

Acculturation, Filial Responsibilities and Living Arrangements: An Empirical Study of the Acculturative Experiences of Elderly Chinese Immigrants in New Zealand

Mingsheng Li
Massey University, New Zealand

Abstract: This study examines the acculturative experiences, filial responsibilities and intergenerational communication between the elderly Chinese immigrants and their adult children in Wellington, New Zealand. Thirty-two elderly Chinese immigrants from mainland China, ranging from 64 to 79 years of age, participated in one-hour semi-structured interviews in late 2008 and early 2009. The study found that the levels of economic feasibility, acculturation and self-support for Chinese elderly immigrants determined the probability and desirability of living arrangements in the form of co-residence or independent living. Changes in economic and social status, roles, intergenerational boundaries and the changed socio-cultural environments challenged the Chinese traditional concept of filial piety and weakened the ties and bonds between the elderly migrants and their adult children. A large majority of the participants lived independently in state houses in spite of their old age, language and cultural barriers, social isolation, poor health and feelings of abandonment. Separate living arrangements and the effective government financial and housing support and services helped them regain their self-identity, self-worth, independence, and freedom to manage their own life, finance, and social activities. The study highlights the importance of care for the general wellbeing and the quality of life of the elderly Chinese immigrants in New Zealand.

Keywords: Elderly Chinese immigrants, intergenerational conflict, acculturation, roles, filial piety, living arrangement, family relationships

1. Introduction

This research project attempts to examine the acculturative experiences, filial responsibilities and intergenerational communication between the elderly Chinese immigrants and their adult children in Wellington, New Zealand. It will explore how socio-cultural and economic changes impact on living arrangements and the conceptualisation of filial piety that has been deeply valued in Chinese tradition.

According to the statistics provided by the New Zealand Department of Labour (2009), in 2008/09, sixty-two percent of the 46,097 people granted permanent residence were in the Business/Skill Stream. Ninety percent of 3,818 principal applicants from China were initially international students and later became permanent residents. The main reason for younger Asian immigrants to migrate to New Zealand is education, but the main reason for older Asian immigrants (50+ years old) is social (Statistics New Zealand, 2007). From July 1997 to

December 2011, 98,208 Chinese nationals were granted permanent residence in New Zealand; 57.6 percent of them were in Business/Skill Category. The Parent Category consisted of over twenty percent (Immigration New Zealand, 2010). These elderly Chinese immigrants come to New Zealand to be reunited with their adult children in New Zealand. These immigrants, according to Maré, Morten, & Stillman (2008, p. 12), prefer to live in local market areas “that have denser networks of migrants from the same region of birth, larger foreign-born populations and larger populations, in general” rather than in areas with better economic opportunities.

The concept of filial piety has been deeply embedded in Chinese culture. Adult children are expected to live together with their aged parents and care for them in their old age, a convention that traditionally provides “a safety net” (Jacobs & Century, 2012). China’s Criminal Law of 1979 stipulates that adult children must support their aged members of the family and failure to fulfil filial responsibilities may lead to imprisonment of up to five years (Palmer, 1995). Accordingly, such a law enables neglected elders to sue their adult children who fail to fulfil their filial responsibilities. However, the legislation is being challenged by the changing socio-cultural and economic situations. Millions of adult children leave their native places to seek employment elsewhere, leaving their senior parents behind. According to China’s Ministry of Civil Affairs, more than 50 percent of all Chinese households, and in some urban areas 70-90 percent of households, become “empty nests” inhabited by elders only (Jacobs & Century, 2012). In rural areas in China, the concept of filial piety is weakening, the support system is lacking, and the situation is worsening because of the outmigration of the young (Huang, 2003). The “safety net” is thus broken and the Chinese government has to resort to traditional filial devotion to help alleviate the burden of eldercare (Zhang & Goza, 2006).

It has been a Chinese tradition that adult children are obligated to perform filial responsibility to look after their senior parents even when these adult children migrate to other countries (Kamo & Zhou, 1994). Family reunion through migration is considered to be a kind of filial practice (Ho, Lewin & Muntz, 2010). These elderly Chinese immigrants, who have migrated to New Zealand to be reunited with their adult children, have invested heavily in their children’s education and have retired in China. While living in the receiving country, they offer help to their adult children with childcare and housework. Many become involved in grandparenting within families as a form of “social capital” and building intergenerational solidarity with their adult children (King, Russell & Elder 1998, p. 57), supporting them in their career and professional development, firming up relational bonds or connectedness “through roles, through interactions, through sentiments, and through exchange of support” (Silverstein, Giarrusso & Bengtson, 1998, p. 145). In the first two years, most elderly Chinese immigrants co-reside with their children because new immigrants are not entitled to any financial support from the New Zealand government. The residence period requirement for social benefits has been set to two years (Quazi, 2007). All of these working-age and non-working-age elderly Chinese immigrants become beneficiaries after two years of residence in New Zealand. In China, the retirement age is 60 for men and 55 for women. In New Zealand, the retirement age is 65 for both men and women. A retired Chinese man or woman who arrives in New Zealand under the age of 65 is still considered as a “working-age” person. Quazi reported, “the most common nationality of migrants in receipt of a benefit was those from China” (2007, p. 6). This is not surprising, given that China has been the second largest source of immigrants (after

the UK) and the largest ethnic group within New Zealand's Asian population. Older Chinese immigrants are one of the largest ethnic ageing groups in New Zealand (Li, 2011). Coresidence becomes prevalent in the first two years of migration. Studies reveal that coresidence generates family satisfaction as well as a hidden tension and discord between the elderly immigrants, their adult children, children-in-law, and grandchildren because of the limited living space, economic constraints, and acculturative issues (Burr & Mutchler, 1993; Hook & Glick, 2007):

The purpose of this study aimed to examine acculturative experiences of the elderly Chinese immigrants within the context of living arrangements (living with adult children or without adult children, or living independently) in New Zealand, in association with the concept of filial piety, family relationships, support networks, and other factors relating to cultural adjustment and adaptation. The study will investigate answers to four key research questions:

- (1) Is filial piety still faithfully upheld by Chinese adult immigrants in New Zealand?
- (2) How do Chinese elders experience their acculturative life in New Zealand?
- (3) What factors determine the living arrangements of elderly Chinese immigrants in New Zealand?
- (4) How do living arrangements affect the intergenerational relationships and the acculturative experiences of the elderly Chinese immigrants in the country?

2. Review of the Literature

In the Confucian tradition, the relationship between family members is not based on mutual love and equality, but on hierarchy and filial piety (Park & Cho, 1995). Essential to filial piety are elements of benevolence, authority, children's obedience (Park & Cho, 1995), "duty, obligation, loyalty, respect, devotion to parents, importance of family name, service, and sacrifice for the elders" (Wong, 2001, p. 24). In Cowgill's (1986) observation, Chinese immigrants would like to carry with them their cultural traditions to the receiving countries; however, the duration and strength of these cultural patterns are inevitably conditioned by the cultural influence of the host cultures. Living arrangements affect the lives, family relationships, and acculturative experiences of the elderly Chinese immigrants (Kamo & Zhou, 1994; Li, 2011; Lowenstein & Katz, 2005). Coresidence, though not a key characteristic of interdependent relationships in the family, reinforces mutual obligations and care (financial, physical and emotional) for both adult children and aging parents (Elliott & Gray, 2000). Kamo and Zhou (1994) maintained that although the influence of immigrant culture is increasingly reduced through years of acculturation, elderly Chinese still prefer to live in multigenerational households. They believed that the influences of the original culture impact on the choices of the living arrangements, regardless of their lengths of stay in the host country. Wong (2001) supported the view, arguing that living in shared households is regarded as a culturally and ethically desirable living arrangement and meets strong responsibilities and obligations of filial piety that still permeates and guides the lives of Chinese families and intergenerational communication. Wong found that many elderly Chinese immigrants perceived living alone as a shame, a loss of face, a source of embarrassment, and a failure "for not doing their part in rearing their children with proper values and sense of filial piety" (p. 24). On a similar vein, Yeh (2003) reported that Chinese elders, strongly influenced by their cultural values, preferred

coresidence or interdependent living over independent residence. Living with married children and grandchildren in a multigenerational household was perceived as a “normative” idea and “the greatest blessing in life” (Yeh, 2003, p. 730). Other studies have found that life satisfaction for the elderly was higher in shared households, and that the elderly who lived independently reported higher levels of depression in spite of their strong desire to live alone and to be less dependent on their children (Lee & Holm, 2007; Lowenstein & Katz, 2005).

Many factors affect living arrangements, such as the size of the family, the affordability of housing, intergenerational relationships, adult children’s employment, economic resources, language proficiency, age and the health of the elderly, stages of acculturation, social networking, community influences, and government support services (Kim & Lauderdale, 2002; Mutchler & Krivo, 1989; Burr & Mutchler, 1993). In turn, living arrangements have a huge impact upon the quality of life for the elderly and other family members. There are advantages and disadvantages for both independent living and coresidence (Kamo & Zhou, 1994). Kim and Lauderdale (2002) pointed out that independent living is likely to offer privacy and avoid many intergenerational relationship problems, but it may lack emotional and instrumental care. Coresidence, in their view, may provide both emotional and instrumental care, but is likely to attenuate the impact of unsatisfactory intergenerational relationships.

Culture plays an important role in determining types of living arrangements (Ho, Lewin & Munts, 2010; Li, 2011; Lowenstein & Katz, 2005). Burr and Mutchler (1993) argued, however, that cultural and economic factors are interrelated and interact to determine living arrangements. Eventually, they noted, it is economic resources that condition cultural factors as determinants of living arrangement choice. Sufficient economic resources enable immigrants to decide whether they would like to live in an extended family or not. They concluded that “As economic status increases, the impact of cultural factors on living arrangement status diminishes” (p. 169). Beyond economic considerations, Burr and Mutchler (1992) asserted that the level of acculturation also had a strong impact on living arrangement choices: the more acculturated would like to live independently and the less acculturated chose to live in an extended family.

A recent study in New Zealand by Ho, Lewin and Muntz (2010) suggests that adequate living arrangement is associated with family relationships, general wellbeing, health, emotions, social activities, and concerns for the life and independence of older migrants. They found that although the Chinese cultural tradition considers coresidence with one’s aged parents as a filial obligation, such cultural value is changing and being transformed into many other forms. They believed that preference for independent living over intergenerational living is becoming a major trend and aged immigrants benefit from various levels of interactions with their adult children, whether they co-reside or live independently, with children in the same neighbourhood, in the same city, in other cities or countries.

Li (2011) studied the role of filial piety and its changing forms in living arrangements and ageing experiences of elderly Chinese immigrants in the New Zealand context. Her findings suggest that, although the Chinese elders often experienced life disruptions, identity issues and status discrepancies in adaptive acculturation, most of them were satisfied with their life in the country, and they made every effort to adjust to the new life by integrating into the host culture and maintaining their ethnic identity at the same time. She noted that Chinese traditional

coresidence had evolved into pluralistic familial arrangements to encompass filial piety at a distance, “beyond physical space and with cultural, social, relational and imagined landscapes” (Li, 2011, p.5). She insisted that Chinese elders should not be stereotyped as passive minority subjects; through acculturation, they had actively transformed to age well in the host country.

The changing environment may cause changes of the traditional intergenerational relationship and the concepts of family interdependence, family cohesion, and filial piety (Cheung, 1989). Parents who were authority figures in the family in the past have lost much of their authority over their adult children who have been Westernised and have adapted to the life and culture of the host country (Ho, Au, Bedford & Cooper, 2002; Lo & Russell, 2007; Tsai & Lopez, 1998). Elderly parents have to learn to adjust to the role change, and at the same time change their filial expectations and intergenerational relationships (Lai, 2010). Their role in the family has changed from an authority figure to a peripheral family member (Wong, Yoo & Stewart, 2006). The rosy picture of prevalent intergenerational coresidence, a supportive kin network influenced by the traditional value of filial responsibility, has diminished (Ishii-Kuntz, 1997). Many elderly Chinese immigrants choose to live alone to avoid role conflicts and “cultural conflict and difficulties in generational adjustments in families with three generations living together” (Tsai & Lopez, 1998, p. 80). No longer expecting their children to take care of them in their old age, they have to learn to adjust to new ways of life, new family roles, and identity reformulation (Antonucci, Jackson & Biggs, 2007; Chang, 1991). They have to overcome acculturative stress such as feelings of isolation, loss of dignity, low esteem, inferiority and emptiness, low life satisfaction, which may further estrange them from the mainstream society (Diwan, 2008; Mui & Kang, 2006; Thomas, 2003; Tsai & Lopez, 1998). To achieve positive acculturative experiences, according to Kim and Lauderdale, they must constantly develop cognitive and socio-cultural competences to cope with challenges associated with immigration and cultural forces, such as migration stress and “migratory grief” (Casado & Leung, 2002) that are experienced by many immigrants.

3. Research Methods

This research was conducted in December 2008 and January 2009 in Wellington, New Zealand. A qualitative research approach was adopted in the form of semi-structured individual in-depth interviews. Chinese-language interview questions were designed aiming to collect responses to the four research questions outlined earlier by drawing on the acculturative experiences of elderly Chinese immigrants in relation to their living arrangements, intergenerational relationships, social activities and support networks and other acculturative challenges. Thirty-two elderly Chinese immigrants were interviewed for 45-60 minutes. Most respondents were recruited through a language learning centre in Wellington where most of them were studying English. The selection criteria were: the participants were Chinese immigrants of 60+ from mainland China who had lived in New Zealand for at least three years and were living alone or with their adult children. Theoretically it is believed that it usually takes migrant families one to two years to settle down in a new country (Neuliep, 2009). Having gone through the migrant transition in the process of acculturation, these participants were assumed to be able to present accurate and reliable accounts of their acculturative experiences in the receiving country.

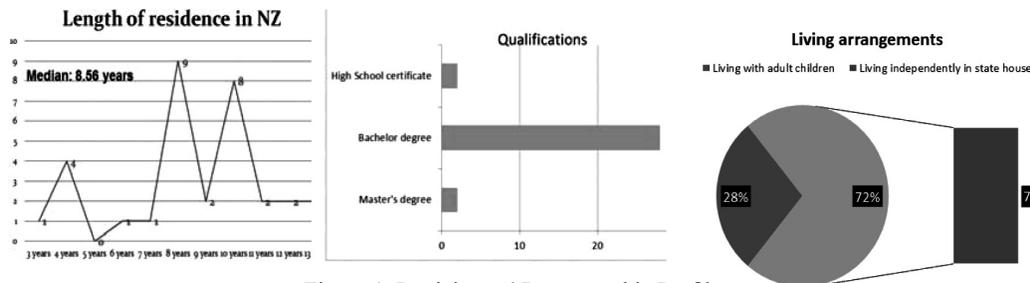


Figure 1. Participants' Demographic Profiles

Of the thirty-two participants, sixteen were male and sixteen female, aged from 64 to 79; the mean age was 69.7. Their length of residence in New Zealand ranged from 3 years to 13 years; the mean length of residence was 8.56 years. Twenty-five (78%) had lived in New Zealand for over 8 years. Except two participants who had received school education, all others had bachelor and master degrees. Most of them were academics and professionals. Prior to their arrival in New Zealand, they were professors, researchers, doctors, surgeons, engineers, teachers, accountants, chemists, geologists, business people, and military officers. Some had worked at China's top universities. All the interviews were audio-taped and transcribed verbatim.

Semi-structured interviews seeks to obtain narratives of the interviewees' views, perceptions, and lived worlds with respect to the the research questions (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2008). These narratives were thematically classified, coded and assigned meaning for data analysis. The data analysis went through two phases suggested in Ground Theory: *initial coding* that studies the fragments of data and generates numerous category codes, and *focused coding* that selects "the most useful initial codes and test them against extensive data" to identify repeating ideas and underlying themes that connect these codes (Charmaz, 2006, p.42). Eight major recurrent themes were identified, compared, and grouped and their relationships analysed: (1) Filial responsibilities, reciprocation and "unfilial" practice; (2) the impact of economic resources on living arrangements; (3) economic constraints and living arrangements; (4) language barrier as an external constraint; (5) problems with in-laws; (6) changes in roles, social and economic status; (7) independent living arrangements; (8) elderly Chinese parents abandoned in New Zealand. The case-oriented strategy was used to sort out and analyse these themes to identify invariant patterns and relationships through studied cases in each of the interviews (Ragin, 1987).

4. Findings

In New Zealand, all low-income and non-working residents are eligible to apply for state housing and security benefits. Those living in state housing pay the rent of only one quarter of their income. The security benefit for a non-working resident is about \$US200 per week. A 65-year-old migrant who has obtained a permanent residence status and has lived in New Zealand for ten years is automatically entitled to pensions of about \$US240 per week (as in 2012).

The study found that there are dynamics of, and various reasons for, the living arrangements of coresidence and independent living for the Chinese elders. Due to economic and social constraints associated with the high cost of rental living, lack of social networks and lack of English proficiency, many Chinese elders co-resided with their adult children. However, improved economic situations, levels of nativity and acculturation, availability of state housing, public subsidies and security benefits enabled the Chinese elders to live independently. Coresidence was found to have a buffering effect to compensate for the shortfalls in economic resources and at the same time to provide opportunities for adult children and their aged parents to consolidate their family solidarity and fulfil their filial expectations and responsibilities. However, there was a mismatch in expectations. Intergenerational dissonance emerged, involving the practice of filial piety, family finance, intergenerational relationships, relationships with in-laws, changes in roles and social and economic status, and government support for the Chinese elderly immigrants. The following sections will report the findings in association with these issues.

4.1. Filial Responsibilities, Reciprocation and “Unfilial” Practice

Inviting their parents to come to New Zealand and sponsoring their application for permanent residence enabled the Chinese adult children to fulfil their filial responsibilities in order to pay back what their elderly parents had done for them. It also demonstrated these children’s academic or professional or career success — winning pride and honour for the family is part of filial piety. The elderly Chinese immigrants, in turn, would like to reciprocate by doing whatever they could to help their children and grandchildren. This study found that one of the most important reasons for many of the elderly parents to come to New Zealand was childcare for the adult children. This reflects parental care as manifested in filial reciprocation. Participant 4 discussed the importance of filial responsibility in Chinese tradition in relationship to coresidence. It was under such a cultural influence that he and his wife came to New Zealand to help their children out in their difficult times. It is obvious that at the initial stage, coresidence was the main structure for such families. The main job of these Chinese elders, especially females, was to look after the grandchildren and do all sorts of housework for the children and children in-laws, including cooking, washing, cleaning, and gardening. Participant 4 stated:

A majority of parents have come to New Zealand, mainly to look after their grandchildren. When their grandchildren go to school, there is no need for childcare. Then that’s the end of the relatively harmonious intergenerational relationship. When your assistance is not needed, you become a burden to the family and you have to consider leaving them. If you continue to live with them, the relationship will eventually become sour. This has become a pattern in the life for the elderly Chinese immigrants.

Childcare and house chores were no small job. Participant 7 described her life in this way:

It was really tough. My daughter had two children. In order to support her study at a university, I did all the childcare work and house chores. I took the older one to school,

and looked after the younger one at home. I cooked food for the whole family. I was busy all the time. I had to get up many times during the night to warm the milk to feed the baby. I was really tired.

The findings of this study suggest that most elderly Chinese were more than pleased to provide whatever support their adult children needed. Participant 8 mentioned that he and his wife had moved nine times within a space of four years as their daughter and son-in-law were studying at universities and were later looking for jobs. They felt pleased that with their effective childcare and selfless sacrifice, both the daughter and son-in-law had found decent jobs. They were considering moving to a state house when the grandchildren went to school.

These Chinese elders fully understood their children's difficulties and considered it their responsibility to help them out in their difficult times. For example, Participant 9 illustrated that:

My main purpose was to look after my grandchild. My daughter was 30 years old then. Her qualifications from China were not recognised and so she had to enrol to study in order to get New Zealand qualification from a university. She was living on benefit and did not have any additional financial support. In order to support our accommodation, she was doing a part-time job while studying. Life was extremely difficult for her and for us.

However, there was a mismatch in expectations. Not all Chinese adult children fulfilled their traditionally prescribed filial responsibilities that some elderly Chinese migrants have expected and wished to have of the adult children. Participants 2, 3, 4, 15, and 29 confirmed that adult Chinese children no longer upheld the Chinese tradition of filial piety. Participant 15 stressed that there was no such a thing as filial piety among these Chinese children any more. Participant 4 was disappointed that the children had been so acculturated that they had given up on Chinese tradition of filial piety. He said that there was not a single trace of filial responsibility in his children's behaviour. He reported that he and his wife had to move out because they could not tolerate their children's "unfilial" treatment. However, he stressed, even though they moved out to live in the same neighbourhood, they would offer whatever assistance they could to help the adult children, such as taking the grandchildren to and picking them up from school. He emphasized, "They are our children, after all."

When these adult children successfully acquired permanent residence for their senior parents, according to Participant 29, they began to develop a sense of superiority which led them to believe that "I have acquired permanent residence for you, and now you must listen to me. Parents thus become indebted to their children." Participants 2 and 3 reported that when they talked about their families with other Chinese elders while studying at a language school, they all shared a similar bitter story: they all had serious problems with their children and there was no harmony and no filial piety in their families. Participant 24 complained that these children had been very good in China, but after years of study and work in New Zealand, they had all changed. They became more self-focused and the tradition of filial piety had all disappeared. They made attempts to control their aged parents, especially their freedom, privacy and their

finance and make them depend on them for a living.

4.2. Impact of Economic Resources on Living Arrangements

This study found that although culture plays some role in living arrangements, economic resources are a determining factor. When economically constrained, Chinese elders tended to choose to co-reside with their adult children. When their economic conditions improved, they preferred to live an independent life.

At the time when this study was undertaken, of the 32 participants, nine (28%) were living with their adult children and 23 (72%) were living independently in state housing. All the participants concurred that they came to New Zealand upon the invitation of their adult children who had acquired permanent residence and had established themselves in the country. Except one who lived with his son for a few months and moved out because of the family conflicts, twenty-two other participants who were living independently said that they shared accommodation with their children in the first two or three years of their arrival because of their economic constraints – receiving no security benefits from the government.

Of the nine elders who were co-residing with their adult children, 6 indicated that they would move out when their grandchildren grew up and when they had accumulated some more money in order to live independently. At the same time, they would like to help their children to become more independent. Three other elders (one 76, the other two over 80) said they would not consider moving out to state houses. They were living happily in the houses of their children who were professionals and business persons. Obviously their children's employment, sufficient economic recourses and housing affordability enabled them to live a harmonious life in an extended family, which is the tenet of Confucian filial piety. They confirmed that living with adult children enforced their cultural tradition of family solidarity, affection and filial piety and filial reciprocity. On the other hand, they pointed to the fact that they were healthy and economically independent and had not yet become a burden to the family. This study revealed that all except one of the elderly Chinese migrants received pensions from the Chinese government and fourteen (43.75%) also received pensions in New Zealand. They were thus financially secure. Participant 21 reported that he felt pleased with coresidence with his daughter's family. His daughter and son-in-law respected him and his wife and treated them very well. He had rarely felt any tension in the family. Filial piety that Chinese tradition emphasizes had clearly been exercised in the family. The family's income enabled such an exercise.

4.3. Economic Constraints and Living Arrangements

For many adult Chinese children, life was not easy for them. Many of them were renting houses and some were staying in state houses. They could not afford to have their own houses to enable them to fulfil filial responsibility, i.e. having no financial capability to accommodate their elderly parents and look after them as traditionally expected. It is especially difficult for those who were still students or those who did not have an employment or those who were just married and had children. Although their adult parents could assist them to some extent, their

existing financial resources were very limited. Participant 8 provided illuminating evidence: “As for me, I very much like to co-reside with my children. This is good for everybody. However, we have been so conditioned economically that we have to seek independent living.”

This study reveals that economic constraints were found to be one of the major causes of intergenerational discord within the structure of coresidence. Participant 15 said that his daughter had invited him to come to New Zealand. He stayed with her for about one year but could not tolerate her strict control of his life and his pocket money. He was not allowed to have any money for his personal use. He later found a part-time job and earned some money. With the money, he felt he was the richest and the happiest man in the world. He moved out to live an independent life in a state house. For many years, he had not had any contact with his daughter.

Before their arrival in New Zealand, many parents held a belief that their children would uphold the Chinese tradition of filial piety. Some sold their houses in China, arrived in New Zealand and gave all the money to their children, believing that their children would, with gratitude, respect them and look after them in their old age. However, economic constraints could trigger some “unfilial” practice – abusive use of the elders’ finance. Participant 29 told her bitter stories. She said her husband made millions of dollars in China. They migrated to New Zealand on a Business and Investment Category. They bought houses for their children. Her husband died. She lived with her daughter for a short time, but was forced to move out of the house because her daughter was dating a Kiwi boy and her presence was considered a hindrance. Her daughter charged her \$250 per week for accommodation, much higher than the market value, intending to kick her out. She could not afford it as she was living on a benefit of about \$240 per week. Her son did not want her to live with him, either. Her two children were enjoying their lives in the houses their parents had bought them, entirely forgetting their ageing mother who should be the actual owner of the properties. When this interview was conducted, Participant 29 was living in a state house, having been baptised in a hope to find some consolation in religion.

The story told by Participant 16 was revealing. She sold her properties and valuables in Beijing and came to New Zealand to get united with her son, in a strong belief that she would spend the rest of her carefree life in the country. With her money, her son bought a house and later got married. Her nightmare began. She could not get along well with the daughter-in-law. The money paid to her as benefits by the government was strictly controlled by the daughter-in-law. She was forced to move out to live in a state house. She was thinking of returning to Beijing, but she had nowhere to stay and could not afford her flights. Tears accompanied her all the time when the interview was conducted.

Similar stories were found in the accounts of Participants 2, 3 and 15 and 18. In these similar cases, the elderly parents were financially abused and maltreated. Participant 18 said the purpose of her enrolment in the language courses was to learn how to open a bank account, how to use the EFTPOS card and how to manage her own money paid to her by the government. Ability to manage her own finance, she emphasised, would stop her daughter and son-in-law from “stealing” and “abusing” her money. It is obvious that financial constraints eroded family trust, harmony and traditional Chinese filial piety in such families.

4.4. Language Barrier as an External Constraint

The probability of coresidence is affected by English-language proficiency. This study shows that none of the participants had a reasonable level of English proficiency to enable them to undertake routine business. All the participants reported having English language difficulties. The language barriers rendered them unable to read, write, watch TV and listen to radio, communicate with local residents, and access necessary information. Lack of language proficiency constrains many of their social activities, makes coresidence or proximate residence a necessity, and thus creates a dependency model: elderly parents depending on their adult children and grandchildren for any language-related affairs. Participant 1 reported:

Without the ability to speak the language, I feel stupid. I cannot understand what other people say. I do not want to go anywhere. Do not know how to take a bus and where to get off the bus because I cannot speak English.

Lack of English language proficiency made these elderly Chinese helplessly depend on their children or government-paid interpreters in the areas where language communication is essential, such as visiting family doctors, or a pharmacy, banking, communicating with their grandchildren whose first language is English and with children-in-laws who do not speak Chinese. Participant 5 confirmed,

The language barrier prevents us from doing many things. Whatever we do, we need an interpreter. Our children have to work and cannot provide language assistance. When you visit a doctor, you also need an interpreter.

Most participants had diligently studied English for some time, some for two or three years, but still they could not speak the language. Participant 14 attributed his inadequate English skills to his old age and poor memory:

I am not happy with my progress in English learning. I have studied English in the language school for some time, but I cannot remember what has been taught. My memory fades away easily. My life would have been better if I had been able to speak it.

Without the ability to speak the English language, most elderly Chinese found it difficult to understand and integrate into the mainstream society. Most elderly Chinese felt isolated in the country where they could not understand the culture and society and make any friends with local residents. Participant 10 noted,

I feel very lonely here. The main obstacle is language. I cannot socialise and make friends with Kiwis and cannot participate in many of the community events. I cannot appreciate their music, songs and dances because of lack of cultural knowledge.

None of respondents reported having made any Kiwi friends. Participant 4 said that

loneliness and isolation became serious issues to many Chinese elders. Participant 2 stated, “I do not have any Kiwi friends at all, nor do I have any opportunity to socialise with them because I cannot speak English.” Participant 25 found that language was a major challenge facing elderly Chinese immigrants in New Zealand. He insisted that learning a second language was extremely difficult for old people. Years of learning did not equip them with sufficient skills to communicate. Participant 5 indicated, “I cannot speak the language. I have no one to talk to. Life here is an imprisonment to me.”

Theoretically, coresidence is a living arrangement aiming to help these Chinese elders avoid social isolation and loneliness (Kamo & Zhou, 1994). However, this study did not find enough evidence to support such a claim. Social isolation and loneliness was found to be stressful and depressing to a majority of Chinese elderly immigrants living in co-residential structure. Reunification partly helped to address the emotional side of the acculturative issues. Although many were heavily involved in childcare support, they felt lonely at home. Participant 15 confirmed that “for elderly Chinese in New Zealand, the biggest problem is loneliness and isolation.” Some elderly parents found that coresidence did not bring them any joy and happiness at all. As Participant 9 affirmed,

Our children work during the day and come home very late. They have so much to do. In fact, Chinese elders are very isolated and lonely here. You have nobody to speak to. Coresidence does not bring me any comfort and joy. Instead, it brings me endless house chores.

4.5. Problems with In-laws

Coresidence involves relationships not only with adult children but also with their spouses or partners. Living with in-laws has been a perennial problem for many elderly Chinese immigrants. Many elders moved out of the family to live alone when security benefits and state housing were available, partly because of the tension with in-laws. Participant 23 stated, “It has been a norm: if you live with in-laws, male or female, you are bound to have nagging, quarrels and other endless problems. This is a law, ninety percent correct to all people.” Participant 14 pointed to the reason that he and his wife moved out to the state house: They had a difficult time with the “disrespectful” son-in-law whom they disliked even from the first day of their daughter’s dating. Participant 2 had very bitter experience with her daughter-in-law who failed to appreciate her timely and infallible support:

When the child was born, I helped them out, for one year. My son was grateful for my baby-sitting, but my daughter-in-law was different. She regarded it as my responsibility to do so. She was a shrew, squabbling, nagging, and showing all kinds of nasty behaviour towards me. I could not tolerate these and moved out.

Participant 3 could not stop crying when talking about her life experiences in the family. She and her husband had been in New Zealand for three years and were co-residing in the son’s family. They were looking after the two young children, one six months old and the other

two years old. She told her sad stories in tears that her daughter-in-law treated them like a piece of useless doormat. She often yelled at them, and worked them to death. She controlled the family's earnings, including the elders' security benefits. She said, "Last week, it was my grandson's birthday. How I wished I had a few dollars to buy a gift for him, but I couldn't. I did not have any dime." She said she was very tired from heavy house work and childcare. She wished to have a holiday like other Kiwi elders. She wished to have some money to pay for their trip back to China and never came back to the hellish life she was living. Participant 2 described her daughter-in-law as "an uncultivated shrew":

She took everything in the family, including my benefits, under her control, and yet expecting me to look after the family and the grandchild, seeing this as my responsibility.

Participant 7 gave a similar account. Her daughter-in-law treated her as a slave. She said, "Babysitting was a tough job. When I was sick and could not look after the grandchildren, she was extremely displeased, pulling a long face, yelling, and seeing me as a burden to be readily disposed of." Life was even more difficult for her before she was entitled to the state-paid security benefits. She insisted that life was a nightmare when she had to depend on the children because of the lack of income and English language proficiency. She noted, "I had never suffered from such maltreatment while I was in China."

The study suggests that children-in-law are less likely to treat their parents-in-law with respect that is associated with filial piety. Participants 7, 12, 23, 26 and 29 believed that most immigrant family problems occurred between elderly parents and in-laws. Participant 26 claimed that problems were inevitable because they did not have much to share: They had no common interests, no common backgrounds and life experiences, no common language, no common family history, and no common levels of education. Participant 12 complained that his children-in-law saw them as free child minders rather than as their parents-in-law who should deserve some respect. Participant 7 stated, "These in-laws often treat their parents-in-law as slaves."

Non-Chinese children-in-law are no exceptions. Their culturally-based and idiosyncratic behaviour often put off their Chinese parents-in-law. Three participants reported that they had moved out only because they could not tolerate New Zealand [Kiwi] food and some cultural behaviour of their daughters' non-Chinese husbands or boyfriends. Participant 16 explained that she moved out because she did not feel comfortable with the life in her daughter's family. Her daughter married a Kiwi boy. Language became a communication barrier. She did not like Kiwi food and the in-law's behaviour. Participant 17 expressed her dislike of her son-in-law's "selfish" behaviour. For example, when he invited the parents-in-law to dinner in a restaurant, he asked them to pay their own share of the bill, which was a huge insult in Chinese culture. When they went sightseeing during a weekend, he bought his own cans of coke, reluctant to share with others. She said, "He is an American, an animation designer. I do not like his behaviour. I said to my daughter, 'you must teach him how to behave'." Participant 29 reported that her daughter's Kiwi boyfriend never greeted her even though they had been dating for many years. When her husband died, both the daughter and her Kiwi boyfriend did not bother to appear even though they had been invited to attend the funeral. She was extremely saddened

that her daughter, now a high school teacher in Wellington, to whom she had devoted all her love and money for her tertiary education in New Zealand, had been ruthlessly corrupted by her Kiwi boyfriend.

4.6. Changes in Roles, Social and Economic Status

The data from this study has shown that many Chinese elders had successful careers in China. When they arrived in New Zealand, their roles, social and economic status changed. Adapting to the socio-cultural changes requires time, individual effort and cultural knowledge. Their children have been educated and have been working in New Zealand for some time. They have adopted aspects of the New Zealand culture. Some of the New Zealand cultural values may be incompatible with Chinese cultural values, such as individualism, work ethics, child-rearing practice, intergenerational relationships, filial responsibilities, and family finance management. These cultural differences have influenced Chinese adult children's perceptions, outlooks, role expectations, and behaviour and have become sources of conflicts between the Chinese elders and their children. The Chinese elders were in charge of the family while they were in China; in New Zealand, their children are in charge of the family. Just as Participant 24 said,

We must change and adapt. We must understand the changes in our roles and status that have occurred. Now we are living in our children's home. They are the owners and managers of the family. We have done our part on this world stage. Now it is time for them to perform their part on the stage. We must get used to such role and status changes.

Role change was frustrating for some Chinese elders. Participants 11 and 17 felt that they did not feel comfortable living with their children being fully integrated into the New Zealand culture. They felt anxious because they had lost their authority over their children, culturally, psychologically and emotionally. Their authority was often challenged. Lack of respect by the children and loss of authority, according to Participant 2, had a devastating effect upon the self-confidence and self-image of these Chinese elders.

Attempts to exercise rigid control over the children, criticism, illegitimate demands and rebuff could aggravate family tensions and damage the intergenerational relationships (Zhang 2004). For example, Participant 29 had a strong argument with her daughter over her dating a Kiwi boy and their pre-marital coresidence. She did not want her daughter to date and marry a non-Chinese. Her daughter, however, did not listen to her and continued the relationship with her Kiwi boyfriend. She said,

I said to her, you are a Chinese. You can never change your identity. You cannot change your skin. You should not live together with him before marriage.

She still upheld her old Chinese tradition that forbade pre-marital coresidence, presumably a shame to the family. She wanted to exercise her authority over her daughter but her authority was ignored. Their unresolved tension eventually led to the breakdown of their relationship.

She sued her daughter in court for her failure to fulfil her filial responsibilities. The court case further worsened their already strained relationship. In the end, she disowned her.

Participant 24 suggested that changes in roles and status meant that Chinese elders must change their role concepts and cultural expectations associated with filial piety. Rigid adherence to Chinese traditional role expectations and filial piety without considering social and cultural changes in the family structure and dynamics could only build intergenerational communication barriers. Participant 21 made the point that the elderly should change and adapt to fit into the new culture and new patterns of family life:

As a senior who has been through the process, I say, you must change and adapt. Put yourself in the subordinate, not superordinate, position in the family. Do not interfere with your children's decision-making. Do not expect your children to fulfil filial responsibilities, as required by the Chinese tradition. They have changed and have been acculturated to the receiving society.

Role and status changes mean that the Chinese elders must adapt to the new style of family management by forsaking their long-held authority concept and empowering their children to independently manage the family. Participant 26 explained that some family problems occurred because some Chinese elders still clung to their traditional role concepts and held high expectations of their children to become obedient, which was bound to clash with the new values their adult children had adopted. Some rarely considered adapting to the social and cultural changes and showed little respect to their children. Elders' perceptions of children unable to fulfil filial piety and expectations, lack of respect and mutual understanding, and reluctance to change inevitably resulted in family tensions between the elderly and their adult children.

4.7. Independent Living Arrangements

All participants lived in state houses when the interviews were conducted. Many of the interviews of this study took place in these state houses where one person normally lived in a two bedroom house or apartment, and a couple lived in a three-bedroom house or apartment. Such a housing environment afforded opportunities for elderly Chinese to seek independent living where privacy, freedom, space, affordability and comfort were guaranteed.

All the participants who were living alone in state houses provided evidence of their self-reported life satisfaction with independent living. They took pride in being able to independently manage their own life, not being a burden to their offspring, and giving their adult children a free reign to autonomy and independence. Participant 18 argued that "Coresidence can lead to problems and family dissonance. Distance creates intimacy." Other participants supported her view that those who co-resided with adult children were no more likely than those living alone to receive emotional support, respect and deference accorded to elders. The stable income from the government support and cheaper housing were adequate to make their life secure. They gained freedom to get involved in social networks to help them develop other coping skills in acculturation. Their self-image was regained and promoted and their children loved

and respected them even more. They were free from the heavy demands and responsibilities of caring for grandchildren. Participant 6 felt that children would not thank their parents for the contribution if they stayed together, such as childcare, cooking, cleaning, gardening, and washing because they regarded these as their non-negotiable responsibilities.

When these elders lived independently and were invited to help them out, these children would feel grateful for their assistance. Some Chinese elders who had moved out to live in a state house found they had more leisure, freedom, privacy and more time to pursue their personal interests. They had time to engage in social activities in the Chinese community such as dancing, computing, knitting, table tennis, singing, painting that were organised by Xiyanghong (the Glowing Setting Sun), a social club sponsored by the Wellington City Council. For Participant 12, the elderly should leave their adult children and give them an opportunity to become independent. Participant 19 reasoned:

We had to move out to live an independent life. Our finance allows us to do so. There is a generation gap. We have different habits and views. Living separately would give us freedom and comfort and avoid all the family problems.

Participant 23 suggested that when the elders could not contribute much to the family, when they were seen as burdens rather than assets, they must consider an independent living even though it might be the time when they needed help most.

Individual personalities and past life experiences were found to have a huge impact on living arrangements. Participant 27 was a high-ranking military officer before his arrival in New Zealand. He initially lived with one of his three children. He explained that his 50 years of military career had made it difficult for him to live with his children. He admitted that he had never developed a sense of family; even when he was in China he could not live comfortably with his wife whom he met once or twice in a year. His clock-oriented and rigid military life style was extremely incompatible with his children's casual and relaxed life styles. He stated that he had never been able to share and discuss his views with his children whose ideas always clashed with his. His short stay with his children ended disastrously. He moved out to live with another Chinese family until he found a cheaper state house.

4.8. Elderly Chinese Parents Abandoned in New Zealand

Elders' health is one of the serious factors that affect decisions to co-reside or to live separately. Understandably, elders with good health and at a younger age [young old] are more welcomed to co-reside with their children; elders with poor health and at an older age [older old] are least welcomed to co-reside with their children. This is sad because the latter need more instrumental and emotional care from the members of the family.

Some Chinese elders had been abandoned in New Zealand by the adult children who had moved to another city, migrated to Australia, the United States, Canada or returned to China. Ties with these children became very weak. They reported that these children had not returned to see their elderly parents for many years, some for over ten years. The only contacts with these children were short phone calls during the Chinese New Year. These Chinese elders were

living a lonely and helpless life. Participant 24 gave one example of her neighbours. Their children had gone to Australia eight years before. The couple were over eighty years old. One of them had cancer. She said:

They are living an isolated miserable life. They cannot go to live with their children in Australia because they are ineligible for any security benefits and free medical care there. Their children cannot afford to invite them to get reunited in the country.

Some parents are left in New Zealand to look after their grandchildren when their adult children have moved overseas. Participant 25, a chief engineer in China, aged 79, was a typical example. He and his wife arrived in NZ in 1998 to help with childcare for their son and daughter. In 2002, his daughter and son-in-law moved to Canada. A year later his son and in-law returned to teach at a top university in China, leaving their 8 year old son for the elderly couple to look after, expecting their son to receive better education in New Zealand. In 2004, the man developed throat cancer and his wife became blind and bed-ridden. She needed intensive care. Alone, he had to look after his wife and his grandson while he himself was recovering from his cancer operation and was receiving chemotherapy. He had to do shopping, cooking, washing, cleaning, nursing and grand-parenting. His adult children had never returned to New Zealand to see them. Filial piety is symbolised in the phone messages only. He did not complain. Instead, he was very proud of the success of his children in China and Canada and the academic progress of his grandchild, who is now studying at a top university in New Zealand. He considered his sacrifice worthwhile, in spite of the hardships he had gone through.

5. Discussion

This study shows that living arrangements are closely associated with the economic resources of both the elderly Chinese immigrants and their adult children. Both economic strengths and economic constraints affect the probability of establishing a shared household or living an independent life. In general, the lower the level of economic feasibility, the greater the likelihood of Chinese elderly immigrants living in a shared household. The study reveals that many of the intergenerational conflicts involved the family's management of financial resources. Economic resource issues seemed to be the major sources of family discords, directly impacting on the desirability of living arrangements and the acculturative experiences and satisfaction of the Chinese elders. These economic issues serve to override the Chinese cultural tradition of filial piety. Healthy income enables Chinese adult children to fulfil filial expectations and comply to the cultural norms by providing their elderly parents with adequate living arrangements, whether living in an extended family or living in state housing. Economic constraints, such as inability to afford high rent, lower income, unemployment, forced the Chinese elderly persons to live in an extended family household in spite of their preference for an independent living.

Traditional Chinese values seemed to have some influence on some Chinese to fulfil filial responsibilities by inviting their parents to live together or close to them so that they can look after them and reciprocate what they have done for them. Coresidence is often perceived as a form of filial piety (Elliott & Gray, 2000). However, coresidence alone did not seem to

guarantee that the elderly were provided with adequate needed psychological and emotional support. The negative side of coresidence increased intergenerational tensions and conflicts. Maintaining family solidarity and harmony based on a co-resident structure became a challenge to the family members in the new cultural context. The Chinese elders and their adult children struggled with both internal and external pressures which led to many new problems. The internal pressures include the status of family finance, education, accommodation, language proficiency, relocation, the rate of acculturation, family hierarchy, cultural tradition and norms, and changes in the family status, structure and roles. External pressures come from social and cultural environments that affect the life of all immigrants, such as government support, the benefit system, employment situations, the language environment, the transport system, and health services. Such pressures require family members to adopt new patterns of interaction. Conflicts and tensions arise when the Chinese elders and children face these pressures without being aware of the social and cultural changes in the receiving country and the resultant problems that impact heavily on intergenerational relationships and interactions based on their cultural interpretation of boundaries, rules, roles and hierarchies in the family organisation. Some Chinese elders relied heavily on strict role behaviour in a set of closed family boundaries and as a result conflicts with their children became inevitable.

A separate living arrangement was found to be an alternative solution, in spite of its negative side. It reshaped the bond and boundaries between the elderly and their adult children and it also resolved many of the family problems, such as problems of finance, accommodation, differences in interests, food, tastes, habits, and life styles. Such a living arrangement was not possible without the government stable support systems and community support networks. Although there were some inconveniences when living alone, all the Chinese elders expressed their appreciation and satisfaction with their life which gave them aspired autonomy, independence, and freedom from isolation and loneliness, and from being financially and emotionally abused by their children, and helped them acquire their self image and self-confidence. It was also the government support systems that made it possible for those Chinese elders who had been abandoned in New Zealand by their children to survive the ordeal of the tough life and to overcome their migrant plights in New Zealand.

Migration involves costs and opportunities (Elliott & Gray, 2000). If elderly people choose to live with or close to, and be cared for, by their adult children in another country, away from their familiar environments, and isolated for lack of language and mobility, they must be psychologically prepared for the expected anxiety, tensions and conflicts. Elderly people who are not mentally prepared for the socio-cultural changes tend to blame their children more than themselves for all the misfortunes befalling them. They need to be aware that the higher the level of acculturation on the part of the adult children (which is desirable for all immigrants in the host country), the looser the bonds and ties with their elderly parents, the less the fulfilment of filial obligations and physical care.

One important implication from this study is that many Chinese elderly immigrants in fact experience difficulties and hardships in New Zealand which may be ignored by the mainstream society and social workers. The issue lies in the stereotyping of Chinese New Zealanders as a “model minority”, implying that Chinese elderly people are well looked after by their adult children in the close-knit family unit where filial piety is exercised and filial reciprocation

practiced (Ip & Pang, 2005), assuming that any outside assistance and mainstream intervention are unnecessary. Such a misperception would take its toll on elderly Chinese immigrants who need care, socially, culturally, and emotionally. This study has clearly demonstrated the need for outside assistance, especially government support and necessary intervention for elderly Chinese immigrants.

6. Limitations of the Study

It should be noted that this study has some limitations. A large majority of participants were reluctant to disclose their family problems, fearing that disclosing one's problems might bring stigma to themselves and the family and cause additional family tensions. Keeping the family name as a collective identity and protecting the family's image is considered as an important duty of the family members (Casado & Leung, 2002). They were all conscious of the concept of face — self image and approved positive attributes perceived by others. The Chinese aphorism might have influenced their behaviour: “the disgraceful family matters should not be spread outside the family” (Tsang, Liamputtong & Pierson, 2004, p. 69). The current interview data has reflected significant aspects of the acculturative experiences of the elderly Chinese immigrants in New Zealand in relation to living arrangements and filial piety. Elliott and Gray (2000) pointed out that intergenerational relationships, family memberships and obligations are all subjective, involving psychological and emotional considerations. Therefore, it would be beneficial to explore and investigate the views, perceptions, attitudes of the adult children of these Chinese elders to find out “another side of the story” and have a broad understanding of the issues, and eventually to identify effective strategies to help both the elderly and their children to effectively resolve their family issues.

7. Conclusions

This study examined the acculturative experiences of elderly Chinese immigrants within the context of living arrangements. It was found that economic resources affected living arrangements which in turn impacted on many aspects of the family life and intergenerational relationships. The Chinese traditional concept of filial piety has been seriously challenged. A large number of elderly Chinese immigrants were disappointed in the level of filial piety offered by their children or absence of filial piety because their children lived separately from them. Coresidence did not guarantee that filial responsibilities were fulfilled. There was a variety of outcomes among interviewees who co-resided with their children, including those who were entirely content, those who were dissatisfied but accepting of their lifestyle, and those who were dissatisfied and desperate to change the situation. There was not one definite explanation to such outcomes. Contributing factors included financial issues, housing affordability, language proficiency, intergenerational relationships, relationships with in-laws, nativity and acculturation, personalities, hierarchy, the family structure, concepts of self, roles and status, and availability of government support and services. Some elderly Chinese had been financially and emotionally abused by their adult children. Most elderly Chinese preferred to live in state houses after their dedicated involvement in childcare support for their adult children. Separate

living arrangements helped them regain their self-identity, self-worth, autonomy, independence, and freedom. The availability of state housing, the government financial support, free medical services, the Chinese community networks and support systems were critical to the acculturative lives of the elderly Chinese immigrants.

References

- Antonucci, Toni C.; Jackson, James S. & Biggs, Simon. (2007). Intergenerational relations: theory, research, and policy. *Journal of Social Issues*, 63(4), 679-693.
- Burr, Jeffrey A. & Mutchler, Jan E. (1992). The living arrangements of unmarried elderly Hispanic females. *Demography*, 29, 93-112.
- Burr, Jeffrey A. & Mutchler, Jan E. (1993). Ethnic living arrangements: Cultural convergence or cultural manifestation? *Social Forces*, 72(1), 169-179.
- Casado, Banghwa Lee & Leung, Patrick. (2002). Migratory grief and depression among elderly Chinese American immigrants. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*, 36(1), 5-26.
- Chang, Winnie. (1991). No longer silent. *Free China Review*, 41(12), 4-19.
- Charmaz, Kathy. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. London: Sage.
- Cheung, Monit. (1989). Elderly Chinese living in the United States: Assimilation or adjustment? *Social Work*, 34(5), 457-461.
- Cowgill, Donald O. (1986). *Ageing around the world*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Diwan, Sadhna. (2008). Limited English proficiency, social network characteristics, and depressive symptoms among older immigrants. *Journal of Gerontology*, 63B(3), 184-191.
- Elliott, Susan & Gray, Alison. (2000). *Family structures: A report for the New Zealand Immigration Service*. Wellington: New Zealand Immigration Service.
- Ho, Elsie; Lewin, Joanna & Muntz, Muriaroha. (2010). *Ageing well in a new country: Preliminary findings of a survey of older Chinese in New Zealand*. Waikato, NZ: Population Studies Centre, University of Waikato.
- Ho, Elsie; Au, Sybil; Bedford, Charlotte & Cooper, Jenine. (2002). *Mental health issues for Asians in New Zealand: A literature review*. Wellington: The Mental Health Commission.
- Hook, Jennifer Van & Glick, Jennifer E. (2007). Immigration and living arrangements: Moving beyond economic need versus acculturation. *Demography*, 44 (2), 225-249.
- Huang, Jinxin. (2003). Economic restructuring, social safety net, and old-age pension reform in China. *American Asian Review*, 21, 171-198.
- Immigration New Zealand. (2010). *Immigration New Zealand statistics*. Wellington: Department of Labour.
- Ip, Manying & Pang, David. (2005). New Zealand Chinese identity: Sojourner, model minority and multiple identities. In James H. Liu Trach McIntosh & Teresia Teaiwa (Eds.), *New Zealand identities: Departures and destinations* (pp. 174-190). Wellington: Victoria University Press.
- Ishii-Kuntz, Masako. (1997). Intergenerational relationships among Chinese, Japanese, and

- Korean Americans. *Family Relations*, 46(1), 23-32.
- Jacobs, Andrew & Century, Adam. (2012). As China ages, Beijing turns to morality tales to spur filial devotion. *New York Times*. Published electronically September 5, 2012.
- Kamo, Yoshinori & Zhou, Min. (1994). Living arrangements of elderly Chinese and Japanese in the United States. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 56(3), 544-558.
- Kim, Jibum & Lauderdale, Diane S. (2002). The role of community context in immigrant elderly living arrangements: Korean American elderly. *Research on Aging*, 24(6), 630-653.
- King, Valarie; Russell, Stephen T. & Elder, Glen H. (1998). Grandparenting in family systems: An ecological perspective. In Maximiliane E. Szinovacz (Ed.), *Handbook on grandparenthood* (pp. 53-69). Westport, CT: Greenwood.
- Kvale, Steinar & Brinkmann, Svend. (2008). *Interviews: Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing* (2nd ed.). Los Angeles, California: Sage.
- Lai, Daniel W. L. (2010). Filial piety, caregiving appraisal, and caregiving burden. *Research on Aging*, 32(2), 200-223.
- Lee, Young Me & Holm, Karyn. (2007). The immigration experience among elderly Korean immigrants. *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing*, 14, 403-410.
- Li, Wendy Wen. (2011). *Shifting Selves: Home beyond the house — A study of ageing, housing and wellbeing of older Chinese migrants to New Zealand*. PhD thesis, University of Waikato, Waikato, New Zealand.
- Lo, Meihan & Russell, Cherry. (2007). Family care: An exploratory study of experience and expectations among older Chinese immigrants in Australia. *Contemporary Nurse: A Journal for the Australian Nursing Profession*, 25(1/2), 31-38.
- Lowenstein, A. & Katz, R. (2005). Living arrangements, family solidarity and life satisfaction of two generations of immigrants in Israel. *Ageing & Society*, 25, 749-767.
- Maré, David C.; Morten, Melanie & Stillman, Steven. (2008). *Settlement patterns and the geographic mobility of recent migrants to New Zealand*. Wellington: Department of Labour.
- Mui, Ada C. & Kang, Suk-Young. (2006). Acculturation stress and depression among Asian immigrant elders. *Social Work*, 51(3), 243-255.
- Mutchler, Jan E. & Krivo, Lauren J. (1989). Availability and affordability: Household adaptation to a housing squeeze. *Social Forces*, 68(1), 241-246.
- Neuliep, James W. (2009). *Intercultural communication: A contextual approach* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.
- New Zealand Department of Labour. (2009). *Migration trends and outlook 2008/09*. Wellington: International Migration, Settlement and Employment Dynamics (IMSED) Research, Department of Labour.
- Palmer, Michael. (1995). The re-emergence of family law in post-Mao China: Marriage, divorce and reproduction. *China Quarterly*, 141, 110-34.
- Park, Insook Han & Cho, Lee-Jay. (1995). Confucianism and the Korean family. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 26(1), 117-134.
- Quazi, Asif. (2007). *Benefit receipt of migrants to New Zealand*. Wellington: Department of Labour.
- Ragin, Charles C. (1987). *The comparative method: Moving beyond qualitative and quantitative strategies*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press.

- Silverstein, Merrill; Giarrusso, Roseann & Bengston, Vern L. (1998). Intergenerational solidarity and the grandparent role. In Maximiliane E. Szinovacz (Ed.), *Handbook on grandparenthood* (pp. 144-158). Westport, CT: Greenwood.
- Statistics New Zealand. (2007). *Asian mobility in New Zealand*. Wellington: Statistics New Zealand.
- Thomas, Trang. (2003). Older migrants and their families in Australia. *Family Matters*, 66(Spring/Summer), 40-45.
- Tsai, Debra Tzuling & Lopez, Rebecca A. (1998). The use of social supports by elderly Chinese immigrants. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*, 29(1), 77-94.
- Tsang, Elaine Yuk Lin; Liamputtong, Pranee & Pierson, Jane. (2004). The views of older Chinese people in Melbourne about their quality of life. *Aging & Society*, 24, 51-74.
- Wong, Morrison G. (2001). The Chinese elderly: Values and issues in receiving adequate care. In Laura K. Olson (Ed.), *Age through ethnic lenses: Caring for the elderly in a multicultural society* (pp. 17- 32). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Wong, Sabrina T.; Yoo, Grace J. & Stewart, Anita L. (2006). The changing meaning of family support among older Chinese and Korean immigrants. *Journal of Gerontology: Psychological Sciences*, 61B(1), 4-9.
- Yeh, Wei Chiang. (2003). Living arrangements and lifestyle satisfaction among the elderly in Chinese immigrant families: A preliminary study. *Chang Gung Medical Journal*, 26, 729-736.
- Zhang, Yuanting & Goza, Franklin W. (2006). Who will care for the elderly in China? A review of the problems caused by China's one child policy and their potential solutions. *Journal of Aging Studies*, 20(2), 151-64.
- Zhang, Yan Bing. (2004). Initiating factors of Chinese intergenerational conflict: Young adults' written accounts. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Gerontology*, 19, 299-319.

Author Note:

Dr Mingsheng Li is a Senior Lecturer at Massey University (Wellington), teaching cross-cultural communication and business communication. He was awarded a doctoral degree in education by La Trobe University, Australia. His research areas include cross-cultural communication, international education, migrant settlement, media communication, and teaching English across cultures.