

## **Hard Control and Soft Contract: Domestic Labor under the Influence of Internet**

LIANG Meng

*(Department of Social Work, School of Humanities and Law,  
Beijing University of Civil Engineering and Architecture, Beijing 102616, China)*

**Key Words:** domestic labor on Internet; labor relations; labor process; employment model; digital divide

**Abstract:** To combine Internet and traditional domestic labor could help overcome the digital divide or continue it. This study applies the analytical framework of combining labor relations and labor process to identify that capital and Internet technology work together to create a model of employment of domestic workers via Internet based on hard control and soft contracts. Through extending soft contracts with domestic workers but multiple ways of control and management, domestic workers are faced with intense control in the labor process, reinforcing their lower status and the obscurity of their experience with digital divide. This study demonstrates the complexity of domestic labor from a gender perspective.