

I. Introduction

Shenzhen, the Chinese city where labour-intensive industry used to be one of its major economic drivers, has accelerated the transformation and upgrading of industries in recent years. The city government proposed several policies in its document - "Guiding Opinions of the Acceleration of Industrial Transformation and Upgrading by the People's Government of Shenzhen" in 2011, such as elimination of low-end industries, improvement of industrial structure, urban redevelopment and technical innovation. These changes have already been noticed during our observation in industrial zones.

Tertiary and secondary industries have switched their places in the city's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) during the past decade. Industrial zones that used to be full of factories are now gradually replaced by financial services office buildings and residential projects, upgrading into high-end and knowledge-based industries. At the same time, low-end, more polluting and labour-intensive industries are relocating to other cities or shutting down.

Year	Contribution of Secondary and Tertiary Industries in Gross Domestic Product (GDP)	
	Secondary Industry	Tertiary Industry
(Unit:%)		
2009	46.1	53.8
2010	46.2	53.7
2011	46.3	53.6
2012	44.1	55.8
2013	43.2	56.8
2014	42.6	57.4
2015	41.2	58.8

Source: *Shenzhen Statistical Yearbook 2016*

This means an enormous change to industrial zone-based organizations like The Shenzhen Dagongzhe Migrant Worker Centre (DGZ Centre), as the majority of the workers we meet are no longer from factories. Their situations, working conditions and industrial relations in the tertiary industry are more diversified than the past. More importantly, the workers who used to work in factories might not stay in the same industry after the industrial transformation and upgrading, and probably, like many workers in the more developed world, they will as well join the service sector and thus change their career path.

There are more migrant workers working in the service industries in Shenzhen nowadays, such as logistics, catering, hotel, sanitation and security. Unlike factories, these industries' workplaces are scattered, with less staff number and unstable contracts. Therefore, we see the urgency to understand the actual working conditions in service industries and to compare that with the production industry's in the past, in order to develop a new approach that suits the needs of workers in the service industries.

Among different service industries, hotel industry is one of the few that still maintains a relatively large number of staff. There are many hotel chains in Shenzhen besides five-star hotels. For instance, budget hotel brands like 7 Days Inn and Hanting Hotel have grown into a certain scale. Yet, this may not be shown in official figures. According to *Shenzhen Statistical Yearbook* from 2011 to 2015, the total number of star rated hotels has decreased (the total number has dropped from 153 in 2010 to 134 in 2014). However, the number of room and bed in four-star and five-star hotels has increased by one fourth, while the same figures in two-star and three-star hotels have decreased by nearly a half. Since some large scale budget hotel chains like Vienna Hotel and 7 Days Inn are not star rated, their expansion is not included in official figures. On the other hand, staff number in guesthouses and hotels has constantly decreased from 2010 to 2014, i.e. from 56,272 in 2010 to 47,406 in 2014. This number is only about regular workers, therefore outsourced workers, dispatched workers and interns are not included.

This phenomenon makes us wonder why the number of labour is declining when the expansion of the industry is still going on? How does it affect the forms of employment and working conditions? We had encountered with a few service industries workers before, realized violations of the Labour Contract Law is common in the industries. In Summer 2016, with the assistance of several university student volunteers, we conducted an exploratory research on the working conditions and worker composition in the hotel industry in Longgang District, Shenzhen.

II. **Research Methodology**

Data collection of the research is mainly through questionnaire interviews covering topics of interviewees' basic personal background, employment processes, basic information on hotels,

labour contract, working conditions and working hours, wages and overtime payment, social insurance and benefits, workplaces' rules and regulations, personal feelings and daily life etc. Before we started the interviews, we also conducted a preliminary survey through collecting information from recruitment websites and phone calls, visiting nearby hotels and talking to workers who have joined hotel industry. Due to some reality constraints, most of the workers were not able to finish the whole questionnaire. At the same time, interviewers also hoped to discover other aspects of the industry beyond the questionnaires, therefore the interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner. Again, given the said constraints, careful sampling was impossible during our research. However, the research outcome is still inspirational and important for us to study the existing issues in the hotel industry.

During the preliminary survey, we visited a few local guesthouses and found that it is rather hard to conduct research there, because most of them are family-run businesses and the number of staff is small. Staff members are usually relatives of the owner and living in the guesthouses which makes it difficult for us to have in-depth conversations with them. There are numerous guesthouses with different backgrounds in the region. In this case, we would need a huge sampling size in order to increase the representation of the research, yet it is impossible given the limited resources and time we had. Therefore, we chose local express business hotel chains and five-star hotels as our samples, because they have both gained higher market share and employ more staff. The issues we discovered in them would somehow show a general picture of the hotel industry in China.

Questionnaire interviews mostly took place during workers' shift time. We met them at the hotel exits, shuttle bus stops and places near their dormitories. Sometimes when situation allowed, we interviewed workers during their shifts in the hotels when they were not busy. As the situation varied during our meeting with workers - mostly they only had limited time to answer our questions - we skipped or amended some parts of the questionnaires during interviews, for example we changed from asking them their exact amount of wages into a certain range of wages, in order to get as much information as possible. After each interviews, we gave workers legal knowledge booklet as gift.

III. Research Findings

a. Basic Background

We collected 58 questionnaires in total. 36 of them were completed by workers from two five-star hotels - One was invested and managed by a state-owned enterprise and the other was belonged to an international hotel group; seven of them were completed by workers from several nationwide chain hotels, in which two hotels were regular chain. Another 15 questionnaires were completed by workers from three locally-owned business hotels.

The scale of express, business hotels vary from 80 to over 100 rooms; and the number of staff is between 10 to 30, usually in front desk service and housekeeping, and the rest of them in maintenance, account and finance, security and cleaning. Some hotels also run other amenities like restaurants and karaoke boxes while some rent out the amenity facilities to other service providers to run.

On the other hand, five-star hotels have 300 to 400 rooms, with the staff number around 300 to 400. Most of them work in food and beverage and entertainment services. These hotels often provide Chinese and Western catering services, banquets and bars. Inside the food and beverage department, there are several divisions like waiter service, kitchen and catering support. Besides, there are other positions like laundry attendants, lifeguards and gardeners.

Regarding the age distribution, workers are generally younger in front desk service since they give the first impression of the hotels to their guests. Security department also prefers young and strong workers, while housekeepers are usually relatively older. In terms of gender, there are both male and female workers in front desk and catering services while female makes up the majority. Cleaning positions, especially housekeepers, are taken by female workers when positions of maintenance, gardening, cook, porters are generally taken by male workers.

Grassroots employees in five-star hotels are usually hired through workers or school recommendations. Open recruitment usually takes place in the early phase of the hotels' operation. Academic requirement is higher in any positions in five-star hotels – dishwashers are required to be high school graduates while the minimum requirement for front desk workers is university graduates, bachelor degree preferred. Meanwhile, grassroots employees in regular hotel chains or business hotels are recruited through recruitment websites or recommendations, with a lower academic requirement. For positions like security guards or gardeners, education requirement was low in general.

Most of the interviewees joined their companies after 2012. Besides student interns, nearly 60 per cent of them joined between 2015 and 2016. The turnover rate in front desk service is higher when housekeeping is lower. It is because housekeeping requires more working experiences, so the positions are usually taken by older workers that look for job stability. Younger workers always look for ideal jobs. A switchboard operator told us he wants to leave his job due to the bad attitude of guests. It seems to us that low-rank workers are very easy to resign.

b. Labour Contract

According to the research, less than 60 per cent (55.6%) of workers sign labour contract with their hotels, while nearly 40 per cent (36.1%) of workers, who are student interns, sign tripartite agreement with their schools and hotels, yet the work compensation is basically decided by their schools and hotels. There are some outsourced and dispatched workers (8.3%) that do not sign labour contracts with the hotels. Student interns mainly work in the departments of food and beverage, concierge and switchboard operation, which require less experience or skills, but in need of young workers who are good at communication. Outsourced workers are mainly responsible for unskilled jobs like lobby and outdoor cleaning and catering support.

Labour contracts signed between five-star hotels and younger workers are usually three-year contracts while the labour contracts for older workers vary at different positions. For positions like housekeeping that require more skills, the hotels may sign a three-year contract with the workers; for positions in laundry and gardening, the labour contract duration varies from one to two years. Older workers tend to return home for retirement and student interns prefers to stay in the hotel after internship ends. During our observation, only one five-star hotel signed open-term labour contract with eligible workers, while the other five-star hotel does not, since it was established less than six years ago.

Some chained express hotels are escaping the liability to sign open-term labour contract with their staff, for example by frequently changing store manager or asking the store manager to sign new labour contract instead of renewing the current one. Such practice is even more common in locally-owned business hotels. Workers from two hotels told us it is a common practice to sign labour contract once a year with their employers while a smaller proportion of them do not sign labour contracts or possess a copy themselves. Workers generally are not familiar with their labour contract details.

c. Wages and social insurance status

Generally speaking, the linkage between the hotel ratings and the wages level of workers is not always clear, depending on job positions. The basic salary of regular workers is the minimum wage of the city or slightly higher than that. Workers rely highly on overtime payment, commission or bonuses to add up their wages.

Wages of formal workers and supervisors is about 3,000 yuans in five-star hotels and the basic salary of student interns, who take up the largest proportion of the workforce, is only about 1,000 yuans. Wages of front desk and cleaning staff is about 2,000 to 3,000 yuans, a small proportion of them can get monthly wages over 4,000 yuans through commission. Positions like housekeeping supervisor do not have any extra income but they can have at least 3,000 yuans monthly due to their high position rank. Five-star hotels have higher hygiene standard on guest room thus housekeepers work harder,

which means the excessive room-cleaning quota pay and wages are higher, in a range of 3,000 to 4,000 yuans. Some of them can even get monthly wages of 5,000 yuans.

In other positions, the number of waiters has taken up a certain proportion of the total staff number. The wages are consisted of basic salary and overtime payment. In one of the hotels' western restaurant, there were a total of 20 staff - three head waiters, three supervisors and the rest are student interns. Wages of student interns do not exceed 2,000 yuans while head waiter only has around 3,000 yuans. The higher the position, the more wages a worker can get. However, workers claimed that competition for the supervisor position is keen. The basic salary for physical labour positions like catering support and laundry attendants is only 2,030 yuans, if adding up overtime payment a worker can get over 3,000 yuans a month. Gardening and lobby cleaning also require the same level of physical labour but the wages for these positions are less than 2,500 yuans. Security, account and finance, engineering do not have commission. The wages for security staff are around 2,500 yuans and some of the workers can get wages over 3,000 yuans; while the wages for account and finance and engineering are only around 3,000 yuans.

There are many rankings in five-star hotels management, which the wage levels are directly related to. For instance, in one of the five-star hotels we studied about, workers are ranked from 1 to 10. Most of the workers are ranked at or below 7. Workers at rank 9 and 10 are responsible for basic works, such as dishwashing, laundry, gardening. The basic salary is 2,200 yuans, and they only receive around 1,800 yuans after the deduction of social insurance premiums. Front desk supervisor, head waiters are at ranks 7 and 8, and their wages can reach 3,000 to 4,000 yuans. Duty manager and department manager belong to rank 6 and 5; director at rank 3 or 4, the basic salary is around 6,000 to 7,000 yuans. Chief manager is at rank 1 and their monthly salary can reach 200,000 yuans at maximum. The rankings in chained hotel management is simpler, because one store manager only manages around 20 staff members, which is approximately the same ranks to ranks 5 and 6 in five-star hotels. The usual structure in these hotels is Store Manager – Department Head – Supervisor – Staff.

We interviewed a store manager in a chained hotel. He is a native of Shenzhen below 30 years old. He spends over 5,000 yuans each month and lives from pay cheque to pay cheque. Therefore, we estimate his monthly salary is 5,000 yuans approximately. He told us he and many of his peers got promotion to store manager because they met the boom in the hotel industry. There is less promotion to store manager afterwards. The same was mentioned by staff in a five-star hotel too. Promotion was easier during the early development of hotel but now even the vacancy of supervisor is rare.

The composition of wages, besides basic salary, may includes the following:

- achievement rewards – pay when the hotel occupancy rate achieved to a certain percentage; the amount varies from tens of yuans to thousands of yuans and from different stores to different ranks of staff
- Attendance bonus, night shift and high temperature allowance
- Some irregular income, for example retails sales bonuses
- Commissions. Yet there are various forms of calculation – in five-star hotels the commission for front desk staff comes from the luxurious room chosen by guests; in regular hotel, front desk staff usually get commission from selling membership to guests. Commission rate varies from tens of yuans, hundreds of yuans or even thousands of yuans. The sales of membership vary between stores – depends on their locations, guest number, room rate and membership rate etc. The commission of housekeeper is made of excessive room-cleaning quota pay – i.e. when worker cleans over his assigned daily room quota, he can get pay for every extra room he cleans. The amount varies from a few yuans in regular hotels to more than ten yuans in five-star hotels but the cleaning requirement is different between the two types of hotels.

The wages of housekeepers do not increase according to their age or experience. Housekeepers in one of the business hotels are female workers in their 50s who is difficult to find jobs. These female workers are skilled and they used to get 2,600 or 2,800 yuans of wages with basic salary and excessive room-cleaning quota pay. But when they reach their 50s, they can only get 2,200 yuans with excessive room-cleaning quota pay after switching to this hotel. Also, they only have four rest days in a month which means they are paid less than the minimum wage requirement.

The workers in this business hotel only have wages around 2,000 yuans but male workers working in the karaoke box run by the hotel can get wages from 5,000 to 6,000 yuans (we did not meet any female workers during the interview). This karaoke box is a luxurious one, staff got tips by guests. A staff can get at least 100 yuans a night for serving a room, so the monthly wages can reach to 5,000 to 6,000 yuans, but their basic salary was only 600 yuans. This kind of karaoke box run by the hotel might have more labour law violations or even unlawful operations.

Most of the hotels offer meals and accommodation to workers. If the hotel did not have meal for workers, they will provide meal allowance. However, since hotels do not encourage workers to live out, accommodation allowance is rare. Workers have to pay for their own water and power bills in the hotel dormitory, or they have to pay when the usage exceeds a certain level. Five-star hotels have shuttle bus service for their workers. Although shuttle bus drivers are not hotel employees but they are good resources to help us understand the hotel situations.

Different hotels have different social insurance arrangement. Five-star hotels and some of the regular hotels buy full set of social insurance but some chained hotels divided workers in different

classes to purchase social insurance. Class A is only for staff who obtained household registration in Shenzhen; Class B premium is 180 yuans per month and the employer pays two third of it; Class C premium is tens of yuans and is for medical insurance only. In some cases, workers only buy some parts of insurances or they refuse to purchase. Some workers of chained hotels told us they do not need to by social insurance because they have already purchased the New Rural Social Pension Programme. Five-star hotels save the cost of social insurances by hiring student interns and dispatched workers who do not enjoy social insurances. Some workers claim they refuse to purchase the insurance. However, it is compulsory to buy social insurance according to the Law. Therefore, it is the hotels' intention to not tell such information to the workers. Many workers do not understand their social insurance status and some workers refuse to buy social insurance because they only plan to work temporarily in the city. In some cases, however, workers are older than the age limit to purchase social insurance and are worried about their retirement.

d. Working hour and overtime work

Front desk work usually adopts two working hour systems – the Three-shift System, each shift is eight hours; and the “Two-days-on, Two-days-off”, each shift is 12 hours. And for catering support and waiters, some works eight hours per shift and some works split shift - working 10.5 hours per day, with a three-hour break in between. Since comprehensive working hour system is applied on these posts, working on weekends does not count as overtime. Housekeepers work for three shifts and have night shift allowance. The working hour of store manager, account and finance is more stable. Five-star hotels have at least seven different shift and rotation systems in different positions – morning shift, night shift, split shift etc. Most of the hotels follow labour law requirement and offer paid sick leave.

Front desk workers in some hotels work “Two-days-on, Two-days-off” and working on weekends is not counted as overtime work. It could be the result of comprehensive working hour system or only because the employers are not following the Labour Law. Many workers told us they do not have overtime pay for weekend work but will have compensation leave as remuneration. In five-star hotels, overtime pay for weekdays and weekends is only applicable for some staff but every worker has it for overtime work on statutory holidays. In case of overtime work for unfinished tasks, an intern from a five-star hotel told us he usually works two hours extra and does not have overtime pay. A regular work in the dishwashing department also told us he gets compensation leave instead of overtime pay for unfinished task. The employer will only make a cash payment to eliminate accumulated compensation leave balance when a worker resigns. In some chained hotels, workers are not paid for overtime pay, instead employers listed meal allowance as overtime pay on their payslips. And in the said business hotel with karaoke box, some workers' weekend overtime pay is calculated based on the city's minimum wage instead of their basic salary.

e. Student interns and dispatched workers

The biggest characteristic of five-star hotels is student interns form the majority of the workforce. The students work for six months to one year. Every year, the human resources department hires student interns from schools. If student interns are willing to stay and have good performance, it is possible to get promoted to rank 5 in a few years. However, we are told that the promotion competition is fierce. Many students leave after the internship ends. This practice is similar to that of Foxconn, by using student interns as cheap workforce to cut labour cost.

Another way adopted by five-star hotels to cut cost is using dispatched or outsourced workers. This usually occurs in unskilled positions like dishwashing and lobby cleaning which are highly replaceable and student interns refuse to do. Poorly-educated and older workers take up these positions. These dispatched or outsourced workers usually do not obtain any labour contract and have only 2,200 yuans to 2,500 yuans a month without social insurance. Some of them only has four rest days off in a month which means their basic salary is less than the minimum wage requirement. Wage arrears happen sometimes.

f. Work safety and management system

Workers of front desk, security and room service is at risk of workplace hazards when some chained hotels tend to cover accidents and hazards to protect its reputation. For instance, when a fire breaks out in a hotel, workers are not authorized to report the hazard. Instead, they are only allowed to report the case to their supervisors and let them decide to report. Also, when staff is attacked by drunken guests or thugs, they are not allowed to defend themselves. This may result in physical injuries of the workers. Female front desk workers are under higher risk of physical attack and sexual harassment. In terms of work injury, workers from five-star hotels and some of the chained hotels told us their employers has a certain procedure for it; when workers from other hotels have no ideas how work injury would be handled as they have no experience in it.

For management system, most staff of five-star hotels and chained hotel are familiar with the rewards and penalties system in their hotels. If they caused any damage on hotel property or made wrong meal order, they have to pay the original price or pay penalties after exceeding a certain quota. Employees would be fined for excessive unqualified performance, such as substandard cleaning and being complained by guests. For late to work, some hotels deduct workers' break time as penalty, i.e. if worker was late for one minute, three minutes will be deducted from his break time; and some hotels will deduct worker's attendance bonus.

Hotels usually do not ask new employees for deposit, but we found that some business hotels that are suspected to unlawful operation ask new front desk staff for 500 yuans as deposit. Most workers

can enjoy paid annual leave while some workers only have unpaid leave. Workers usually pay around 100 yuans for uniforms deposit. It will be deducted if they damaged the uniforms. Workers in most of the positions do not get wage deduction for sick leaves, but for positions like catering support, security, cleaner and managers, their wages will be deducted for that.

Staff number in some chained hotels is large and employers tend to segregate them. Hotel management launched different WeChat and QQ chat groups according to workers' positions, for example manager group, supervisor group and regular worker group and have sub-groups of different stores and departments. Although there are also larger chat groups for specific departments and stores, an employee might be kicked out of those groups when considered to be "provoking" and too vocal with their grievances. It prevents workers to build their own chat groups and hinder their information exchange, making it hard for workers to organize and fight for their rights.

g. Workers' daily life

Older workers generally save more and spend less than younger workers while younger workers' consumption practices vary among themselves. Given the same salary, some of them live from pay cheque to pay cheque while some can save up to 1,000 to 2,000 yuans per month. Many younger workers are breadwinners of their families and have to send 1,000 to 2,000 yuans back home every month. Some workers told us they spend all their wages on online shopping. Some younger workers purchase high-end products like iPhone, although their wages are only around 3,000 yuans.

When we discussed the reason of inadequate wages with workers, many of them think it is more because of high personal expenses and the rocketing prices; some of them think it is more linked to personal ability, and some thinks it is because of the low compensation offered by their employers. Cleaners, laundry attendants, kitchen support workers grumble how tiresome their works are and always working without break time. Front desk workers and waiters were less tiring jobs, yet some of them also feel tired about night shift and standing for long time at work.

A large proportion of interviewed workers do not have high expectation on promotion and wage increase and the rest of them are more inclined to a positive future. Nearly half of the interviewees chose "pleasant" to describe their workplace atmosphere. Two third of the workers have shifted their working industries. Most of them were former factory workers, some of them were construction workers, self-employed, clerks and workers in other service industries. When they compare hotel industry and the industry they worked in, most of them think it is similar or inappropriate to compare and some workers think the working conditions is slightly better. Some workers think that although the wages are lower than their previous job, the work intensity is lower as well.

Most of the interviewees have not decided their retirement location, especially the younger workers; while most of the workers who have replied this question plan to retire in their hometown in rural villages. Since mid-aged and older workers often have not purchased social insurance up to the designated duration, the pension they can get is insufficient to support their retirement life in the city; and to many younger workers, the amount of pension will be meagre for living even if they insist to pay for all their working years. It is still common that workers refuse to buy social insurance.

IV. Overall observation

a. Floating salary, miscalculation of overtime work pay, low participation rate in social insurance

We can tell from the questionnaire findings that no matter five-star hotels or chained business hotels, workers get more than 2,000 yuans for basic salary, a little higher than the official minimum wages in Shenzhen. The rating of hotels has no impact on workers' basic salary. This is close to the hotel industry wages guideline announced by the Shenzhen Municipal Human Resources and Social Security Bureau which says the wages of front desk and housekeepers should be slightly higher than 3,000 yuans. Indeed, many interviewees receive more wages, between 3,000 to 4,000 yuans or above but they work more than five days a week, eight hours per day. It is all contributed by floating wages like overtime work and commission. Workers may earn this floating wages by their ability or luck. From workers' participation of social insurance, we also notice that many hotels set up their own "participation threshold" or manipulating workers' limited knowledge on social insurance to skip the cost.

The calculation of overtime pay is unclear. Hotel workers usually work eight hours per shift, unlike their counterparts in production industry that have stable overtime work. Overtime on weekdays is usually due to unfinished tasks. However, it is very common for hotel workers to work six days a week when working on weekends is not counted as working overtime. Some workers mentioned the rotation system of "Two-days-on, Two-days-off" but it can be a result of comprehensive working hour system. Hotel industry is one of the industries that comprehensive working hour system can apply. Other industries are geological and resource exploration, construction, salt refining, sugar refining and tourism which is restricted by season or nature and only applicable to some of their workers. We see two questions here – 1. Have these hotels seek approval from the Labour Bureau before they adopt comprehensive working hour system and have they inform their employees? 2. This system has a restriction on the total number of working hours, i.e. 40 hours per week. However, we observe the current situation that workers have to work six days a week, eight hours per day, exceeding the said time limit. Therefore, we can tell some employers are stealing overtime pay from workers no matter they are officially applying comprehensive working hour system or not.

b. Student interns widely used in several positions while educational purpose in doubt

Student interns form a major workforce in some positions in five-star hotels, for instance they form over half of the workforce in catering service and concierge. The figure can sometimes up to 80 per cent. However, we found that the proportion of student interns working in housekeeping and kitchen cleaning is less, only taking up 10 per cent of the workforce. It is probably because of the high physical labour required. These positions are usually done by older female workers. Although students work full time in the hotels, but the internship allowance for them is lower than local minimum salary. According to Article 40 of the *the Higher Education Internship Regulation of Guangdong Province*, employers must provide interns a living allowance no lower than 80 per cent of the local minimum salary. Due to the less hours in overtime work, student interns can only get around 1,000 yuans per month and since employers are not required to buy social insurance for students, the labour cost is further reduced. According to Article 23 of *the Higher Education Internship Regulation of Guangdong Province*, student interns should not exceed 30 per cent of the total workforce in the firm. Therefore, we suspect the high proportion of student interns in hotels has violated the regulation, but since we do not have full details of the student interns proportion in the workplace, it is hard to confirm.

The student interns in hotel industry is different from those in Foxconn – they are majoring in hotel management, thus this internship bears relation with their studies and they can choose freely on their internship hotels as long as they can fulfil the graduation requirement of their school. However, when looking at the job nature and the high proportion of student interns in the same position, it is hard to identify the educational purpose of such internship programme and how much guidance the hotels offer to the students. Of course, the purpose of internship experience in the hotel industry is for students – the future management in the industry - to understand the industry from foundation, but we doubt that students have also become a way for employers to trim down the labour cost.

c. High turnover rate leads to lower motivation to handle dispute

Through our interaction with hotel workers, we get a picture that they lack commitment to work long-term in the industry. Many younger workers do not want to stay in the workplace or they just see the job as a temporary transition in their career. Even though they are unpleasant with their current situation, they are easy to leave their job, thus are disengaged with labour processes and collective actions to fight for improvement. We interviewed a mid-aged worker who reflected the issue of low wages to her employer. She and her colleagues have just been informed about wages increase recently, but their case is rare in the industry.

According to the workers' description on their jobs, we see a great potential to lead to a labour struggle, for example the overtime pay miscalculation mentioned above, work safety and other workplace hazards. However, there is more to be studied about – whether workers will choose to resign when they face these issues or other actions by them to strive for improvement.

V. Recommendations for Further Action

In the past, we only understood little of the working conditions of hotel industry workers. This research helps us to establish basic knowledge on their working conditions and there is more to be studied in the future, for example:

- a. Is the contract signed by hotel workers meeting legal standards? How is working hours, wages and work safety protection mentioned in the contract? How was the tripartite agreement between student interns, schools and employer designed?
- b. Given the high turnover rate in the hotel industry, how do workers respond to the unfair working conditions in the workplace? How do they evaluate their role and position in the industrial relations? When they face labour dispute, what obstacle would they face when fighting for their rights beside resigning from their jobs?
- c. The overall number of staff in general chained hotels is huge but each branch is run independently, with only dozens of workers in every hotel. Interaction between workers in different branches is rare, how can we encourage communications within them?

These questions are not only applicable in hotel industry, other service industries like retail, catering also have the same characteristics like high turnover rate and scattered workplaces. Indeed, the working conditions in these industries could be worse. Therefore, we hope this research can offer a few glimpses of the service industries to open up more space for further worker organizing.