

Minh Cao

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EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, IRVINE

Doctor of Philosophy in Organization and Management

September 2022

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Master of Philosophy in Development Studies

June 2015

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK AT NEW PALTZ

Bachelor of Science in International Business

December 2013

PH.D. DISSERTATION

Customer service and its challenges in college admissions consulting

My dissertation examines service work and its challenges, as seen in college admissions consulting. My dissertation is an ethnographic study of two college admissions consulting firms, Icarus and Sparta. These firms provide consulting services for Asian students applying to colleges in English-speaking countries. The first and second chapters of my dissertation focus on consultants at Icarus: Chapter 1 shows how these consultants navigate the tension between a) clients' demands for personal connection, care, and intimacy, and b) their own need for personal boundaries and professionalism in daily interactions with clients; Chapter 2 analyzes how consultants translate to Asian clients the accessibility of elite academic institutions in the English-speaking world, by showcasing "Harvard standards" and explaining why most students will never reach those standards. The third chapter describes salespeople at Sparta during the COVID-19 pandemic, showing how they cope with extraordinary levels of work-related pressure by enacting social connections and cultural activities at work with the use of non-work physical objects.

MANUSCRIPTS IN PREPARATION

Cao, Minh. "The realm of the ridiculous": Straddling intimacy and professionalism in college admission consulting. *(The first chapter of my dissertation)* To be submitted to *Human Relations* April 2023.

Cao, Minh. "Maybe don't mention Harvard": Translating the accessibility of elite academic institutions. *(The second chapter of my dissertation)* To be submitted to *Business and Society* in August 2023.

Cao, Minh. “First, let’s eat cake”: Workers’ use of physical objects in facing high pressure at work. (*The third chapter of my dissertation*) To be submitted to *Human Relations* in December 2023.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Cao, Minh (August 2022). *The realm of the ridiculous: Straddling intimacy and professionalism in college admission consulting*. Academy of Management (AOM) annual meeting. Online.

Cao, Minh (June 2022). *Reflexivity at the micro level: How institutional actors resolve conflicts by focusing on present impacts*. European Group for Organizational Studies (EGOS). Online.

Cao, Minh (2021, October). *The empathizers: How workers resolve conflicts by focusing on present impacts*. Harvard Business School’s Rising Scholars Conference. Online.

Cao, Minh (2019, August). *Temporal and relational: The positionality of embeddedness in immigrant rights advocacy work*. Academy of Management (AOM) annual meeting, Boston, MA.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Lecturer, The Business School, RMIT Vietnam, November 2022 – present

Associate Lecturer, The Business School, RMIT Vietnam, June 2022 – September 2022

Instructor, Paul Merage School of Business, University of California, Irvine, August 2020

OTHER EXPERIENCE

Symposium Organizer, Academy of Management annual meeting, August 2019

Symposium title: *“Inequalities and the fight for inclusiveness: Unpacking the varied experiences of migrant workers.”*

I organized this symposium with my colleague Carrie Wang to offer insights into the various work and life experiences of migrant workers, all of whom are challenged by their environments and many of whom are marginalized. This symposium consisted of four studies examining: 1) multi-level factors influencing ascriptive inequality towards migrant workers; 2) individuals who return to mainland China to pursue entrepreneurial opportunities; 3) the impact of social categories and group esteem theory on different immigrant groups; and 4) workers who do advocacy work for immigrant rights. This symposium was selected to be featured in the 2019 All-Academy Theme “Understanding the Inclusive Organization.”

AWARDS AND HONORS

Ray Watson Fellowship, Paul Merage School of Business, University of California, Irvine, 2019

Scholarship from the Cambridge Commonwealth, European & International Trust, University of Cambridge, 2014 – 2015

REFERENCES

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