percent) than either the other Asian managers (2.8 percent) or the U.S. managers (0.7 percent). In considering these data one must remember that the mean age is nearly 39.

Table 8

Health Status

<u>Health Status</u>	<u>Chinese Managers</u>	<u>Asian Managers</u>	<u>U.S.</u>
Excellent	8.6%	13.0%	26.5%
Good	36.0	66.9	60.5
Fair	46.7	17.3	12.3
Poor	8.6	2.8	0.7



Social Support

Throughout Chinese history the family has been the core of living, some even speaking of "familial immortality" (Blunden and Elvion, 1983 p. 214) as a contributor to both past and present relationships. And increasingly, as part of that family the position of the woman has gained in status, giving her recognition beyond the bearing of children, putting her into the workplace, and therefore giving her stressors similar to but in some ways unlike that of the male. (Jick, Mitz, 1985)

One recent study in the U.S. (Dooley, Rook, Catalano, 1987) and several previous investigations (Cassel, 1976; Cobb, 1976) indicate one of the moderators of stress is social relationships, suggesting that the interactive effects of a positive social environment results in a decrease in stress. House (1980) supports that assertion in his recent study of factory workers on the effects of social support:

Of all the conditioning variables, social support clearly has the strongest and most pervasive effects. Despite the probable weakness of cross-sectional designs for detecting interactive conditioning effects, social support conditions the relationship of a significant number of objective or perceived stress factors to virtually every health outcome, as well as conditioning the impact of job characteristics on perceived stress...Thus situational factors, specially social support, seem to offer special promise as potential factors mitigating the impact of job characteristics on perceived stress, and of both of these on health.

Because of the strength of the family throughout Chinese history, one might presume that social support of the Chinese manager is higher than other nationalities. That is not entirely true, for when asking the Chinese managers the degree of strength of their social ties with their family, 57.4 percent suggested a "very strong" relationship. What makes that statistic interesting (and surprising to Chinese and western readers) is that U.S. top level executives--no comparable question was asked of either Asian or U.S. managers--rate their family relationships even higher, 68 percent suggested a "very strong" relationship with their family.

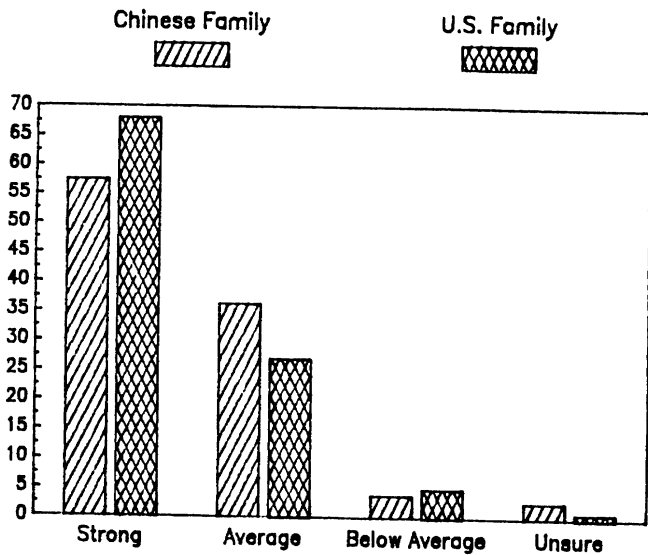
We have given considerable thought to these differences. Hypotheses, untested of course, include the pressures of close extended family living; daytime separation from a child or children during a six-day work-week; a small physical living space devoid of privacy, especially for young married couples in the same extended family environment; the lack of modern conveniences demanding common household chores to be completed on the one free work day (Sunday); and youthful discontents, in part due to their centrally assigned place of work and potential lack of mobility in the workplace, brought into the home. Those observations need further investigation, but suggest some initial thoughts.

A positive emphasis on the family continues in the U.S.; (Handy, 1978; Hildebrandt, Miller, Bond, Edington, 1983-1987) longitudinal data of the Chinese manager will indicate whether the family as a strong social tie will also continue to increase. In the obvious second position is social ties with friends, for both the Chinese managers and U.S. executives.

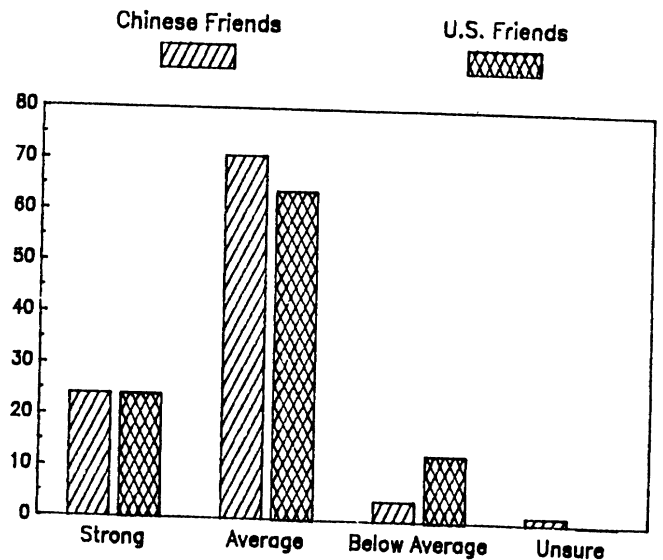
Table 9
Social Supports

Social Support	Chinese Manager		U.S. Executive	
	Family	Friends	Family	Friends
Strong	57.4%	24.0%	68.0%	24.0%
Average	36.2	70.8	27.0	64.0
Below Average	3.8	3.9	5.0	13.0
Unsure	2.7	1.4	1.0	--

Social Supports--Family



Social Supports--Friends



Life Satisfaction

One of the quality of life questions sought to answer the Chinese managers' lifestyle satisfaction, that is, what subjective response did they have to life itself? We suggest no primary cause why only 10.5 percent of them are "Completely Satisfied" with life. That low affirmation is in dramatic contrast to the higher 55.2 percent of the U.S. sample but somewhat in agreement with the 13 percent of the Asian managers. A higher percentage of the Chinese managers are also "not very satisfied" with life (3.3 percent) compared to the U.S. sample at 1.7 percent, and the Asian managers at 7.7 percent.

Anecdotal responses in interviews supply hints for a commonality of causes for the lower quality of life designation of the Chinese and Asian managers, in part similar to the concerns noted above under social ties with the family: (1) close physical proximity in the workplace; (2) small housing accommodations⁴ (average living space per person declined from 4.5 square meters prior to 1982 to 3.6 square meters in 1984, (Woodard, Banister, 1987)); (3) little opportunity for privacy after marriage because of the traditional but changing extended family concept; (4) the challenges to obtaining an advanced education for their children; (5) discomfort with the urban versus the rural environment (in 1953 87 percent of the population lived in the countryside, in 1986 that percentage had dropped to 79 percent, that figure possibly decreasing considerably by the year 2000, thus placing even more people into the cities (Woodward, Banister, 1987)); (6) extended periods of time needed to meet daily living requirements such as shopping; (7) comments about low wage scales as the price of goods increase; (8) concern about

receiving a position assigned them by the government; and (9) some fear that their children will not receive a position in an enterprise commensurate with a higher education.

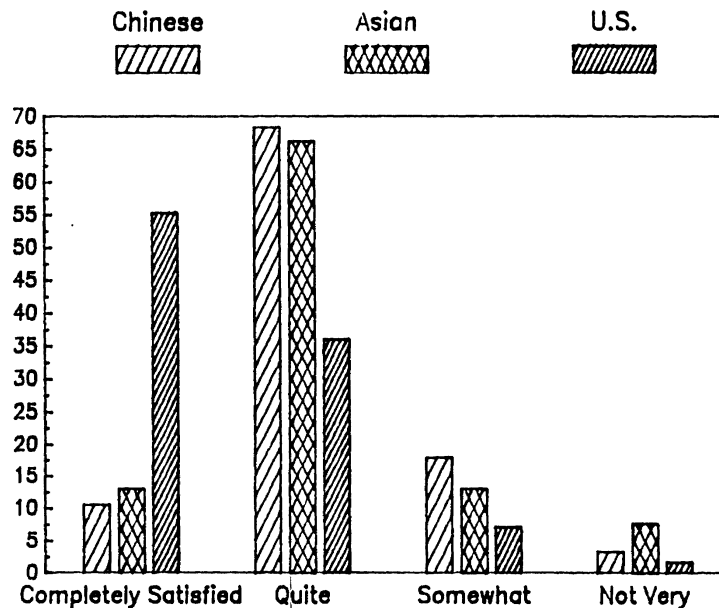
A review of the above possible causes suggests that most concerns centered around factors over which managers have little ability to influence the outcome, according to Burgoyne's (1975) concept one of the powerful variables producing stress. Regardless of causalities, the Chinese managers' satisfaction with their lifestyle--at the "Completely Satisfied" level--was dramatically lower than the western managers.

Table 10

Life Satisfaction

Life Satisfaction	Chinese Managers	Asian	U.S.
Completely satisfied	10.5%	13.0%	55.2%
Quite satisfied	68.3	66.2	36.0
Somewhat satisfied	17.9	13.0	7.1
Not very satisfied	3.3	7.7	1.7

Life Satisfaction



Job Satisfaction

Some disagreement exists (Cooper and Payne, 1978) as to the intensity of job related stressors, yet recent studies continue to emphasize job satisfaction (Howard, 1986; Kramish, 1986a; Howard, Cunningham, Rechnitzer, 1986) as a moderator associated with job stress. We do not know the stress level of the Chinese managers, but only 10.2 percent of them are "Very Satisfied" with their job, in contrast to the 24.7 percent of the U.S. sample and 21.8 percent of the Asian managers.

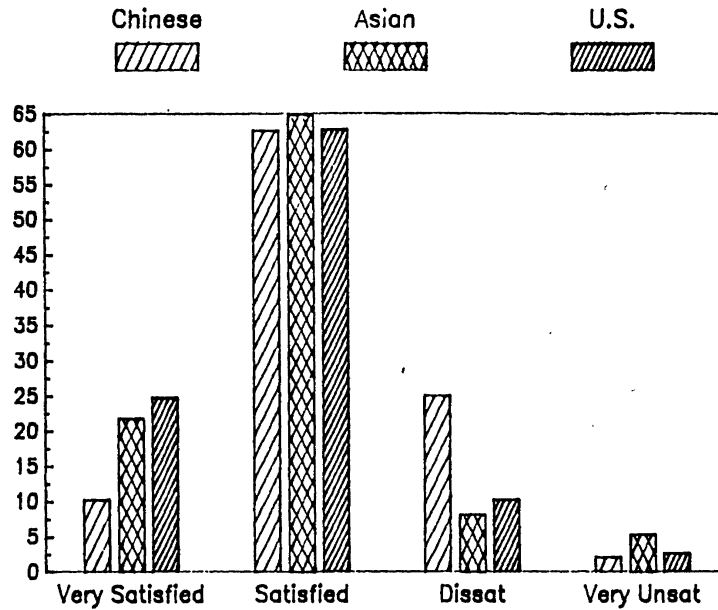
It is risky to assign causality for the lower "Very Satisfied" category of the Chinese managers. It is tempting to suggest, as based on several studies (French, Caplan, 1970; Buck, 1972; Margolis, Kroes, Quinn, 1974; Kasl, 1973; Quinn, Seashore, Mangione, 1971) that less opportunity for decision making, low self-esteem, and little autonomy in the workplace are potential factors. But those generalizations demand a concentrated look at the Chinese managers as compared with U.S. samples. What makes such research important is that the Chinese managers are less "Very Disappointed" (2.1 percent) as compared with the Asian and U.S. managers, 5.3 percent and 2.6 percent respectively.

Table 11

Job Satisfaction

<u>Job Satisfaction</u>	<u>Chinese</u>	<u>Asian</u>	<u>U.S.</u>
Very satisfied	10.2%	21.8%	24.7%
Satisfied	62.6	64.8	62.7
Dissatisfied	25.0	8.2	10.2
Very disappointed	2.1	5.3	2.6

Job Satisfaction



SUMMARY PROFILE

The preceding lifestyle profile of the Chinese manager was based on two-thirds of the group being male, nearly 39 years old, and living in the city of Beijing. Mainly larger firms are represented, particularly from textile manufacturing, non-electrical machinery, automotive manufacturing, and computer technology manufacturing. Most are employed in enterprises larger than 7,500 people.

Over one-third of the managers--males primarily--smoke more than their Asian and U.S. managerial counterparts. They also drink alcoholic beverages at a level equivalent to U.S. managers.

While the U.S. has more organized, more structured physical activity to improve one's lifestyle and physical condition, few Chinese managers engaged in formal sustained physical exercise. The caveat, clearly, is that much normal life activities as riding a bicycle to work

is already a form of exercise but not in the formal, structured, organized sense in U.S. homes or private clubs.

Taking into account differences in height, more than half of the managers are underweight. Few know their blood pressure or cholesterol level, presumably letting that information be in the files of their doctor.

Few consider their health to be excellent, most designating their condition as fair. Additionally, and somewhat as a surprise their relationship with their families is no higher than top-level executives in the U.S., and as with other comparative groups, the friends as a social support system are in second position. Nor are the majority completely satisfied with their lives generally.

Finally, job satisfaction according to many researchers tends to decrease job stress. While the study does not measure stress directly, less than one out of ten is very satisfied with their job. Some causes for this low ranking may include the little autonomy which Chinese enterprises offer managers.

Notes

- ¹While the term Asian or Asia may also include Mainland China, for purposes of differentiation we will use the term Asian to refer to the regions of Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, and Korea. We have resisted using the term South-East Asian because many of the "Asians" used for comparative purposes came from Hong Kong. Hong Kong Chinese (N=249) make up the bulk of the sample with the others representing Singapore (62), Malaysia (5), and Korea (3), for a total of 319 "Asian" managers. Most data is taken from Hildebrandt and Miller (1987b), A Managerial Profile: The Asian Manager.
- ²The term enterprise is generic to the factories and other work units of the Chinese managers. While most of the managers (77.3 percent) came from the manufacturing sector, we use the term enterprise to refer to the other non-manufacturing units as well. Because the term enterprise has a somewhat different meaning in the U.S.,—usually the umbrella organization with numerous sub-units—we shall use the term company when referring to U.S. companies.
- ³The term "graduate" is less used in China when referring to students attending post-undergraduate or commonly known as graduate schools in the U.S. Hence the term "post-graduate" will be used when referring to studies beyond an undergraduate education.
- ⁴It is somewhat difficult to reach agreement regarding housing size. A recent statement (Resolutely Reform, 1988, January 29) suggests that shortly after the Peoples Republic of China was founded, the average floor space in urban China was about 4.5 square meters. By 1985 that space had increased to 6.36 square meters in state housing for which residents pay about 0.13 yuan per square meter. At present about 20% of the total number of urban households live in their own residences.

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