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**CHANGES IN PARENTING FOR CHINESE NEW IMMIGRANT
FAMILIES AND THE IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL SERVICE
DELIVERY SYSTEMS**

**BY
HONG WANG**

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of Master of Social Work

Faculty of Social Work
University of Manitoba
Winnipeg, Manitoba

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**CHANGES IN PARENTING FOR CHINESE NEW IMMIGRANT FAMILIES AND THE
IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEMS**

BY

HONG WANG

**A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of The University
of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree
of**

Master of Social Work

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to explore the changes in parenting in Chinese new immigrant families in the new environment - Canada, and to make recommendations to improve social services for this population.

The questions addressed in the study included: 1) How is the child/parent interaction in Chinese families affected by immigration? 2) What factors contribute to the changes in parenting for Chinese new immigrant families? And 3) What are their perceptions of social services in Winnipeg?

Symbolic interactionism was used as a methodological framework because it focuses on the personal and social construction of meaning and the essential importance of interpretation in human experience. Based on the purpose of the research, a qualitative approach was adopted.

The interviews showed that immigration brought about significant changes for Chinese new immigrant family life and in the parent/child relationship. Culture played an important role in child rearing practices and could be useful in explaining parental behaviors. For instance, the parents believed that punishment (including physical punishment) is the effective way to deal with a child who has misbehaved because punishment brought the feeling of shame to him. They felt that their ability to raise their children correctly has been threatened in the new environment.

The families also thought that social service organizations should help new immigrants adapt to the new society by developing culturally appropriate social service systems. Some recommendations emerging from the study are that policy makers and practitioners increase their level of cultural skill and knowledge.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

*Dear Helen,
I really admire Mrs. L's family. Their son studies very hard and behaves so well. My son makes me worry a lot. He is not like a Chinese kid. He is not polite, and does not show respect to older people. He does not listen to parents' teaching. Everyday you can hear him saying 'I want...', 'I like...', always 'T', 'T', 'T',... Please tell me what to do?...*

*Dear Helen,
My parents came here to visit us. Now they are criticizing us saying we are spoiling our daughter. They don't like the way she talks and behaves, and asked why we were so permissive. But my daughter always complained I disciplined her too strictly and gave her no freedom. She even did not talk a lot with me. I am so frustrated. Am I too permissive or too strict?...*

*Dear Helen,
I wanted to have my birthday party at home, and invite my friends to come. But my parents took me to the restaurant. I don't understand why they have never allowed me to do the things I want?...*

(Manitoba Chinese Post)

My research question is framed from my own experiences as a Chinese new immigrant and a social work student as well. I have been working with quite a few Chinese immigrants and their families since I started my social work practice. I did individual counseling for immigrant women who live in abusive relationships, facilitated parenting groups in the community (1997 - sponsored by Winnipeg Child and Family Services, Southwest Area, 1996 - sponsored by Mount Carmel Clinic,), and did translation for immigrant families in the Court, Legal Aid, and many social service agencies (e.g. Child and Family Services). I also hosted a monthly column "Dear Helen" in the Chinese Newspaper that provides social service information to the community. Having heard and witnessed what the new immigrants and their families have experienced because of cultural shock, language barriers, and insensitive social service delivery, some questions come naturally to mind. I cannot help asking myself what I can do about it and how I can

help the social service system understand the cultural factors affecting these new immigrants' life so that more culturally appropriate social services can be delivered. This research is not a trivial issue because Chinese are called the largest visible minority in the country. Particularly in the past ten years, more and more Chinese immigrants have come to Canada from Mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan. According to the statistics of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (1996), in 1994, there were 64,073 Chinese immigrants (from China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan) which comprised 29 percent of the total number of immigrants who came to Canada that year. In 1995, there were 52,712 Chinese immigrants in Canada, which is 25 percent of the total new immigrants for that year (p.7). China, especially, ranked first place in the top ten source immigration countries in 1998 (see Table 1.1 Immigration - Top Ten Source Countries, 1995-1998). In addition, China has been ranked the first place in the Skilled Workers Category of Immigrants from 1996 to 1998 (see Table 1.2 Skilled Workers - Top Ten Source Countries, 1995-1998). Although the research shows that most Chinese immigrants landed in B.C. and Ontario (Driedger, 1989), from 1990 to 1997, there were over 5, 000 Chinese who immigrated to Manitoba. This comprised 14% of the total of Manitoba's immigration intake (Citizenship Division, 1997).

Another reason for me to focus on this population is that there is not much reliable information to help the social services understand how to better help these immigrants and families since very little research has identified their experiences and needs. "An understanding of family dynamics, of intergenerational struggles, and of how the ethnic reality impinges on the family's capacity to play its varying roles is crucial for the ethnic-sensitive social worker"(Devore & Schlesinger, 1981, p.205).

**Table 1.1 Immigration (All Classes) to Canada
Top Ten Source Countries, 1995-1998**

Country	Jan-Dec 1995	Rank	Jan-Dec 1996	Rank	Jan-Dec 1997	Rank	Jan-Sept 1998	Rank
China	13,209	4	17,486	3	18,498	3	13,793	1
India	16,024	2	21,169	2	19,541	2	11,381	2
Hong Kong	31,622	1	29,913	1	22,212	1	6,986	3
Philippines	15,071	3	13,127	5	10,849	6	6,301	4
Pakistan	3,981	10	7,734	6	11,210	5	6,164	5
Taiwan	7,659	6	13,178	4	13,295	4	6,074	6
Iran	-	-	5,809	9	7,458	7	5,301	7
Korea	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,658	8
USA	5,211	9	5,854	8	5,034	9	3,389	9
Russia	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,245	10
Sri Lanka	8,819	5	6,125	7	5,046	8	-	
Great Britain	6,148	8	5,579	10	4,655	10	-	
Bosnia-Herzegovina	6,278	7	-	-	-	-	-	

(Source: Communications Branch, Citizenship and Immigration Canada: *CIC Net - Publications, Oct, 1998*)

Table 1.2
Skilled Workers (to Canada) - Visas Issued Abroad,
Top Ten Source Countries, 1995-1998

Country	Jan-Dec 1995	Rank	Jan-Dec 1996	Rank	Jan-Dec 1997	Rank	Jan-Sept 1998	Rank
China	9,381	2	21,023	1	20,083	1	21,272	1
Pakistan	3,181	8	10,456	5	14,106	2	8,641	2
India	5,830	5	10,632	4	10,621	4	7,522	3
Taiwan	6,429	3	13,302	3	11,352	3	5,713	4
Iran	-	-	4,155	7	6,103	7	4,485	5
Hong Kong	16,732	1	19,396	2	10,003	5	3,397	6
South Korea	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,122	7
France	4,562	6	3,132	10	-	-	2,987	8
Russia	-	-	-	-	4,014	8	2,829	9
Philippines	5,841	4	7,098	6	6,608	6	2,775	10
Great Britain	4,406	7	3,975	8	-	-	-	-
Romania	3,044	9	3,493	9	3,160	10	-	-
USA	2,129	10	-	-	-	-	-	-
Soudi Arabia	-	-	-	-	3,761	9	-	-

(Source: Communications Branch, Citizenship and Immigration Canada: *CIC Net - Publications*, Oct. 1998)

sensitive social worker"(Devore & Schlesinger, 1981, p.205).

This study will examine the meanings of parenting in Chinese new immigrant families and present the results of research with Chinese new immigrant families in Winnipeg. The purpose of the study was to explore the changes of parenting roles in Chinese new immigrant families in the new environment and to make recommendations to improve social services for the target population.

The following three questions were addressed in my study:

- 1. How is the child/parent interaction in Chinese families affected by immigration?**
- 2. What factors contribute to the changes in parenting in Chinese new immigrant families?**
- 3. What are their perceptions of social services in Winnipeg?**

Some researchers found out that while access to basic social services is a universal entitlement, mainstream agencies across the human service delivery system have failed to provide accessible and equitable service because of linguistic, cultural, and racial barriers (e.g. Tator, 1996). Mainstream social service providers have generally been unwilling to acknowledge that the way they provide services can actually ignore or work against the interests of racial and cultural minorities.

"Research in Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom has shown that, as a result of the continuing racial and cultural barriers within these organizations, many clients underutilize or terminate their involvement with an agency, finding the manner of service delivery too

institutionalized and culturally/racially insensitive (Tator, 1996, p.162)".

Findings from this study will provide a reasonably clear picture of child-rearing practices in Chinese new immigrant families in Canada, and help social service agencies to have more understanding of the problems facing these families. Hopefully, the findings will make contributions to improving and developing a more culturally appropriate social services delivery system.

The following chapter reviews literature about immigration and family, cross-cultural adaptation, child rearing practices, Chinese cultures and families, and ethnic sensitive social work. Chapter three describes the methodological framework of the study, the rationale for qualitative methods, and the specific qualitative method (interview and participants observations) used to collect and analyze the data. Chapter four presents the findings of the study, characterized by direct quotations from the parents and children, combined with my observations. Chapter five further discusses the findings from the data, and chapter six draws conclusions, suggests responses for the social service system, and makes recommendations for further research.

Chapter 2 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Patton (1990) points out that a theory-method linkage means that how you study the world determines what you learn about the world. My “pre-research” includes a literature review and discussion with various groups of people (e.g., Chinese social workers, cross-cultural social service providers, Chinese immigrant parents who have been in Canada for more than 10 years, and school teachers). These combined with my experiences in facilitating parenting classes in the community and communicating with the new immigrant families, have contributed to the development of the following themes associated with my study. The glossary of terms can be seen in Appendix A.

2.1 Immigration and The Family

“When an individual finds himself in an unfamiliar cultural environment, where his previous learning is inadequate for coping, he may suffer some degree of emotional disturbance, a condition often referred to as culture shock” (Taft, 1977, p.139).

Ho (1987) identifies five major factors that contribute to the cultural transitional difficulties that lead to the dysfunction of Asian/Pacific American families: 1) economic survival; 2) racism; 3) loss of extended family and support system; 4) vast cultural conflicts; and 5) cognitive reactive pattern to a new environment.

“Due to differences in value systems, discriminatory conditions, and societal constraints, ethnic minority members can be expected to experience significant family and individual problems and difficulties” (Ho, 1987, p.15).

Waters (1997) suggests, in her research on West Indian immigrants in the United States,

that both serial migration and lifestyle changes weaken the ties between immigrant parents and their children. She points out the several factors which weaken the immigrant ethos of high aspirations and hard work as the route to achievements, including that nuclear families are often much more isolated than they were in their home country and parents are less available to supervise their children because they spend long hours at work. Parental authority also is eroded by differences between American norms regarding discipline and traditional disciplinary practices.

“One of the most significant ways an ethnic culture is expressed is through those activities that we identify as family activities. The family historically has been a conservative institution, and those cultural elements concerning family life, if not affected by outside forces, will tend to replace themselves generation after generation.... If traditional ethnic values are to be found anywhere, they will be found in the family” (Mindel, et al., 1988, p.9).

Based on the research on Mexican-American migrant farmworkers and their children, de Leon Siantz (1997) presents a model which illustrates how family processes can be incorporated into studies of immigrant children's outcomes. This model emphasizes the importance of family, parent, and child characteristics to children's adaptation or maladjustment. Because children's well-being is directly affected by family structure, family dynamics, and the mental health of their parents, immigrant children cannot be considered apart from the families in which they live (de Lion Sianz, 1997).

The family is a major unit of the social system and an agency for the transmission of cultural values which has survived through many generations in various forms. It reflects society's values and norms and is of crucial importance for human development (Kagitcibasi, 1990). New immigrant families share all the problems of those of non-

immigrants. But their problems are magnified many times by the loneliness, strangeness and newness of their environment. Besides culture shock and language difficulties, these new immigrants also experience changes in occupation and vocation, the unavailability of supportive relationships, the inversion of traditional family roles and the general crisis of adaptation. The economic difficulties, political upheavals, loss of friends and family, and the racism and insensitivity of government officers and mainstream social service agencies leave them feeling vulnerable, confused, depressed and alone. Trute and Saulnier (1984) also state that:

“Migration to a new environment, particularly one that is based on alternative values and behavioral norms, can threaten family cohesion and stability. The usual realignment of internal family relationships and patterns of parental authority, which is characteristic with adolescents and their families, can create more vulnerability to family instability when the family has migrated to an alien culture” (p.221).

Each family member, including father, mother, grandparents, and children of different ages, has his or her own difficulty in adjusting to the new life. The research indicates that adolescents tend to be more sensitive toward the situation of adjustment, particularly when changes of language, school system, and patterns of social relations to their peers are involved (Tseng & Spiegel, 1990, p.19)

The researchers list seven factors which have drastically altered the structure and content of Asian/Pacific immigrant families (Ho, 1987). These factors include: 1) cultural shock and disbelief at the disparity between the expectations and the reality; 2) disappointment at what exists; 3) grief at the loss of what was left behind; 4) anger and resentment; 5) depression because of the current family situation; 6) some form of acceptance of their situation; and 7) mobilization of family resources and energy.

De Lion Sianz (1997) emphasizes that it is very important to identify and support parental characteristics that are associated with successful developmental outcomes for immigrant children, because “the immigration process itself is a stressful event that directly impacts parental psychological well-being and parenting style, as well as developmental outcomes of children” (p.158).

2.2 Cross-cultural Adaptation

The term “adaptation” is defined as “the changes made by the immigrant in order to fit in better with the environment” and “includes changes in attitudes as well as behaviour” (Taft, 1973, p.227). In Taft’s study, it is hypothesized that ethnic minority individuals will adopt one of four cultural adaptation styles: 1) The assimilative style of those who adapt themselves exclusively to the majority group and not to the ethnic minority group; 2) The dissociative style of those who adapt themselves exclusively to the ethnic minority group and not to the majority group; 3) The acculturative style of those who identify with both the ethnic minority group culture and the majority group culture; and 4) The marginal style of those who identify with neither group.

Although a great deal of research has been done on the acculturation and assimilation of immigrants which examines individual-level indicators by using individual-level variables, there are not many studies about the adaptation of new immigrant families. Landale (1997) points out that “theoretical frameworks for understanding the role of the family in immigrant adaptation to the receiving country are less well developed than those focusing on the migration process itself” (p.283).

Rumbaut (1997) also stresses the importance of the family in research on immigration. He says that the family is the strategic research site for understanding the dynamic of immigration flows and of immigrant adaptation processes. In addition, Tseng and Hsu (1991) state that the family is the appropriate place to examine culture because "the family is the basic sociocultural unit through which culture is transmitted from generation to generation"(p.xiii).

Tsai and his colleagues (1980) have found that acculturated children with unacculturated parents are more likely to have accidents than are unacculturated children. The acculturated children with unacculturated parents experience the stress of being caught between contradictions of parent traditional teachings and their schoolmates. These children may be more apt to be tense due to conflicts at home. They may be more anxious to get recognition from the white peer group and "will court danger in order to prove his/her courage" (p.298).

Therefore, the cultural adaptation of Chinese parents will have an impact on their child-rearing practices and their child's development. For example, schools in China (including Hong Kong and Taiwan) emphasize learning through repetition and memorization, as well as the importance of academic learning. Schools here look for total development and inspire students to search, think, make notes and find out answers for themselves. Besides academic subjects, schools here encourage sports, outings, and extra-curricular activities. If parents remain unacculturated, this will create a substantial gap between the home and school environments, and the children of these families "will tend to internalize their distress, thus manifesting more anxiety reactions, psychosomatic disorders, and school

phobia" (Gibbs & Huang et al. 1989, p.41).

Research shows that a child's mental health is related to the parents' attitude toward their heritage (Gibbs, Huang et al., 1989). After immigration, as cross-cultural changes take place, people begin to doubt their own ways of doing things. They may wonder: Who is right? Me? Or them? As parents, they may become ambivalent and inconsistent.

Some research suggests that a child's cultural background plays an important role in their development (Aboud and Skerry, 1984, Garbarino and Kostelny, 1992, Ho, 1987, Hsu, 1953, Karen, & Hull, 1993, Keats, 1997, Kirst-Ahman, et al., Sue & Sue, 1988, etc.). These researchers also find that culture influences the goals parents have for their children and the methods they use to achieve those goals. Keats emphasizes that "in all cultures, child-rearing practices have always been a major vehicle for the transmission of cultural values" (1997, p.16).

Value and belief systems function as the core of the culture. Garbarino and Kostelny (1992) point out that the children and youth in minority families often experience conflict between the belief and values of the culture of their parents and those of their peers and school. They must often perform a delicate balancing act to get accepted in both cultures. This frequently results in psychological problems.

"The identity process continues throughout childhood as child-rearing patterns and family experiences play a significant role in the formation of identity. Children first see themselves within the context of their families, and thus through the eyes of parents and siblings. Conflicted and negativistic families tend to produce youth who do not have a strong identity. ... In addition to parents, a child's perceptions of what his teachers and other supportive people think of him influences identity" (Garbarino and Kostelny, 1992, p.185).

Acculturation is also explained as “a minority member’s ability to function within the dominant culture’s value system” (Garbarino and Kostelny, 1992, p.193). It is very common that immigrant families retain their basic cultural values while their external behaviour conforms to the more general expectations of the society around them. This conforming behaviour in children can be observed not only in school situations, but also in their peer group relationships, especially in adolescents' food habits, dress, sport and leisure activities. "When these behaviors are regarded as symbolic of rejecting deeply held cultural values then the attempts to adopt the new ways become a source of conflict between parents and children" (Keats, 1997, p.7).

On the other hand, some researchers raise the question: Is the maintenance of ethnic identity worth the cost? One study found that fifth- and sixth-grade American born boys of Chinese immigrant parents who had more positive attitudes toward Chinese culture had lower self-concepts than boys whose parents had less positive attitudes (Garbarino & Kostelny, 1992). However, I believe the conclusion that “speaking Chinese and adhering to Chinese values increased bicultural pressure on the children of immigrant parents” (p.196) needs more research. This conclusion also comes from an American context that does not have a policy of multiculturalism, but rather is assimilationist with a melting pot orientation, which is very different from Canada.

2.3 Child Rearing Practices

Holden and Coleman list several types of child-rearing variables and the frequency across some related studies (1992, p.19). In 23 studies about Child-rearing Attitudes and Practices, 10 are about disciplinary responses, 6 about child-rearing practices (e.g.,

feeding, toilet training), 6 about nurturance, warmth, and affection, and 1 is about the degree of communication. They concluded that parental discipline has been used commonly to assess child-rearing practices.

On the other hand, Janssens and Gerris (1992) point out that “parental discipline responses are only a part of child rearing. Nonreactive parental behavior (modeling, affection, teaching) also influences the child’s development” (p.1). In the research on the ecology of childbearing and child rearing, Garbarino and Benn (1992) discuss different stages of the parent-child relationship. They note the difference between the task of parenting a child and the process of becoming a parent:

“Parenting is an intense relationship based on the evolving needs of the developing child. Because of its ongoing demands and the potential for mutual satisfaction, parenting influences intimacy. Parenthood, in contrast, can be defined as a role or even a career. Because parenthood involves self-definition and the presentation of oneself in relation to family, friends, and others in the community, it influences adult identity. As parents refine their behaviors to meet children’s changing needs and as they redefine themselves in relation to their parental responsibilities, they are engaged in the interlocking tasks of parenting and parenthood, the ongoing process of becoming parents” (p.153).

Immigration brings changes not only in immigrants' parenthood but also in their parenting styles. As I discussed in the previous section (**2.2 Cross-cultural Adaptation**), culture plays a large part in determining the methods parents and others will use to bring up their children. The range of culturally related differences in these processes is very great. When the parents' methods differ substantially from the professionals' methods, the child can become confused, apathetic, or rebellious (Keats, 1997).

Keats (1997) points out that in most cultures obedience to parents and authority figures is

expected and there are many methods used to counter disobedient or undesirable behaviour. Most common are verbal castigation, withdrawal of privileges, physical punishment of varying degrees of severity, religious taboos and threats of withdrawal of love. No matter which methods are used, the child is responsive to the motives and actions of parents and others and increasingly able to think for himself or herself rather than just accept these passively. Of particular importance is the case of the mismatch between the methods used in the home and those used by the teachers or other professionals with whom the child comes in contact in other contexts (Keats, 1997).

“Most universal in all cultures is the influence of parents on their children. The power of that influence is expressed in the parents' expectations for the child, in the child's concerns about family relationships and in the anxieties which are aroused in some children when attempting to meet those expectations (Keats, 1997, p.124)”.

Vinovskis (1991) analyzes parental responsibilities for early child care, parental control of children, and what they indicate about historical changes in parent-child relations. He concludes that there have been historical changes in the perception and treatment of children and adolescents. He states that

“The relationship between parents and children is influenced by many factors and can vary over time. Alterations in the composition and size of the household as well as its interactions with the outside can affect the experiences of children growing up within it. ... And any changes in the perceptions of the nature of children or their appropriate role in society is likely to influence their dealings with parents and other adults” (Vinovskis, 1991, p.522).

Therefore, changes in parenting in the new society may have an important impact on children's development.

2.4 Chinese Cultures and Families

Wong (1988) gives a general portrayal of the Chinese American family which includes four characteristics: 1) a stable family unit; 2) close ties between generations; 3) economic self-sufficiency; and 4) conservatism (as expressed by the retention of the Chinese language and customs). On the other hand, he points out that a more profitable approach to a greater understanding of the information, development, and modification of the Chinese American family is to look at the different types of Chinese families that have existed and still exist in the United States.

“It should be noted that the Chinese American family is a product of the complex interaction between structural factors (i.e., social, legal, political, and economic) and cultural factors. Moreover, because both structural and cultural factors are constantly undergoing change, the Chinese American family may be best viewed not as a static entity, but as one also undergoing constant changes and adaptations” (Wong, 1988, p.231).

Predominant Chinese values pertaining to family, harmony, education, and selected virtues offer fundamental guidelines for living. For example, the family is the basic unit of society and the central focus of the individual's life. Harmony is the keynote of existence. Successful academic achievement is the greatest tribute to one's parents and family. Virtues such as patience, perseverance, self-sacrifice, maintenance of inner strength, self-restraint, modesty, and humility are each considered necessary expressions of dignity that promote the group welfare (Chan, 1992, p.236). These values have been maintained for many generations and continue to influence the contemporary socialization experiences of children of Chinese immigrants.

In the process of growing up, a child has to learn self-discipline and develop socially

acceptable behavior. What is right? What is wrong? Although cultural values are transmitted through child rearing practices from one generation to the next, family values and expectations may conflict with other social influences upon the child in multicultural societies (Keats, 1997).

For example, Chinese people do not like to express their feelings. Parents love their children but seldom say so. They express their love through the care they provide. On the other hand, Chinese society diminishes the individual and emphasizes the social group. What is important is performing the expected duties within the family and society. If a child is able to do well, the credit goes not only to himself, but also to the family -- the ancestors and the parents (Chan, 1992, Char, et al. 1980, Domino & Hannah, 1987, Ho, 1974, Ho, 1981, Keats, 1997, Lin, 1980, Tseng & Hsu, 1991, Wong, 1975, etc.). The individual is only part of the family and social structure.

Therefore, Chinese parents seldom praise their children. When a child does right, they say "hmmm", or perhaps, "Good girl/boy". If a child brings back a good report card, parents may say, "Not bad!" Should they forget and exclaim "Oh, that is great!", they will add immediately, "You must continue to work hard" or "You must do even better the next time, OK?" They are afraid that the child may become too satisfied with himself/herself and stop trying to improve (S.U.C.C.E.S.S., 1990).

However, children studying in schools in Canada may think that their parents are not very interested in what they are doing or, are never pleased enough with their achievements. Even if parents say "Good", the child may think that the parents are not really sincere or the child may not be sure if parents really think that he has done well.

The misunderstanding between children and parents is also complicated by family difficulties caused by migration. In order to make a living and adapt to the new environment, many immigrant parents are busy working or learning English. They work all day and are busy with housework and homework in the evening. Children returning from school may be chattering non-stop. Parents, tired from work, may not be interested in what the children are saying. They may not respond or may even ask the children to keep quiet. Their disinterest may discourage their children from talking more to them. Thus parents may complain, "Children no longer talk to their parents".

In addition, sometimes people are unwilling to express their feelings when they are unhappy, because in Chinese culture, suppression of undesirable thoughts or emotions is highly valued. These rules for communication contrast markedly with North American values of expression and the tendency to "speak your mind" or "let it all hang out". Parents sometimes grumble, gripe, lose their temper over minor things rather than express their feelings directly. After being yelled at by parents, children may not always know what caused such a big row (S.U.C.C.E.S.S., 1990).

Traditionally Chinese family life was hierarchical and paternalistic, based upon Confucian principles of honor and respect coupled with reciprocal responsibilities according to one's status. In the modern Chinese family the 'good' child maintains the values of respect to parents and significant adults (Keats, 1997). Control of the children is maintained by fostering feelings of shame and guilt (Sue & Sue, 1988, Kirst-Ashman, et al., 1993).

In Chinese culture, filial piety was the prime guiding principle for socializing children

(Ho, 1981). Good behavior such as filial piety (respect, obligation, and obedience to one's parents), achievement, and obedience are clearly defined, and the individuals' behavior reflects upon the entire family. It is the duty of children to listen to and obey their parents. "It is believed that Chinese children show greater concern and devotion toward their elders than average American (white) children" (Wong, 1988, p.250). In Wong's research, he notes that Chinese children felt a strong sense of guilt and shame over what they considered inappropriate care for elderly parents, such as the placement of their elderly parents in nursing homes.

As Garbarino and Kosteny (1992) state, minority youth have to cope with the stresses of "being different". Canadian-born Chinese children or children who have lived here for some years may think of themselves as Canadian. Nonetheless, being visible minorities, others may still look upon them as "Chinese". When discussing issues in connection with Chinese culture, people may mistakenly expect them to be "experts", which may embarrass them (S.U.C.C.E.S.S., 1990). On the other hand, children of new immigrants who may still consider themselves "Chinese" may also have problems getting along with fellow Chinese who consider themselves "Canadians". This question of identity remains a complex issue (S.U.C.C.E.S.S., 1990).

Culture has a great influence on help-seeking behaviour. "Saving face" is highly valued in Asian culture. It involves not only the individual, but also a child's entire family as well as the ancestors. Revealing personal circumstances or problems to people outside of one's family is considered undesirable (Garbarino & Kostelny, 1992). Chinese parents also feel uncomfortable discussing private feelings in front of their children, and the

children are unaccustomed to expressing their feelings toward parental authority.

Therefore, “it may take longer for a Chinese family to feel sufficiently comfortable to discuss problems openly in a family therapy session”(Char, et al. 1980, p.69). This is also one of the reasons for the under-utilization of mental health services by minority groups in North America (Wodarski, 1992).

Moreover, there is an expectation that the family should take care of its own needs (Kirst-Ashman, Karen, & Hull, 1993). Therefore, an emotionally-stressed individual or family member is reluctant to seek help from service providers until the problem becomes severe. They are likely to talk about somatic complaints such as headaches, insomnia, fatigue, heart palpitations, dizziness, or general aches and pains rather than describing specific emotions (Sue & Sue, 1988). Some research reported that the Chinese in Los Angeles and California were seeking services at less than half the expected rate according to their population (Lin, et al., 1980).

These studies suggest that Chinese immigrant families face different social ecologies than earlier European immigrants. Their family structure, parenting practices, and acculturation process require them to use different adaptation strategies better suited to their culture and particular life circumstances in Canada.

2.5 Ethnic Sensitive Social Work

2.5.1 Racism and Discrimination

In Canada, as the population has become increasingly diverse in terms of cultural heritage, a pluralistic view has been adopted. This view acknowledges the contributions of the many cultures that make up this society, but it fails to describe the dynamic and interactive perspective of cultural identity.

The Policy of Multiculturalism, which recognizes cultural pluralism in Canada, was first introduced in 1971. It reaffirmed that Canada is not an 'assimilationist' nation and theoretically recognized that all ethnic groups contributed and should continue to contribute to Canadian society and culture by retention of their ancestral culture and traditions. It also reaffirmed Canada's commitment to overall principles of respect for cultural diversity and use of multiculturalism as an instrument of promoting equality in expanding opportunities for newcomers and fostering anti-racist policies (James, 1996).

"However, the English, and to a lesser extent the French, have continued to play a central role in defining Canadian society and culture. For the most part, minority groups and immigrants have had to change elements of their behaviour (based on their subculture) in order to gain access to institutions and take advantage of the opportunities in society" (James, 1996, p.19).

Minority groups usually find out that they are unable to get culturally appropriate services from mainstream agencies because staff and programs lack a fundamental understanding of their culture and life experiences.

Matas (1996) states: "Few Canadians know that Canada, which now prides itself on its

tolerance of racial and cultural diversity is a nation with a sad history of racism, or that racism was until recently enshrined in law" (p.93). The Canadian Immigration Act of 1910 gave Cabinet the power to prohibit people from immigrating to Canada based on race, ethnicity, and place of origin. In 1919, the Cabinet was given the power to bar immigrants of any race if they were deemed undesirable "owing to their peculiar customs, habits, modes of life and methods of holding property and because of their probable inability to become readily assimilated" (Matas, 1996, p.93).

The 1954 immigration regulations permitted only citizens of the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Ireland, the United States, and France to immigrate. In 1956, citizens of the other Western European countries were added to the list. In 1962 the lists were replaced with a general entry requirement that all prospective immigrants had to prove they could become successfully established in Canada if they wanted to settle here. However, some groups continued to have an unfair advantage. For example, Europeans, Americans, and people from the Middle East could be sponsored by extended-family members, while other, particularly those from Asia and Africa, could only be sponsored by members of their immediate family (Matas, 1996).

According to James (1996), racism exists in three forms: individual, institutional, and structural. Individual racism is the negative attitude that individuals hold of others. Individuals from the dominant racial group are, possessing social, economic, and political power, are the primary beneficiaries of this attitude. Institutional racism exists where established rules and policies reflect and produce differential treatment of various groups within organizations or institutions.

Structural racism is also called societal racism since it is rooted in the way the society operates. This ideology of inequality excludes substantial numbers of people of particular racial groups from significantly accessing and participating in major social institutions. Therefore, minority-group members are denied access to the education, occupational, and political opportunities and social services that are necessary for full participation in the society (James, 1996).

These three forms of racism affect the kinds of service, training, and employment opportunities available to members of racial minorities throughout the social service system.

The 1976 Immigration Act, for the first time in Canadian law, stated the basic principles underlying immigration policy: non-discrimination, family reunification, humanitarian concern for refugees, and the promotion of national goals. It contained provisions that link the immigration movement to Canada's population and labor-market needs (Malarek, 1987). The present Immigration Act states that one of its obligations is "to ensure that any person who seeks admission to land is subject to standards of admission that do not discriminate on the grounds of race, national or ethnic origin, color, religion or sex" (Matas, 1996, p.98). However, the question still exists: Do our institutions and officials put the principles of racial equality stated in the Immigration Act into practice?

Tator (1996) concludes that systemic barriers continue to operate in the delivery of family services to ethnic communities. A study regarding access to Family Services in Metro Toronto in 1991 found that 62 per cent of the established family-service agencies had no formal or informal policies or practices to address the concerns of ethnic and

racial-minority communities (Tator, 1996). These systemic barriers significantly affect the process of family counseling and other social services. Tator (1996) also points out that there is a general failure to recognize the unique problems facing African-Canadian children and an absence of appropriate programs to address their particular needs. Racism and discrimination worsen the problems and difficulties of immigrant families.

In societies that contain people from a variety of cultural backgrounds, children may experience prejudice and marginalisation. Some become the butt of jokes and aggression from other children; others are victimized by adults, including teachers. In shops, on public transport, in entertainment centers and playgrounds, they can be made to feel second class. Often external signs such as eye, hair and skin color, stature and other physical features combine with distinctive dress styles to distinguish such children from their contemporaries and many judgements are made as to their behaviour, intelligence and attitudes on the basis of these cues (Keats, 1997). This kind of discrimination is likely to make a child more vulnerable, particularly if there are other stresses too.

"What is unique about our modern-day challenge is that immigration is no longer only about adults but is also about children and their families" (de Leon Siantz, 1997, p.159). Racism made the racial minorities in Canada remain outside the realm of the national consciousness. Their families and children are rarely the focus of programs or policies.

2.5.2 Culturally Appropriate Social Service Delivery

Barbara Ward, the noted British economist has observed that Canada has grown into 'the world's first international nation' (James, 1996). It is estimated that by the year 2001, the racial minority population of Canada will be about 18 per cent, while in some urban centers like Toronto, Vancouver, Montreal, Calgary, this segment of the population will range from 20 to 40 percent (James, 1996). This cultural and racial diversity creates significant challenges to our human-service delivery system.

Studies have documented the failure of traditional Canadian social service institutions to provide access for various ethno-racial groups (Beyene, et al. 1996). Besides language barriers, immigrants seeking services from mainstream agencies "have had to deal with racist policies and practices, as well as staff and programs that lack a fundamental understanding of their culture and life experiences" (Beyene, et al., 1996, p.172).

Culture and values also influence the effectiveness of social service delivery. "The low utilization and early termination rates of mental health services by Asian-Americans establishes the validity of the premise that cross-cultural counseling has failed to meet the needs of this client population" (Wodarski, 1992, p.56). Different culture and worldviews between mainstream service providers and minority clients increase the barriers and ineffectiveness of services. Cultural stereotyping, unfamiliarity with salient culture and values by service providers and insensitivity of the service also contributes to the low utilization of the services. Language barriers, communication problems and ignorance of available resources are other reasons for newcomers not to seek for help (Wodarski, 1992). Therefore, if the counseling is significantly "cross-cultural", it must address the

above issues.

As minorities make up an increasing proportion of Canadian families, racial issues have begun to receive increasing attention. However, evidence suggests that, compared to white families, minority families seeking help, especially if they are poor, are more likely to be seen by a paraprofessional rather than a professional (Davis & Proctor, 1989).

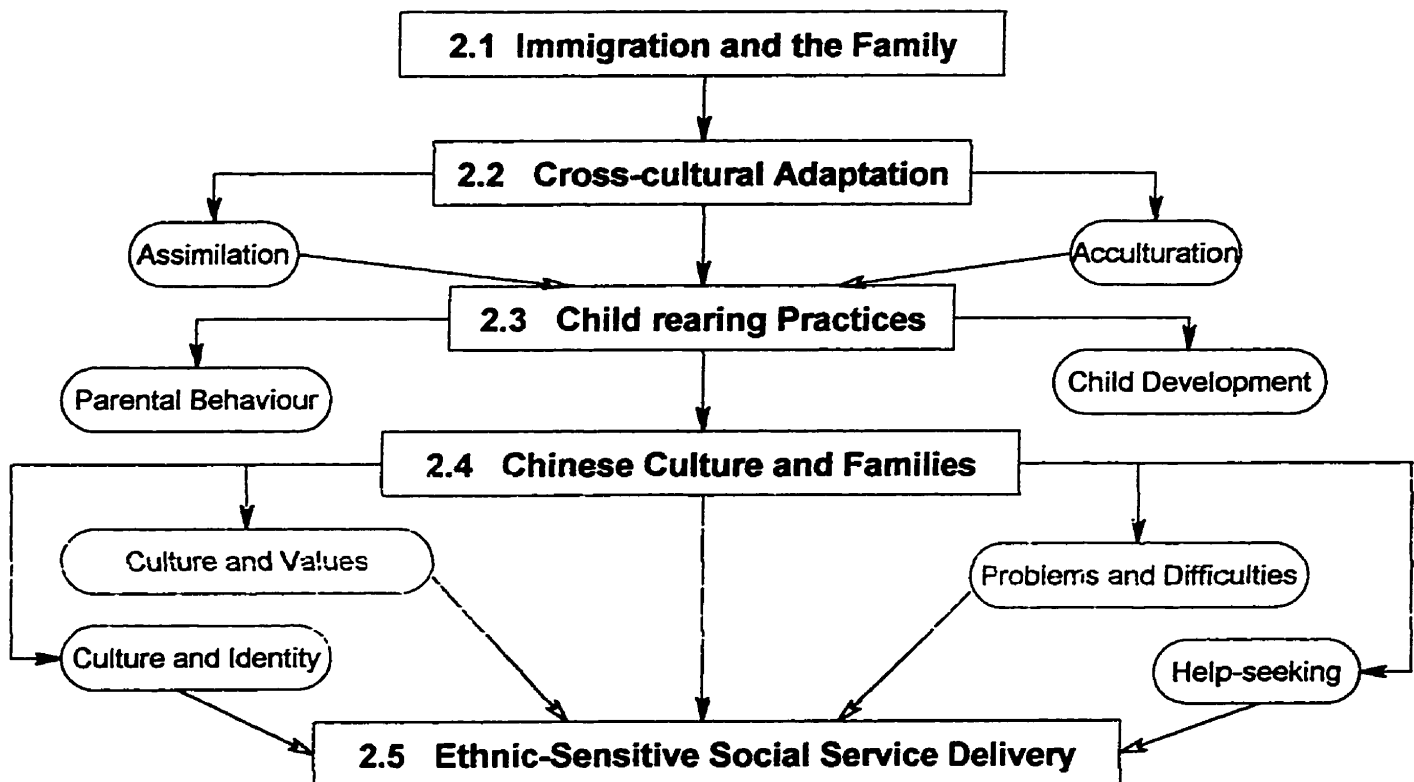
Ho (1987) notes that “a wide gap clearly exists between the unmet needs of the ethnic minority clients and families and the therapists’ ability to provide for their needs successfully” (p.11) based on the facts of the overwhelming underutilizations of mental health services and high dropout rates by ethnic minority clients.

These studies provide the evidence that current social policy and service programs have not paid attention to the issues of well-being, developmental potential, and successful integration of immigrant parents and children into Canadian society. I believe my research on the child rearing practices of Chinese new immigrant families in the new environment of Canada will be valuable in helping social service agencies to have more understanding of the problems facing these new immigrants.

In summary, immigration brought significant changes for immigrant families that result in changes too in child/parent interaction. The research (see section **2.4 Chinese Culture and Families**) demonstrates that Chinese culture and traditional value systems play an important role in Chinese immigrant families. As well, the cultural adjustment of parents has a significant impact on children's development.

The conceptual framework (Figure 2.1) brings together the literature reviewed. It is helpful in order to understand the effects of immigration on family life and of cross-cultural adaptation on child rearing practices. In addition, realizing that “different trajectories of socioeconomic incorporation, success, and cultural integration describe the experiences of different families” (Waters, 1997, p.79) will help the social service system deliver more culturally appropriate services to meet the different needs of immigrant families. It is the framework from which I begin my research journey.

Figure 2.1. Conceptual Framework (Summary of Literature Review)



Note:

- Main Themes
- Major Components of the main themes
- The connection flow of the main themes
- The connection of major components and the main themes

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Methodological Framework

Gilgun (1992) states that "methodological perspectives infuse all aspects of research processes: the choice of questions, purposes of the research, theories, methods, sampling strategies, data collection, data analysis and interpretation, and writing up the results" (p.26). This chapter discusses some important issues in my research that include methodological theories, methods and research strategies. Some ethical considerations are also discussed.

3.1.1 Symbolic Interactionism

"Theory is central in qualitative family research" (Gilgun, 1992, p.28). Researchers use theory to organize research processes that include problem formulation, data analysis and interpretation, and report writing.

Symbolic interactionists have made major contributions to many areas of knowledge such as social problems, medical sociology, collective behavior, the emotions, social organization and bureaucratic structures, race relations and industrialization, childhood socialization, family violence, and many other fields (Denzin, 1992).

"Interactional experience is assumed to be organized in terms of the motives and accounts that persons give themselves for acting. These accounts are learned from others, as well as from the popular culture. ... Interactionists don't believe in asking 'why' questions. They ask, instead, 'how' questions" (Denzin, 1992, p.20/24).

They assume that the important human processes cannot be quantified; mind cannot be measured, and the human body is not a behavioral machine whose actions can be meaningfully understood through procedures that count activity. They also prefer to write texts which remain close to the actual experiences of the people they are writing about and write about people who struggle to make sense of themselves and their life experiences. "Interactionists study the marked, deviant, stigmatized, lonely, unhappy, alienated, powerful, and powerless people in everyday life" (Denzin, 1992, p.25).

Symbolic interaction is the chief means by which human beings are able to form social or joint acts. As Schwandt (1994) states, symbolic interactionists seek explanations of the immediate world of social experience and begin with a sensitizing image of the interaction process built around the concepts such as self, language, social setting, social object, and joint act. In other words, "Meanings develop from the language and behavioral interactions between individuals and the groups with which each person is associated" (Detzner, 1992, p.88).

Symbolic interactionism places great emphasis on the importance of meaning and interpretation as essential human processes in reaction against behaviorism and mechanical stimulus-response psychology (Patton, 1990). Snyder (1992) also states that symbolic interactionism focuses on the personal and social construction of meaning and the essential importance of interpretation in human experience. Blumer (1969) emphasizes that

"The methodological position of symbolic interactionism is that social action must be studied in terms of how it is formed; its formation is a very different matter from the antecedent conditions that are taken as the

‘causes’ of the social action and is not covered by any specification of such causes” (p.57).

I use symbolic interactionism as a theoretical framework for the methodology of my study because it “proposes that individuals act on the basis of the meanings they ascribe to words, events, persons, and things” (Detzner, 1992, p.88). The theory helps me to understand that people create shared meanings through their languages and interactions and those meanings become their behaviors. These meanings are also interpreted and reinterpreted over time through the cultural and experiential lenses of each person.

In terms of methodological implications, Soloski and Daley (1980) make an important point which is that the researcher remains true to the situation s/he is studying. The researcher must examine the problem in the situation to which s/he gets close and interacts with the people s/he is studying. They have noted that the researcher interacts with the people “not only to watch but also to listen to the symbolic sounds that characterize this world. A dialogue with persons in their natural situation will reveal the nuances of meaning from which their perspectives and definitions are continually forged” (1980, quoted in p.7). These statements are very important for my research because they help me to better understand how changes in a new environment affect Chinese immigrants and their families. In addition, this concept helps me realize that understanding the participant’s perspective and interpreting her/his world is very important for my interview and data analysis.

The values of society at large affect children's perceptions of themselves and their cultural heritage, encouraging acceptance or antipathy towards the values of their own and other cultural groups within the society (Keats, 1997). On one hand, parents train

children in what they regard as appropriate behavior. On the other hand, that behavior is not always seen as appropriate when the child moves into different environments outside the family such as the school or the peer group. For example, while having the same good intentions, the Chinese parents and the Canadian school may look at and do things in different ways. Schoolteachers are more democratic while Chinese parents tend to expect modesty and self-restraint. When a teacher asks a child to perform a task and the child asks "why", the teacher will explain. At home when the same child asks "why", his/her parent may feel irritated and look upon this as a challenge to authority. The teacher wants a child to think independently and the parents want that child to follow strict instructions (S.U.C.C.E.S.S., 1990).

Children learn to absorb the family's norms and values, but they may also come to realize that their parents' way of life and expectations for their behavior are not always approved of by others whose opinions are important to them. Younger children may have a vague feeling of being rejected by those outside the family but not know why they are rejected. If they are the butts of aggressive acts they may have no idea why that aggression is directed towards them. They can react in several ways: they can counter with more aggression, they can retreat from the situation physically or emotionally, they can attempt to appease their aggressors with peace offerings, or they can attempt to bring the offenders into their own play or peer group. "Children will respond in different ways reflecting both their family upbringing and values and how they have been treated by others" (Keats, 1997, p.4).

3.1.2 *Qualitative Research*

“Qualitative research methodologies are gaining acceptance within practice-based disciplines such as family studies, marriage and family therapy, social work, counseling, psychology and education. Recent transformation in the philosophy of science, including increasing awareness of the limitation of empiricist/positivist research methodologies for the human sciences, have increased enthusiasm for qualitative approaches to research” (Franklin, 1996, p.242).

Marshall and Rossman (1989) also note that “qualitative research methods have become increasingly important modes of inquiry for the social sciences” (p.9). Daly states that qualitative methods are particularly amenable to the study of diverse families as they focus on the “processes by which families create, sustain, and discuss family realities” (1992, p.4). Some of the characteristics of qualitative design include: looking at relationships within a system or culture; referring to the personal, face-to-face, and immediate; focusing on understanding a given social setting, not necessarily on making predictions about that setting; requiring ongoing analyses of the data; incorporating informed consent decisions and being responsive to ethical concerns (Valerie, 1994). In their comparative analysis of social values of Chinese and American children, Domino and Hannah (1997) have pointed out that the paper-and-pencil tests and questionnaires which are so common in American schools are rather alien to the Chinese.

Tutty and Grinnell (1996) emphasize the importance of the relationship between research and culture. For example, if the qualitative researchers carry their own cultural assumptions into the field, they risk imposing a foreign frame of reference on interpreting the experience and meanings. Some critics have even suggested that “the only people who should study a culture should be members of that culture” (Tutty & Grinnell, 1996,

p.18). Tutty and Grinnel believe that "respect for diversity and valuing difference is the best recipe for a rich and well-differentiated profession, flexible and effective in its response to the complex needs that our clients present" (p.19).

Quantitative researchers have used standardized instruments developed in studies of one culture when studying others, without recognizing the problems this can create. From my own experience, I have also noticed that

"language, assumptions, and values implicit in an instrument's questions and the way they are interpreted could be foreign to research participants, making the process confusing or difficult and rendering the study's findings invalid" (Tutty et al., 1996, p.18).

Since qualitative research depends on the presentation of solid descriptive data, we should focus on the substance of the findings and lead the readers to understand the meaning of the experience under study. Qualitative researchers design a study with real individuals in mind, and with the intent of living in that social setting over time (Janesick, 1994). A research problem should be interesting to the researcher and the researcher must have a clear sense of exactly whom he/she wants to study and where to find these people (Tutty et al., 1996).

I have chosen newcomer families who came from Mainland China within the last 10 years as the research population because this group of people are substantially different from those Chinese who came here many years ago as laborers ("Coolies") and from the current business immigrants from Hong Kong. I am part of them (we came as international students and then became independent immigrants) and I have heard so many different stories from my friends, clients, and readers. Many studies have been

done about the history and situation of Chinese immigrants in Canada (e.g. Andracki, 1978, Chan, 1982, Hoe, 1989, Lee, 1967, Lee, 1984, Malarek, 1987, Ng, 1986, Richmond, 1967, Song, 1996, Wickberg, 1982, and Wright, 1988, etc.), but very little research has been done with those who obtained secondary education and were professionals in China and moved to Canada recently. What are their problems? What are their needs? What has happened in their families? I live closely with these families (in a big apartment building) and have observed their daily life and family interaction. I know where to approach them and how to communicate with them effectively. I am sure my research is important for social service delivery systems because if we have more information about the problems, we will be able to act more competently and provide better social services to the population (Tutty et al., 1996).

The foundation of qualitative research is the study of people in their natural environments as they go about their daily lives. Qualitative research aims to understand "how people live, how they talk and behave, and what captivates and distresses them" (Tutty, et al., 1996, p.4). Compared with quantitative research methods, the qualitative approach is more suitable for capturing and communicating human experiences and family interactions. Many aspects of the family process may be too personal or complicated to be easily ascertained with quantitative methods, such as structured questionnaires or standardized measures. Qualitative research methods provide approaches that afford glimpses of the inside through the process of intense and prolonged observations or interviews in field settings (Franklin, 1996).

My study aimed to provide an in-depth and detailed understanding of the child rearing

experiences of Chinese new immigrant families and their interactions. Symbolic interactionism is very useful tool to see the real situation involved in problems new Chinese immigrant faced. "Symbolic interaction sets a frame that has immediate implications for practice"(Stolar, 1976, p.35).

3.2 The Research Strategy

As mentioned previously, "the point of using qualitative methods is to understand naturally occurring phenomena in their naturally occurring states" (Patton, 1990, p.41).

The methods I used to collect data are interviewing and participant observation.

Kirby and McKenna (1989) state that the purpose of interviews is to elicit information by asking questions. "The interview is the favorite methodological tool of the qualitative researcher"(Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p.353). Rogers and Bouey (1996) also point out that interviewing is "the most utilized data collection method in qualitative research studies" and "can be an especially effective method of data gathering in the field of social work" (p.52). I used guided interviewing, sometimes called intensive interviewing which seeks "to discover information about the experiences of the interviewee in the language and gesture of that person" (Kirby & McKenna, 1989, p.68). I had my interview guide (see Appendix D for Interview Guide) which was the combination of open-ended questions and probes for elaboration. By using this guide, some predetermined questions or key words were used to begin the conversation clarify it and keep it focused (Rogers & Bouey, 1996). This way provides "a balance between respecting their perspective and allowing us to pursue theoretically relevant topics" (Fravel & Boss, 1992, p.131). As Rogers and Bouey (1996) suggest, I asked questions "in an order that suited the flow of

the interview, adjusting the wording of the questions, and digressing and probing in a way that went beyond what could have been accomplished with a set of prepared questions” (Rogers & Bouey, p.56). In contrast to the structured interviews which seek to ask questions of participants for whom the context of the interview and the question pattern is controlled, “intensive interviews are more likely to be guided by the need and intent of the participant” (Kirby, 1989, p.68).

Holden and Coleman (1992) discuss the different methods to measure child rearing which include questionnaires, interviews, and observations. They agree that the interview is a way to obtain data about behavior that is difficult to observe or the act of observing could interfere with the activity being observed. Interviewing allows clarification and flexibility in questioning, something not possible with paper and pencil surveys. “In contrast to the rigidity of a survey, the interview format usually allows for probes of the parents’ responses in a way that provides much more complete and thorough information” (1992, p.14).

Holden and Coleman (1992) also cite three potential sources of error from interview data: forgetting, deliberate withholding or falsifying information; and unconsciously motivated omissions or distortions. Their suggestions are that interviewers direct questions to recently occurring parental behaviour, focus on details and specifics, and avoid value judgements. They also point out that the interview is more time consuming and difficult to reduce into data than a questionnaire.

3.3 Research Design

3.3.1 Identifying Questions

I have developed a conceptual framework which summarizes the important areas related to my research, based on a literature review and discussion with various groups of people (e.g., Chinese social workers, cross-cultural social service providers, Chinese immigrant parents who have been Canada for more than 10 years, and school teachers), From this framework (see Figure 1, Chapter 2, p.30), one can see clearly the connections (the arrows) of the issues which guided me to the main questions.

"Symbolic interactionism places a premium on the personal and social construction of meaning and the essential importance of interpretation in human experience" (Snyder, 1992, p.48). In the conceptual framework, the process of immigration and the adjustment to a new life have an effect on child development through their impact on parenting practices. Questions arise such as: *What is the meaning of immigration and the cultural transition on Chinese parents from Mainland China who came to Canada with their children? How do they make sense of the new environment? Do the parental behaviors of these Chinese new immigrants have meaning for their children's development?*

In this framework, family interaction is not only affected by immigration and adaptation, but also influenced by the culture and values that parents and children retain. For instance, *How do they see their ethnic identities? What problems are there in their families because of the cultural factors and different values between parents and children, or others? Whom do they seek help from? What are their help-seeking patterns*

and behaviors? All these issues are connected to the development of ethnic-sensitive social work practice. The study of these questions may shed light on the following: *How can culturally appropriate social service programs be delivered to help different families and meet different needs?* My interview guide was developed from these questions (Appendix D).

3.3.2 Data Sources

In the recruitment stage of the study, I made an inquiry through the Chi-List, that is, the e-mail list of Chinese Student and Scholar's Association, and submitted a very brief introduction of my research. I asked people who were interested in obtaining more information to contact me. I also put a poster in the building where many Chinese new immigrants lived.

The primary selection criteria for participants include:

- 1) Families from Mainland China who came to Canada after 1990. From 1987 to 1995, over 250, 000 Chinese students came to Western countries. Most of them came to North America ("Manitoba Chinese Post", April 1, 1998). My research population will be those new immigrants who are currently studying or working in Winnipeg. I wanted to know the experience of the families in the adaptation stage. "On average, most people take five to seven years to adapt to a new country" (Manitoba Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, 1997, p.1);

- 2) Families with at least one child from 8 to 12 years old. "Generally speaking, children in Chinese families are not submitted to strict discipline during their childhood, but experience this after entering school" (Rin, 1980, p.220). Some researchers state that the youngest and oldest children acculturate less quickly than children who arrive during the middle years of childhood (Landale, 1997). Landale provides the following explanation: very young children have little exposure to institutions outside of the family, whereas older children tend to be less malleable due to both their developmental stage and the greater duration of their exposure to the country of origin. In my research population, there were not many older children because most of these new Chinese immigrants were between 30 and 40 years of age. In the sample, the oldest child was 12 years old.
- 3) Parents and Children have English or Chinese (Mandarin) speaking ability. Some parents, especially newcomers, could not speak English well and preferred to speak Mandarin. Some children preferred speaking English.
- 4) At least one parent had post-secondary education and was a professional (i.e. teacher, doctor, engineer, professor, manager, and public servant –“cadre”, etc.) in China. This is an important aspect in terms of their social class background. This is also a unique characteristic of my research population. When analyzing educational achievement and aspirations in immigrant families, Rumbaut (1997) has discovered that parental education and occupational status have positive independent effects on GPA (Grade Point Average) and achievement test scores as well as on educational aspirations among children of immigrants.

I did not use a group interview for wives and husbands, because in Chinese culture people don't like to talk about their problems in front of others. As well, some parents might know each other, which would make the group interview more difficult. They would not say "negative" things about their families in order to save face. 'Saving face' and 'losing face' are well known Chinese concepts, which relate to avoiding conflict and protecting the honor and reputation of the family. On the other hand, I preferred to interview children in a small group because this helps children to express themselves openly. Based on my personal experiences, Chinese children are usually quiet and polite. In a one on one interview, they might be nervous and shy to answer questions. A group atmosphere can stimulate their desire to participate, especially with their close friends. My interviews affirmed this assumption.

3.3.3 Data Collection

After I received feedback through e-mail and phone calls, I contacted 10 families who wanted more information. I described my study goals and intent, as well as recruitment criteria. Parents and children who were willing to participate in the study were asked to sign the consent form (see appendix B) (I will address confidentiality and other ethical concerns in the next section). I then contacted them individually to schedule an interview at a convenient time. I made sure that every participant fully understood what would happen and their right to withdraw from the study at any time. I told parents that if a family member wanted to withdraw, or if a child wanted to participate and not parents or vice versa, I would understand and respect their choices.

Since only one couple was available to be interviewed together, I interviewed one parent

from each family. Based on the availability of the parents, I interviewed 4 mothers (*MA*, *MB*, *MC*, *ME*), 2 fathers (*FD*, *FF*), and one grandmother (*GRE*) who was willing to participate in the interview with her daughter (*ME*). I also interviewed two groups of children. Among seven families I chose to interview, only one family had a boy who matched the age criteria. All the other six families have girls. With consideration to the children's comfort, I decided to interview only the girls (*G1*, *G2*, *G3*, *G4*, *G5*, and *G6*). Therefore, each group interview consisted of three girls.

Most interviews were conducted in the respondents' homes. Among six parents, four were interviewed in their own home. Two parents and a group of children were interviewed at my home. Another group of children was interviewed in the family room in the building. I prepared snacks and drinks for the children. The length of each interview varied from approximately one and half to three hours.

Interviews were conducted based on the interview guide (see appendix D) which was constructed to provide guidance for me to explore "what seems meaningful to the particular person" (Snyder, 1992, p.48). "Just as long as the topic was covered to my satisfaction, the wording and order of the questions was not an issue" (Hessler, 1992, p.148). For better understanding the situation of the families, a simple sociodemographic questionnaire was included (see Appendix C). The interviews were audiotaped and each tape/transcript (with questionnaire) was assigned a code number.

My primary data came from transcribed discussions with the Chinese immigrants whom I interviewed and the field notes I was taking during the interviews. All the interviews with parents were conducted in Chinese Mandarin. I used English for one group of children

and for the other, Chinese Mandarin most of time, sometimes mixed with English.

Transcription and translation from Chinese Mandarin to English were processed after I interviewed each person and at the end of study. I did primary data analysis as I collected data after I finished my interviews. Interview data was hand-coded and analyzed with the aid of the computer. I used the word processing software - "Microsoft Word" - to cut and paste, and match categories and excerpts. Field notes were used to enhance the findings from the interviews.

The actual data consisted of the complete transcripts from 13 participants (four mothers, 2 fathers, one grandmother, and 6 children, who were all girls), and analytic memos I wrote which also included my observations. In the process of doing data collection and analysis, I kept communicating with a group of people that include, cross-cultural social workers, Chinese social service providers, and other Chinese parents who did not participate in my research in order to get feedback on my findings. For example, after the third, sixth and ninth interviews, I went to talk with two Chinese parents who did not participate in the interviews and a Chinese social service worker in order to hear their opinions about my analysis. Based on these discussions, I revised my interview questions. For example, two Chinese mothers who came to Canada ten years ago suggested that I should know what parents thought about teachers in school. Because they felt that the way teachers teach children had an impact on parental discipline. If teachers were not strict enough, children would not listen to parents and thought them too harsh. I added the question for parents "Do you think teachers play an important role in your children's development and how?"

3.3.4 *Data Management and Analysis*

I began by making photocopies of each page of transcription. On the side of each page, I left a margin to code my data. I also wrote down the notes about my personal reactions to the data and descriptive words to indicate the themes of the experiences that had been shared with me in the margin. For example, besides the parents' words "Xiao Shun - filial piety is very important. I don't expect she will support our life when we are old, but I do hope she is very close to us,...", I coded "filial piety" and also wrote down "the change of meaning -- different explanation of filial piety with old definition".

The transcribed interviews were hand-coded. I used different colored highlighters to mark the key words and phrases, and marked repeated words and phrases in the interviews by the same color. After carefully identifying meaning units and categories, I assigned codes to those categories, and kept refining and reorganizing codings based on my increased understanding of the meaning of the content. The phrases or words that repeated most became my categories.

Kirby (1989) describes the essence of the analysis as "moving data from category to category (constant comparative), looking for what is common (properties), and what is uncommon (satellites) within categories and between categories" (p.146). At first I developed almost a hundred categories. But subsequently, with ongoing analysis, I realized that each category was too specific to include meaningful information. I started to compare and contrast the categories, and integrate the categories into more general ones, to produce themes and subthemes based on their properties. For example, after making a list of all the "labels", I grouped the ones that seem to fit together and found

one new label for them. I grouped "keeping language ability", "retaining Chinese culture and identity", and "peer relationships" into "Being a Chinese". Then "Being Chinese" became one component of the subtheme "Children's Development - Expectations". Similarly, I combined "putting on pressure", "more criticism than praise", and "punishment and shame" and produced a major theme "Chinese ways of discipline". What I bore in mind is that "be careful not to force labels that don't fit well into meaning units" (Ely, 1991, p.88).

In terms of comprehending the data, I found that some questions for the participants made no sense while some other questions should have been in my guideline. For example, when I ask parents about their expectations of their children, three parents answered that they hoped their children would not start to "date" prior to high school. In my interview guideline, I did not have questions about "dating" or peer relationships. I asked parents to explain the meaning of "dating too early". Parents told me that they watch TV and knew there were a lot of teenage mothers in Canada. This would not be allowed in China, but seemed fine in Canada. They were afraid that their children would be influenced by the different values here. They also had concerns that if children start to "date too early", they would not concentrate on their studying and their academic achievement would be severely affected.

When I was establishing the links between categories, I used the "hurricane thinking" approach (Kirby, 1989). Using this method, I put the "eye of the hurricane" - the research question about Chinese Child Rearing Practices in the center of a page. Then I put all the category names on small cards and moved them around the center "until those which

have the strongest ties remain closest to the center and those with less obvious or weaker ties sit at a distance"(Kirby, 1989, p.147). I also drew lines between each category and the center, with darker lines denoting stronger connections. After repeating this process for many times, the patterns of relations of data emerged and I obtained three major themes and 7 subthemes (see Chapter 4 - Representation of Findings).

3.4 Ethical Considerations

Fontana and Frey (1994) state that

“Because the goal of unstructured interviewing is *understanding*, it becomes paramount for the researcher to establish rapport. He or she must be able to put him- or herself in the role of the respondents and attempt to see the situation from their perspective, rather than impose the world of academia and preconceptions upon them” (p.367).

From this perspective, I had the same cultural background and experience as my respondents. I felt confident that I would gain trust from the participants by sharing my experience and using the language with which they were familiar. However, some problems created by close rapport with participants needs to be considered such as "the researcher may become a spokesperson for the group studied, losing his or her distance and objectivity, or may 'go native' and become a member of the group and forgo the academic role" (Fontana & Frey, 1994, p367). I was aware of this and clearly explained the purpose of the study to the participants. I made it clear to participants of that the study could help social agencies to improve their services. Service providers could benefit from the information about immigrant family lives which I was gathering in my study. At the same time, I tried my best to put the participants at ease and help them feel free to talk,

and share their concerns and outlooks.

The central aspects of qualitative research are observation, interviewing, and documentary analysis. Of greatest concerns are the issues of harm, consent, deception, privacy, and confidentiality of data (Punch, 1994). To protect participants and their dignity, and not invade their privacy, Punch noted that "identities, locations of individuals and places are concealed in published results, data collected are held in anonymized form, and all data kept securely confidential" (1994, p.92). Although my research focused on parenting issues not family problems, I was sensitive to the issues of anonymity and confidentiality. For example, when I felt some participants were hesitating in speaking, I switched the question to make them feel comfortable. The ethical issues associated with my study also include management of information such as where tapes, notes, and transcripts are stored, what would happen to them when the study is concluded, and what would become of my findings.

To deal with these issues, first of all, I helped the participants understand the voluntary nature of the study and their rights to withdraw at any time. Secondly, their names and identifying information do not appear in the study. Identifying data will not be released to other researchers without the explicit informed consent of the participants. Thirdly, the tapes and field notes were stored in a secure place in my home, known only to myself.

A major dilemma I faced was the issue of confidentiality. To deal with this, I prepared my consent form (see Appendix B) and clearly described the purpose and procedures of the study. I made sure that every participant fully understood what was going to happen in the course of the study. For example, I told the parents that I was going to interview

small groups of children and it would be difficult to keep confidentiality. I let parents consider the possible effect on them. I also told them I would ask their children about their family and parents' discipline practices. I emphasized all participants had a right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty and refuse to answer any question they didn't want to answer. They were also told that they had the right to ask for clarification or more information throughout the study. They also had the right not to let their children participate in interviews. I also mentioned that if the information involved child abuse or neglect, I was obligated to report this to Child and Family Services or the police.

In addition, I emphasized that the questions I asked the children did not concern marital conflicts and other family problems, but focused on parenting practices. All my questions for children were about child/parent interaction and discipline. I also discussed confidentiality with the children. I told them I would give them each a pretend name and I would not tell anybody what they said. I said I "hope" they keep secrets about what other children shared and all children promised they would do so. But I knew it could not be realistically guaranteed. Another strategy used was to exclude data if a child indicated that she did not want her parents to know.

Some parents were participants in a parenting group I facilitated a year ago. At the time of my research, there was no risk of a conflict of interest because I was not a group facilitator and had no working relationships with them. But there was a limitation in my role as a social worker student and a mother of a young child. Some parents who had known me may have had previous perceptions about my values. That is, they might answer the questions in the way they thought I would like to hear. In the interview

process, I showed sincerity to learn from my participants and understanding of their experiences.

3.5 Research Limitations

During the process of this study, there were some dilemmas which were unavoidable.

Three major ones were:

- 1) "In-depth interviewing sometimes requires a great deal of patience. Informants can talk at length about things in which you have no great interest" (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998, p.101). Although I was interested in listening to their comments, sometimes I found it very difficult to get interviewees back on track. I did not use subtle gestures as Taylor and Bogdan (1998) suggested since I was very sensitive to the people I interviewed. I was very much aware of the culturally appropriate ways to interact with these Chinese intellectuals. Some interviews were very long and it was very time-consuming to do all the transcriptions. Some data were very important but did not fit my research questions so it was left unanalyzed. For example, a mother talked about "virginity" and how she changed her attitude on this issue. I hope in the future that I or other researchers have opportunities to do further research.
- 2) The second limitation to my role as a researcher was my role as a social worker; some parents might not have had full understanding of this. Since I facilitated parenting groups and hosted a social service column in the Chinese newspaper, I gained a lot of understanding of family issues affecting Chinese immigrant

parents. This was very helpful in framing my research questions. On the other hand, these experiences might have influenced my data collection. The participants who attended my groups (two parents) or read my articles (all participants) might have consciously or unconsciously used their perceptions of what I wanted to hear to respond to my questions. In trying to help people feel comfortable and free to talk, I interacted with them as a Chinese parent to Chinese parent, or woman to woman, or newcomer to newcomer. However it may have been unavoidable for the participants not to associate me with the "Dear Helen" column in the Chinese newspaper.

- 3) Another limitation was the fact that the children I interviewed were all girls. As I explained in the Chapter 3, in seven families I interviewed, six families had girls, while only one family had a boy. It would have been ideal to interview the same number of boys to see if there was a difference in disciplining girls and boys in Chinese new immigrant families. This would have been also helpful in identifying problems in parent/son, parent / daughter relationships, and exploring similarities and differences.

3.6 Issue of Validity

Miles and Huberman (1984) discuss twelve tactics for testing or confirming findings, which include: 1) checking for representativeness; 2) checking for researcher effects; 3) triangulating; 4) weighting the evidence; 5) contrasts and comparisons; 6) checking the meaning of outliers; 7) using extreme cases; 8) ruling out spurious relations; 9) replicating a finding; 10) checking out rival explanations; 11) looking for negative

evidence and 12) getting feedback from informants.

Most of these measures have been undertaken in my study. For example, the range of data sources I used included interviews with three different kind of participants: parents, children, and grandparents, and extensive review of the related literature. The key concepts defined by the literature review were used for comparison with the findings in order to expand the knowledge, confirm and disconfirm the analysis, and extend the findings. These data sets complemented and supplemented each other. I also went back to my research participants asking them individually to confirm or refute my interpretations. During the process of interview and data analysis, I consulted on my results from time to time with my "advisory group" which consisted of a Chinese social service provider, a cross-cultural counselor, a school teacher and several Chinese immigrant parents who have been here for more than 10 years. Their insights were very helpful for me to balance the perspective from the data I collected (Coleman, H. & Unrau, Y., 1996).

I was very happy to have a grandmother participate in the study. When I talked with her daughter about the interview, she showed great interest to participate and said she had a lot to say. I found that it would be helpful to get a grandmother's opinions since she had close observation of the parent/child interaction at home. While children thought parents were too strict, the grandmother found the parents were too permissive. Were parents too strict or too permissive? Why was there such a difference? What were the meanings of being strict or being permissive? Putting those responses into the context of the study in a new cultural environment, it was clearer that parents were changing, adapting, and struggling.

In summary, "[Q]ualitative methods, designed to capture emergent meanings, are well suited to the study of a wide range of family experiences"(Daly, 1992, p.11). The qualitative methodology I discussed here provided a very powerful tool to study the research questions and analyze the data I collected from intensive interviews. The following chapter presents the findings of the research.

CHAPTER 4 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

In the process of observing and interviewing parents and children, I found that I collected information about Chinese family dynamics which went beyond that asked for in my interview guide.

As I previously discussed, I interviewed 13 persons from seven families, which included four mothers, two fathers, six girls, and one grandmother. In these 7 families, five families had one child, and the other two had two children. Among these nine children, two were under two years old (one was a boy, another was a girl), the other seven children range in age from 8 to 12 years old (6 girls, 1 boy who I did not interview).

Two families have Canadian Citizenship. The members of the other five families hold Chinese passports, with landed immigrant status.

The sociodemographic data is summarized in Figure 4.1.

FIGURE 4.1 SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC DATA**Family Number: 7**

Item	Father	Mother	Children
1. Average Length of time in Canada	6 years	4.5 years	4 years
2. Official immigration status coming to Canada	International Student 4 (57%) Visiting Scholar 2 (29%) Visitor 1 (14%)	Visitors 5 (71%) Student 1 (14%) Immigrant 1 (14%)	
3. Current Average age	38 years old	37.2 years old	9.4 years old
4. Occupation in China	Researcher 3 (43%) Lecturer/Teacher 3 (43%) Student 1 (14%)	Engineer 4 (57%) Teacher 3 (43%)	
5. The highest level of education before coming to Canada	Master of Science 4 (57%) Bachelor of Science 2 (29%) Ph.D. 1 (14%)	B. S. 5 (71%) M.S. 1 (14%) College Diploma 1 (14%)	
6. Present occupation	Ph.D. Student 4 (57%) Post-doctorate 1 (14%) Technician 1 (14%) Computer Programmer 1 (14%)	College Student 2 (28%) House Wife 2 (28%) University Student 2 (28%) Technician 1 (14%)	
7. The language spoken at home	Chinese 7 (100%)	Chinese 7 (100%)	
8. Children attending Chinese school			7 (100%)

"One widely used approach to final analysis is the search for themes" (Ely, 1991, p.150).

I singled out some major themes and subthemes that emerged from my data and that seemed to me to have significance in answering my research questions. The results of the study have led me to a framework that consisted of three major themes (MT) and seven subthemes (ST).

The first major theme consisted of parent/child interaction issues. It is referred to as:

Parental Responsibility to Support Children's development. Since the focus was changes in parenting for Chinese immigrants, the second major theme was discipline, and it is called ***Chinese ways of discipline.*** The third major theme contained the barriers to seeking help. It is discussed as: ***Difficulties in the New Society.***

The subthemes emerged from the themes and include: ***Children's Development and***

Parents' Expectations; Meaning of Being Supportive under parental responsibility;

Putting on Pressure; More Criticism than Praise; Punishment and Shame within the

Chinese Ways of Discipline; Family Issues in the New Society; and Barriers to Seeking Help .

The framework of themes is presented in the Figure 4.2. **Thematic Summary of Findings.**

FIGURE 4.2 THEMATIC SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Major Themes	Subthemes	Components
Major Theme 1: Parental Responsibility to Support Children's Development	Subtheme 1: Children's Development and Parents' Expectations	1) "You Chu Xi" - Having a Bright Future. 2) "Xiao Shun" - Filial Piety 3) Being a Chinese
	Subtheme 2: The Meaning of Being Supportive	1) Self-Sacrifice 2) Role-Modeling 3) Financial Ability 4) Active Adaptation
Major Theme 2: Chinese Ways of Discipline	Subtheme 3 Putting on Pressure	1) Requiring Extra Homework 2) Expecting Perfection in the Child
	Subtheme 4 More Criticism than Praise	1) Ways of Expressing Feelings 2) Material Reward
	Subtheme 5 Punishment and Shame	1) Reasonable Punishment 2) Shame
Major Theme 3: Difficulties in the New Society	Subtheme 6 Family Issues in the New Society	1) Family Communications 2) Cultural Differences 3) Impatience
	Subtheme 7 Barriers to Seeking Help	1) Self - Help 2) No trust

MT 1: Parental Responsibility to Support Child Development

Without any exception, all the Chinese parents I interviewed described their duty and main responsibility as parents as supporting their children's development. However their explanation of "child's development" and "ways of support" were more or less different.

Parents agreed that the core issue in child-rearing practices is how to support children's development. They also realized that, in the new environment, their understandings of children's development and the ways to help are affected by the new culture, especially its different values. They all hoped to adapt to the new environment while retaining their own culture and traditions. In the interviews, they not only described their family interactions, but also explained their behaviors.

ST1. Children's Development and Parents' Expectations

When they talked about their children, almost every parent used the same word to express their expectations for their children: "*You Chu Xi* -- Having a Bright Future". Most parents mentioned the word: "*Xiao Shun* - Filial Piety". Most also wanted their children to remain Chinese, while only one hoped their children would become "Chinese Canadian".

1) "*You Chu Xi* -- Having a Bright Future"

"*You Chu Xi*" has a very wide meaning in the Chinese language. You may say some children are "*You Chu Xi*" because they won first place in a contest or on an examination. This would help them have greater achievements in the future (e.g., enter good

universities, start a good career, etc.). You may also say somebody "*You Chu Xi*" because she/he accomplished something which brings honor to parents and family. "*You Chu Xi*" has been considered as the main way for parents to direct child's development. A parent clearly stated:

MB*: I have never educated her (the daughter) to have "filial piety" like supporting us when we are old. What I hope is that she "*You Chu Xi*" -- has a bright future, which means the only expectation I have is that she gets higher education and thus, a good career.

According to parents I interviewed, "*You Chu Xi*" consisted of three major components:

a) academic achievement; b) perseverance; and c) having a better life than their parents.

a) "*Xue Xi Hao* (Study Well)" - Academic Achievement

It was amazing but not surprising that almost every parent expected her (his) child to "Study Well" - have great academic achievement. In Chinese parents' eyes, this expectation was a major part of "*You Chu Xi*". Every parent encourages her/his child to do well at school and to overcome the hurdles to progress to the designed goal. In fact, most children in the families I interviewed did have very good academic records. One

*mother's words were repeated by other parents:

MA: He (the son) has a very good record in school. He always gets Excellent or A+ in Math, Science, etc. I feel good because he always brought A+ or A home. He does not have to be a Ph.D. like his father. But at least he should have a master's degree.

* **MB** refers to "the mother from B family", **FD** "the father from D family", etc.

Most parents I interviewed had a higher education and were professionals in China. In most families, at least one parent was a Doctoral or Master's student at the University of Manitoba. Because they experienced difficulties in job seeking in Canada, they felt that their knowledge and skills were not recognized. Some parents stated that Canada focuses on applied technology rather than scientific research; therefore, their children "do not have to be a Ph.D.":

MD: With too high a degree such as Ph.D. or Post-doctorate it is not easy to find a job in Canada. It is not practical. But she (her daughter) should have a master's degree.

After I heard the similar statement in my third interview, I could not help but ask a mother: *"What if he (her son) just wants to go to community college and then find work?"*

Here is her answer:

MA (firmly): No. I won't let him do that. He has the capacity. We will convince him. Going to the university is the minimum requirement. He must go to the university. He should also get a master's degree. We hope he will have a very good career.

Since academic development was very much emphasized, some parents ignored other aspects in their children's development:

MB: I still think it is very important to study hard. If she did not do house work, that is OK. But if she does not study hard, I am very angry. Aside from her entering the university, I am not too much concerned about other stuff like the career choices.

To further emphasize the focus on academic achievement, every child I interviewed told me that the most important thing for their parents was their studies. This kind of pressure

produced high levels of anxiety for the children. One child's response reflected her parent's expectations:

G6*: My parents always want me to be in the first place of my class in my studies. Every day when I got home, the first thing they (parents) asked was if I finished assignments, how I did in the school, what the teacher said about my studies, that kind of thing.

G4: Once I made a minor mistake in the exam and tied for the first place in the class, my father said: "Tied for the first place? Why didn't you exceed the other? You should have had a hundred percent because the problems were not difficult at all!"

In a building where the parents lived, there is a Chinese school which has Chinese language classes (various levels), Mathematics classes, Chinese painting classes, and some other classes, all of which are operated voluntarily by parents. This indicates the extent of parental expectations for the academic success of their children.

b) Perseverance

Parents saw academic achievement as the most important factor in achieving a "bright future". Some parents also believed that children should be able to persevere in studying to ensure a better future. The parents educated their children to be good, to work hard and to persist in given tasks. Children were also taught that they all can achieve if they try hard enough.

FD: She (daughter) is a very nice, smart and lovely girl. But she does not have a very strong character. She is weak in bearing hardships, not like us when we were young. We went through so many hard things. When she meets

* G6 refers to the girl from the family 6, G4 the girl from the family 4, etc.

difficulties, she uses tears rather than thinking through a solution to deal with it. I hope she is getting stronger and can handle difficulties on her own.

This was not only true for girls; a boy's mother had the same concern:

MA: We went through all kinds of hardships in our lives such as experiencing the Cultural Revolution, going abroad and wandering destitute far from home. One of my concerns is that when my son grows up, he will not be able to bear hardship because here it is too comfortable. He can get almost anything he wants. If he meets any setback in the future, I don't know if he can handle it. He will not have the experiences we had.

The "we" represented here was the whole generation born in the fifties and sixties that went through many political events such as the "Cultural Revolution", "going and working in the countryside", and the 1989 Democratic Movement, etc. This generation, without unremitting effort and perseverance in the face of difficulties, would not have received higher education and become professionals. They passed strict university entrance examinations and the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) to go abroad to study. Their children, however, would be different since they experienced different situations:

MA: We worked so hard and went through many keen competitions to get education, find a job and go abroad for advanced studies. But my son and his generation will not have that kind of spirit of competition. In his school, there is no competition. They don't have a name list in the order of their records or selection of model students like in China. He has no idea about coming in first in class. When we had difficulties, we knew we had to endure, we had to handle them by ourselves. But for him, I don't know. I am afraid that he will give up when he has hard times because his road is too smooth. He will not know how to deal with the difficulties. If he is not competitive, how can he survive when he meets challenges? I worry a lot about it.

Sharing these kinds of concerns, some parents agreed that their children needed to start working in their first year in high school to have a little preparation for their future:

FD: I hope she can start working a little when she enters high school. It will be helpful to foster her working habits and learn to be self-sufficient. It is good if she can support parts of her tuition, but we will support her education. We will do our best. She said she would teach piano to make money for her future education. She also wants to enter a good university. I think she also needs to learn to do housework because she is eleven years old now. If she can not do some thing like setting the table, washing dishes, or cleaning her room, how can she take care of herself when she grows up? I want her to take over some household duties because it will help her to build up her sense of responsibility. Her mother is very permissive and does everything for her.

Like this father, most parents were very sure of being able to support their children's education. They repeatedly stressed that they wanted their children to work a little, not for money, but for the ability ("the spirit of labor"), to be mentally prepared for the future:

ME: If I can afford it, I will support her education. As for working, like a summer job, I hope she can do a little bit to foster her ability but not for money. I definitely will support her (financially). At least she should get a university degree.

c) Having a better life than their parents

Having a better life than their parents was a common topic in Chinese immigrant families. All the parents I interviewed had university education in China and Canada and a certain social status in their home country. However, as new immigrants, they had many negative experiences due to language barriers, cultural shock and discrimination. They saw the pre-eminent goal for their children as having a higher socio-economic status than they have now, and even better than they had in the home country. A few

parents mentioned that they stayed in Canada because of their children, and therefore their children must do better:

FD: We, as the first generation, are not young anymore, and can not make a great improvement in our status. But they (children) are different. I hope she will do better than us. *She should*. She *should* have better education, better career, and better social status than we have. She *should* enter a university, a good university. The second generation should be better than the first generation. I hope she will become a doctor.

This father used the word “should” several times to emphasize his expectations. A mother called these “shoulds” parental responsibilities:

MA: We have brought this child into this world and have responsibilities to bring him up a successful man. He should have better life than his parents. The next generation should do better than us. That is the value of the parents. If a child is looked down by people or is a good-for-nothing, *the parents are failures*. That is why I said that his needs always come first. We will never, never consider our comfort first. We don’t expect him to take care of us when we get old. What we want is that he accomplishes great things in the future.

2) "Xiao Shun" - Filial Piety

"Xiao Shun - Filial Piety" means, traditionally, not only showing gratitude by providing for parents when they are old, but also respecting and trying to please them. Although most parents I interviewed expressed concerns about their children's disobedience -- "*Bu Ting Hua*" (not listening to parents), no parents expected the old concept of filial piety. Most parents expected their children "*Ting Hua*" -- to listen to their parents and saw this as the major part of filial piety. In their minds, children should listen to parents because parents' words are all for their good. Some of them also have different explanations of "*Xiao Shun - Filial Piety*".

MB: Since my daughter came here, she seems more outgoing. She feels relaxed and less restrained. But she is not as obedient as before (in China) (laughs). When she was in China, she absolutely obeyed us ("*Ting Hua*").

A parent explained his concept about "*Xiao Shun* - Filial Piety":

FD: "*Xiao Shun*" is important. I don't expect her to support us when we are old. But I do hope she is very close to us. I don't want to live in a nursing home when I am old. We are Chinese and value "*Tian Lun Zhi Le* -- family happiness". The natural bonds and ethical relationships between members of a family are very important. In my opinion, you will spend your remaining years in happiness if your children are "*Xiao Shun*". It does not mean that she should do a lot of things for parents but she should always show considerations for parents. Parents have done so much for her and she should bear it in mind.

Parents were proud of their family values and thought it was a very precious cultural heritage. As Abdu'l-Baha stated 87 years ago: "The East and the West must unite to give each other what is lacking" (CCC, 1987, p.143). This father thought "*Xiao Shun*" would be beneficial not only to Chinese but also to Canadians:

FD: In Canada, United States and other western countries, the pension plan has so many problems and no one knows about the future. But if you educate children well and they are "*Xiao Shun*", you will not have problems when you are old. Your children will help you. In a word, if you want to have a happy life in your later years, you should have good children (who are "*Xiao Shun*"). It is not only good for children, for yourself, but also for the society. "*Xiao Shun*" is a child's duty. Actually it is a very good aspect of Chinese culture, and we brought it to this multicultural society. Western people may learn from it. I believe "*Xiao Shun*" is worthwhile to be made use of by them.

3) Being a Chinese

It was very interesting to find that the older children (11 years old) saw themselves more Chinese, while younger children (7 to 10) called themselves Chinese Canadians. On the other hand, most parents considered their children Chinese, although some parents also

used the word "Chinese Canadian" and indicated that they were not "Banana – outside yellow, inside white". No parent thought their children should be "Canadians".

a) Keep language ability and retain Chinese culture

First of all, every parent wanted their children to maintain Chinese language ability and retain their culture. They emphasized that children needed to know who they were and to have a Chinese identity. However among all the six children I interviewed, half of them called themselves Chinese, and the other half, Chinese-Canadians. They all attended the Chinese school.

Going to Chinese school was one way to help children keep their Chinese language ability. Some parents saw this as a symbol of their children's identity. To help their children, parents spoke Chinese at home, even though they studied English very hard. They also encouraged their children to play with Chinese children to reinforce their motivation to speak Chinese.

MA: We urge and encourage him to learn Chinese. We have had a very hard time because our English is not good enough. We want him to have very good English and Chinese as well, which will help him to have more advantages. Here the environment is English, like school, TV, etc. We have to provide him with a good environment to practice Chinese. At home, we always speak Chinese. Language means not only linguistics but also culture. We can read and write in English, but it is very difficult to communicate with Canadian people, because of the different culture. He should have good Chinese language skills. China is getting stronger and stronger. By the time he grows up, China will be a very advanced country in the world. His Chinese skills will give him a great advantage to find work. Because many big Canadian companies will do business with China, he will have lots of opportunities to work.

FD: Some parents want to practice English with their children because children learn English very fast. But after a while, children forget their Chinese. It is a pity. A friend of mine did this kind of thing. They (parents) spoke English at home with their child because they wanted to improve their own English. About two years later, they found out that the child refused to speak Chinese and forgot all Chinese culture. They were very regretful for not speaking Chinese at home. Then it was too late. He even refused to go to Chinese school. Think about it, when he goes back to China to visit his grandparents or other relatives, he will need an interpreter!

G4: At home I speak Chinese. The two commonly used English words are: SO? and Bye! (Laughter).

Almost all the parents I interviewed were proud of their own culture and hoped their children would retain it. Although they expressed their willingness to adapt to the new environment, they realized that they had difficulties accepting the different values and behaviors. At the same time, different ways to ensure the children did not abandon Chinese values was a source of family conflicts.

MA: We were educated in China, and our own culture and experiences formed our values and worldview. It is not easy to change them. My son is different. He accepts new stuff without any difficulty. I think he should retain Chinese culture and values such as respecting and showing filial obedience to parents. There is a lot of good stuff in Chinese culture that he should learn. That is why we keep urging him to study the Chinese language.

But although he can speak Chinese now, he doesn't want to follow the teachings such as obeying parents and being polite. He is readily receptive to Canadian culture. (Uncertainly) Maybe he would retain some Chinese culture because at home he is nurtured in the environment of Chinese values and tradition. Our teaching would exert an imperceptible influence on his thoughts and behavior. For example, sometimes he does what we ask such as going to Chinese classes. He may accept a little (Chinese culture).

Some parents were very happy to see their children "behave as a Chinese" and think of themselves as Chinese. A father described how they made efforts to make this happen:

FD: When she came here, she went to daycare. She had her pre-school and elementary school education in Canada. But we (parents) have been imbuing her with Chinese culture and values. We forced her to speak Chinese and set strict demands on her. When she was in daycare, we started to teach her Chinese characters. We started early because we know keeping our own language in a foreign country is very difficult. If she starts earlier, and practices at home, she may have interest in speaking Chinese. Otherwise, when she enters school, an English environment, and speaks English everyday, she would not be willing to learn Chinese. Now, although she can speak Chinese, writing is a big problem for her.

He was very proud of his daughter for her good Chinese language ability:

She speaks Chinese very well and can describe the things that happened in her school in Chinese to us. She always says she is Chinese although she has been here for eight years. She is very sure of her identity. She loves Chinese culture and her uncle called her "a little patriot". Some times she acted as an interpreter for the kids who came to the school recently. Other parents like their children to play with her because they can practice more Chinese.

b) Adapting to the New Environment

At the same time, some parents had positive comments about the new environment. They realized that their children achieved some improvement in different areas:

MA: The main reason we remain here is for him. The Canadian education system has its advantages. The style is lively, open and encouraging. They use models and some other ways to foster students' ability to practice and study on their own. They have a lot of activities and children have fun. That is good. In China, strict examination is highly valued and children have no time to play. Courses are very heavy.

She found her son had made some "positive" changes and thought it was good:

Since we came here, my son has changed a lot. One good change is that he is more out-going now. Before, he was very shy (in China), and did not like to talk although he was naughty. But now, in the school, he likes to answer questions and talk with people. I think this is good. Combining this positive aspect with Chinese culture, he will do a better job in the future. It

is good that he is more open than before because here people are encouraged to speak out.

But she also mentioned the cultural differences which affected Chinese people's development in the new environment:

We were educated to be modest and not to show off. But here it is different. In my husband's workplace, people who like to talk always gain the upper hand like getting more grants although some of them don't know more than others do. In Canada, if you are talkative, you will be seen as more capable. If you don't like to talk, no matter how knowledgeable you are, you will not be looked up to. Besides culture, language ability is also a big barrier. So I think it is good for him to be open.

A mother made a comparison between a Chinese teacher and a Canadian teacher and noticed her daughter's change:

MB: Another good change is that she likes answering questions in the class. When she was in China, she dared not do that because of too much pressure. If she gave a wrong answer, the teacher would criticize her in front of her classmates. She also would feel loss of face. Here it is different. Teachers always encourage you by saying "You did good job" or "It is great", something like that. Even if you did not do that well, the teacher will say "good, good". She likes the environment here, for example, convenient living facilities, not much pressure in the school, much more time to play, etc., but she misses her friends in China. She cried several times because she misses her friends. She thinks they are better than the friends here. She said that she wanted to go back to see them. But she said that in her schoolwork she lagged behind her friends in China. She will never catch up with them (if she goes back to China).

c) Peer Relationships

Some parents also explained the reasons why they hoped their children kept Chinese culture and values. They were very concerned about the influence of the environment on their children.

MA: Now the majority of his friends are Chinese children. We also hope he can spend more time with Chinese children because we see some bad habits in Canadian children, like having girlfriends when they are young (even in an elementary school). (Very firmly) This is not good and is not allowed in our (Chinese) families. Some (Canadian) children are violent and are very aggressive. The crime rate is very low in Chinese youth and it is almost unthinkable in our new immigrant families to have violent children or gang members.

I heard several parents' concerns about peer influences and their hopes that their children would play more with other Chinese children. "Dating" was seen to be a very serious matter and most parents did not agree that children could have a "boyfriend" or "girlfriend" in their "early years".

MA: I will not allow him to date in school even in high school. He should concentrate on studying not dating. Having a girlfriend is a serious thing. You should think about marriage.

FD: It is too early for her (11 years old) to have a boyfriend now. When she is 16 or over, maybe it is OK. I hope she will date a good boy. I hope he is a Chinese boy. From the perspective of biology, mixed blood is not good. Same skin color (with different ethnic background) is OK, but different color will create problems. If a Caucasian and Chinese get married, what is their child's identity? Is he Chinese, or a Caucasian? He has no root and neither society will accept him. This is not good for a child. He will blame his parents.

Having heard how parents relate "dating" to marriage, based on their cultural concepts, I asked a mother, " *What if your son wants to marry a Canadian woman?*"

MA: I will try to stop him. Maybe he won't listen to me. The Canadians don't value family. Some of them are not serious about marriage. Look at the high divorce rate here. It is so scary. Canadian women don't know our traditions and cultures. They are not stable. Maybe after two years of marriage, she (Canadian wife) will say, "Bye Bye" suddenly and leave. What could my son do? It will also do children great harm. I doubt if he will have happy family life if he marries a Canadian woman. That is just

our wish. We hope he can have a Chinese girlfriend. It would be easy to communicate with her. We can also communicate easily with her family.

ST2. *Meaning of Being Supportive*

After having explored the meaning of "child development", it was important to explore what parents meant in terms of being supportive. When I asked how they supported their children's development, parents described their thoughts and methods, and gave some significant explanations. Almost all the parents I interviewed clearly identified their duties and responsibilities as being self-sacrificing, being role models, and providing financial support. Although they hoped their children would be obedient and respectful, very few parents mentioned that they expected their children to do something for them.

1) Self-Sacrifice

As I discussed under the previous subtheme, parents hoped their children would have better lives than their own. Most parents used the word "self-sacrifice" to explain their ways of providing support for their children.

MA: What I should do is to meet his needs in living and studying. I told him that our current situation (both parents are students) does not allow us to provide all the financial support he needs for his secondary education. But we hope he can enter the top university, so he has to work very hard to have an excellent record to get a scholarship. But I will do whatever I can to help him. *If he needs money to get education I will give as much as I have.* That is a parent's duty. If there is not enough money, he has to find work to make money. We make our child's education the top priority. Our personal enjoyment or life of pleasure is not important at all. Even if I have a lot of money someday, I will deposit the amount he needs to go to the university rather than buying a big house or a new car. *Our own needs always come last.*

A metaphor “a burning candle” was used by a parent to symbolize parents’ self-sacrifice:

FD: The big difference between western parents and Chinese parents are Chinese parents sacrifice themselves a lot for their children. Western parents let their children temper themselves in the society. But Chinese parents would like to be a candle, burning themselves to lighten the way of their children. As new immigrants, our financial situation is not good but I have never been tight in spending money for my child's education. That is natural to expect children to remember what their parents did for them and to show respect to parents.

MA: He attends Chinese school not only in language class, but also in Chinese drawing class. I hope this will help him to develop good observational skills. He also attends skating and swimming classes. Although we are busy and tired, we spend lots of time to drive him to different classes because we want him to have various interests and develop his personality.

This mother emphasized that they stayed because of her son:

MA: We explained to him many times that we are new immigrants here and life is very hard. We have to learn English and try to find work here. To survive here and be accepted by this society (Canadian society) is very very difficult for us. But he doesn't understand it at all. He feels good here, no problem for him. We told him that we stay here only because of him. He likes Canada, school is fun, no pressure. We had good jobs in China and were respected by people. But here we are nothing. No matter how hard we work, the future is not secure. We are not sure what we will get even if we make every effort. We have to endure this because we want him to have a better life than we have.

2) Role-Modeling

There is an old Chinese saying: “*If the upper beam is not straight, the lower ones will go askant*” -- when those above behave unworthily, those below will do the same.” Parents described the virtues of famous people in stories and folklore which were examples to their children. Similarly some parents were concerned about their own behaviors as role models.

FD: A child can learn a lot from parents. Since we came here, we have been studying and working very hard. Lot of pressures. She can see it and knows she has to study hard too. We did our best to create conditions for her development. There are a lot of opportunities here if you have money. So if she likes to learn something, we definitely try to support her -- like learning piano, swimming, drawing, gymnastics, and ballet, oh, and skating. She has been attended those classes. As parents, your duty is to support children. If she does not succeed, that is her responsibility.

FF: Parents should watch their own behaviors. No matter how hard the life is, now matter how frustrated you are, you can not show them to your children. You should not quarrel or fight in the front of children. It is harmful.

We don't talk about our difficulties to our child. We don't tell her our frustrations. We believe our hard work and dignity will have a positive impact on her development.

No parents in my interview thought the Chinese culture or traditions were outdated. Some of them were very proud of their ways of bringing up their children. However, many parents realized that some traditional methods should move with the times. Some parents were concerned about their children's perseverance or spirit of hard work, because they realized that society asks for independent children who can take care of themselves. Some parents addressed the issues of their children's development in other areas besides academic achievements. One mother realized that:

ME: In Canada, conditions are better than in China. Children can eat, dress and do things in their own ways. But the main responsibilities of parents are not only providing their physical needs, but also teaching them how to behave. Moral quality is very important. It should be the first priority in education. If you have very good academic achievements but very bad character, you are not good for the society.

3) Financial Ability

Parents faced many pressures to find a good job and to support their families. They also mentioned that they lived frugally to save every penny for the future. As well, concerns were expressed that their financial difficulties would affect their abilities to meet their children's needs.

ME: It is not possible to completely sacrifice yourself financially for children. If you don't have the ability to support the family, it will not be good for children either. As a woman, you have to have financial independence to some extent. In addition, if a husband does not earn a lot of money, a wife has to go out to work. In Canada, many women stay home to take care of children. Their values are different and the situation is different too.

Some children also talked about their dissatisfaction with parents who seldom bought gifts or clothes for them. One girl reiterated this and went further to say that they did not have a party for her birthday. She also complained:

G3: Whenever we went shopping, my parents only bought foods, always foods. I don't understand why they bought so much food and no other things like toys, or clothing. Whenever I said something I would like to have, they always said: "No!"

4) Active-adaptation

When talking about adaptation, all the parents did not want to isolate themselves from Canadian society. They wanted to adapt to the new society actively not passively so they studied English very hard and tried to understand more about Canada. Some parents were more open than others because they observed different child-rearing practices and wanted to learn better methods:

FD: We need to make an adjustment because we came here. We need to learn good stuff here. In Canada, people educate children positively. They encourage a lot and don't punish them severely. This requires patience.

ME: I spanked her before. But I have changed. Sometimes I did not push her, but she did well. I admit that I did not discipline her as strictly as before. In China, we focus on her studying. Here in Canada, we also want her to have wide interests. It is good for her future. But I know a child needs teaching and rules. I think they should know Chinese culture and good manners. But parents also have responsibilities. For example, some children don't like to talk with parents in the school or home because the parents can not speak good English. Now you are in Canada, you should learn English, otherwise how can you survive here? Parents also need to adapt to the environment. Of course, children should understand their parents. Both sides have responsibilities.

Some parents took a positive attitude, in order to adapt to the new environment:

MB: Since I came here, I have made some changes. I learned something new. Now I realize that my method is not very good. I don't know anything about Child Psychology. But recently I read some articles which said that children need encouragement. Too much pressure will lead to just the opposite to what we wished. Now I seldom spank her. Occasionally. But when I taught her, she said I was too "long-winded". Before I would be very angry if she talked back. Now I think a child, like an adult, does not like to be criticized all the time. Children should be allowed to have their own thoughts. Sometimes being obedient is not the ideal. Before, I thought she should obey me absolutely, unconditionally. Now I am trying to say something positive to encourage her. Although I never said that I was proud of her, I clearly know that she is a very understanding girl. She has good self-discipline and always takes the interests of the whole into her consideration. She is not self-centered like some other kids. She has a strong community spirit. I think this is really good.

Some parents realized that although they had language difficulties, their knowledge and skills were also needed in the new environment. A mother said:

MB: I did not go to the sewing factory or restaurant to work because I really want to improve my English and find a job related to my educational background. I was an engineer in the university in China. I know my knowledge and skills are needed here. So I go to ESL class. Since we

came here, we should not always recall our past and contrast it with the present. We should look forward and work hard. Maybe I am too positive.

In my interviews, some children also talked about their parents' changes. Some children described their appreciation about their parents' caring. One point that needs to be addressed is the changing role of the father:

G2: My mom seems to care for me very much. But that is just talk. Everyday she keeps shouting, "don't do this, don't do that,...". My dad really helps me a lot. He teaches me math, English, and others. When I had questions, he answered and explained them to me. I like my dad better than my mom because he helps me a lot. For example, last time, it was a Sunday, I was supposed to go to skating class and it was the last one before the skating rink was closed. My dad was sick, had a fever that day, and mom said not to go this time. But my dad drove me there and picked me up.

There were also different opinions:

G4: My mom cares for me much more than my dad does. She cares for my study and other things. Everyday when I was practicing piano, she always accompanied me although she was very busy in her study. But my father was either reading the newspaper or doing computer stuff.

Chinese parents expected their children "You Chu Xi" - to have a bright future, "Xiao Shun" - to show filial piety, and to be a Chinese child. These expectations originated from their culture and values. Chinese culture and values also provided the explanation of "being supportive". These parents defined "being supportive" as being self-sacrificing, being role models, having financial ability and actively adapting to the new society. They believed their responsibility was to support their children's development and to ensure this development met their expectations.

MT 2: Chinese Ways of Discipline

When talking about child discipline, all the parents I interviewed emphasized that they used Chinese ways because they are Chinese. What are the Chinese ways? What are the meanings of Chinese ways? The following are some interesting findings:

ST3. Putting on Pressures

Parents talked a lot about putting pressure on their children. They hoped their children would achieve academically and would be able to support themselves, and more importantly, have a better life than their parents. They kept pushing their children to do extra homework, to be perfect in everything, and always be better than others. They set very high standards for their children's competence and obedience. On the other hand, children felt pushed and tried to resist these pressures.

1) Requiring Extra Homework

Children complained a lot about time to play because parents didn't allow them to play and watch TV. They always had a lot of extra homework to do for these reasons:

MC: Everyday I give her assignments to do, especially Chinese. I ask her to read the text and write characters everyday. She is Chinese and must know her own language and culture. It will be convenient for her when she goes back to China.

Another reason is that my English is not good enough. Sometimes I don't understand her words when she is talking in English. It is difficult to communicate with her. When I encourage her to study Chinese, I also help myself.

Some parents felt their children didn't understand why they were asked to do extra

homework:

MA: We told him about our difficult situation and let him think about his duty to share his parents' difficulties. But sometimes he didn't understand our intent. We urge him to read and study more because he will benefit from more knowledge. But he is upset and says, 'Why can other children play on weekends while I have to study?' He thinks it is enough to finish school assignments and we are too strict and give him too much to do.

Parents felt they had to be more strict and "very serious" about homework:

ME: When she did not listen to her parents, we began to be very serious. Like talking about her studies, piano class, Chinese class, you have to be very serious. When we asked her to do extra homework, like Chinese assignments, she went on dawdling and moving slowly. You have to push her. Sometimes she was not happy and pulled a long face. But finally she would do it.

Parents worried that their children didn't strive to make progress and had no desire to do better. In answering my question whether this problem was the same as in China, a mother replied:

MA: No. In China, there is so much homework to do that a child will not have time to play. We don't have to give him more work. We don't have to worry. The teacher would give him enough. He has pressures to do well to get in the honor list. For example, if he is in the top five of the class he will get acceptance by a key high school and a good university. But here it is different. No more homework. "Everything will be fine". No competition. No honor list. That is why we give him extra work to do. We don't think what he learned in school is enough. But he does not like to do what we ask.

Her answer represented the concerns of the other parents in this study. Another mother further explained:

ME: I think the elementary education here is not as good as in China. Kids came here and felt that the classes here like math, science, etc. are too easy. Even some kids

who had poor grades in China became good students here. They don't have a lot of homework to do.

Children's discussion also confirmed parents' concerns.

G2: In my teacher's eyes, my math is exceptionally good. She told other teachers many times about that. She said: "This is the girl who is so good at Math. Her name is so and so".

G4: My teacher always gave me A+ or A. You can see it in my report cards. However, I don't like her very much because her math class is so easy that I often feel bored and sleepy. It is too easy.

I asked children if it was true that in their school generally the Chinese kids have higher grades. The children gave me an affirmative answer:

G2 and G4: In our school, in the math contest, almost all the winners were Chinese. The fifth grade students who took the 6th grade test and won the Provincial Math Contest were all Chinese students. The first winner was a Chinese kid.

In parents' eyes, education was the most important thing for children. When parents noticed that their children did not have much homework to do or the schoolwork was very easy for their children, they gave them extra homework. Most parents had obtained higher education so it was not difficult to assign homework for their children.

2) Expecting Perfection in the Child

For these parents, putting on the pressure meant not only demanding that children do extra homework, but also reminding them of their imperfection even when they did a good job.

G4: When my mom knew I won the first place in the Math Contest, she was very happy about it and bought a watch for me. But my dad said: "What is the big deal? Without my help, how could you get the first?"

G2: Some times I got 99 and was the first in the class, but my parents were not very satisfied. Even when I got 100 -full marks and told them about this happily, their answers always disappointed me. (Imitating her parents)" What is the big deal? You are supposed to do it. It is nothing worth being proud of. You came from China and you should do better" and so on. They also said something like "you had learned that stuff in China already. You should do well."

A mother tried to explain this kind of behavior:

MB: Both my husband and I are always anxious to outdo ourselves. Whatever we do, we want to do the best. It is the same thing in child rearing. We discipline her very strictly. We spanked her a lot. Maybe because we want perfection in everything we do, we always found her weakness and shortcomings. I really hate to see some parents who are spoiling their children. Those children are bad mannered, impolite and disobedient. We just want to provoke our daughter to make greater progress.

Most children mentioned that their parents often compared them to their friends. Parents liked to say to children that, "you should learn from so and so, they are very good", etc, etc. Most parents I interviewed admitted this and saw it as a way to stimulate children to greater achievement.

ST4. More Criticism than Praise

There is a philosophy that "you cannot be your son's friend and correct his behavior" in traditional Chinese child rearing practices (Wolf, 1970). Many parents believed a child does not take friendly suggestions seriously, but will obey the stern commands.

1) Ways of Expressing Feelings

These parents told me that they seldom praised their children, especially verbally.

Besides putting on pressures as discussed above, they thought children could not really learn anything until they rid themselves of complacency. Some parents mentioned that even though they were really proud of their children, they never acknowledged it. They prefer to express their feelings through action rather than words. Some mothers recited a very popular ancient poem conveying warmth and love -- "Song of the Wanderer", which described a mother's love for her child and expressed her love through the care she provided:

"Sewing with thread and needle,
Mother makes a coat for her wanderer son.
She sews in small stitches on the eve of his departure
Worried, lest he should be long coming home.
Can the gratitude of a tiny blade of grass
Ever repay the warmth of three springs of sunshine." (Translation in S.U.C.C.E.S.S., 1990, p.1-2)

MB: Of course I love my daughter from my heart, and I think she is a very good girl. But I had never shown it (loving) in front of her. I often criticized her such as "Look what you did. You should have done it better." Once after having visited her friends' home, she said to me: "Mama, you cheated on me. You said you are the best mama in the world and treat me best. And I thought so too. But you are not. I saw that my friends' mamas are very nice and love their daughters very much. You always criticize me."

I know I am stricter than other parents. Sometimes when she got sick or had pains, she screamed and cried. Although I worried a lot, I usually said: "Don't be too soft. What is the big deal? ". I won't pamper her and don't show worry in my face. Now she is much closer to her father. She said he was more patient than I was. He tutors her a lot in Chinese and math. Before he never showed his loving in his face. Now he has changed a lot. Sometimes my daughter says: "Maybe you love me but I don't feel it. My friends' mamas are so patient and very loving. They are all better than you

are. You (and father) are always picking at my faults". Now I think her words are somewhat reasonable. I started changing.

A girl also told me that her father "always" criticized her and was never satisfied:

G4: Once I went to my piano class and passed three music assignments. My piano teacher said I made very good and fast progress and wanted to give me an award. But my father thought I should have passed more and shouted at me: "Why did you just pass three? You wasted my twenty-five dollars!" Another time, I passed four songs, he still scolded me. He is never satisfied.

2) Material Reward

Some parents used "material reward" to show their praise and happiness.

G4: Once, I got a position of "Conflict Mediation Captain". My parents were very happy. When I told them the things I did well, they were always very happy. Last year, I got first place in the mathematics contest. They bought a watch for me. They said, "we are extremely happy".

G2: Every teacher said I did very well this term and had made great progress. Last time, my father went to the school and the teacher told him that I did well in every subject. My father said to the teacher that you said the good things first, then what are the bad things. The teacher said there were no "bad things" and "I think she is a very good girl". My father was very happy and bought a gift (very beautiful stickers) for me.

Of course, not every parent will buy a watch for his (her) child. Some parents gave a "bonus" to encourage children to do housework, not only homework:

G2: If I wash dishes after supper, a lot of dishes, they (parents) give me a quarter. Same thing in her (G4) home.

Several children told me that they felt "discouraged", "disappointed", "upset" and "angry" when their parents were not satisfied even when they did well:

- G2:** I got 28 out of 30 in the math contest, which means I got 98 per cent and there is no full marks in the contest. My dad was still not satisfied.
- G4:** In my report card, most are A or A+, only two B's. My teachers like me and my stuff is always neat and clean. But my father asked the teacher: "why is she doing so well in the school but not home?" My teacher said: "I don't know".

Although parents thought criticism was a good way to teach children based on Chinese tradition, children considered their parent's blaming to be "unreasonable".

- G4:** I don't like that they always talk about my shortcomings with others. For example, my father often says to others that I was too slow, like eating, brushing my teeth, dressing, and a lot of things. Once a kid told something about me which was not true to my dad, he picked up a small stick to hit me without asking for an explanation. I told my mom and my mom stopped him. I am 11 years old now and should not be spanked.
- GF:** One day, a plant in my home fell down and was broken. I did not know who did it. But my father yelled at me: "If you did not do it, I am sure it must be your friend who knocked it over. That's probably what caused it!"

ST5. Punishment and Shame

As discussed above, parents put pressure on children and set high standards. They were also concerned about the influence of the new culture on their children. Therefore, parents disciplined their children strictly.

1) Reasonable Punishment

The majority of respondents admitted that they punished their children physically and otherwise. Non-physical punishment included parents refusing to carry out something the child wanted. One mother told me that she did not allow her daughter to go outside to

play when she did something wrong and refused to buy things she liked. Some parents used hitting and yelling to express their disappointment about the child's behavior and to teach the child a lesson. A girl said:

G4: My father hit me a lot. Using chopsticks. I said to him "this is child abuse". My mother also told him that (hitting) was wrong. Sometimes I kicked him back because he kicked me. My mother spanks on my buttocks by her hands and it did not hurt very much. My father used a chopstick. Once, he allowed me go out to play for a bit longer. But when I came back, he said I came back late and started hitting me. My mom said he should not treat me like that because he said I could go out to play.

2) Shame

The parents saw the punishment as a way of discipline to elicit shame in the children rather than as a harmful act.

MC: Sometimes I had to punish her. I tried everything and nothing worked. Teaching and explaining do not work all the time. I had to give her a pinch and wanted her to feel shame. I said: "Are you feeling shameful for being punished by your parents? You are already 10 years old now!" Sometimes she cried, but sometimes she said: "I don't care". This made me very angry because it means your punishment doesn't work either. Sometimes I was upset and did not talk with her. She seemed to realize that she did something wrong and behaved better.

A girl told me what she was asked to do by her father as a punishment:

G6: Once I got 99, my dad said: "you got only 99? You should have had a hundred!" He is not reasonable. When I made mistakes, I had to write a self-criticism (like a confession) and put it in a place where everybody can see it. Once I put it on the washroom door. My father asked me why, I said because every one has to go to washroom. But I put it in a very low position, so no body can easily see it (laugh).

It was obvious that the intent of this father who insisted his daughter put her self-criticism "in a place where everybody can see it" was to make her feel shamed and lose face so that she would not make the same mistake again.

Parents called this kind of punishment reasonable because they believed children needed to learn a lesson and remember it. A father explained his point of view:

FD: Chinese ways of disciplining children have some advantages. Reasonable punishment is effective most of the time. We use some methods such as, writing a self-criticism, doing more homework, standing her in the corner, or even hitting her on the buttocks. If you explain clearly to her why you are punishing her and what her fault is, it will be useful in remembering the lesson. Firstly, you don't hit her without any reason. Secondly, you have to explain before you punish her. You should tell her why you are spanking her *before not after* (stress) you do it. She may keep the lesson in her mind. If you just say a few words (scolding her), she may forget quickly. The times we spank her are based on the extent of her mistakes.

From this section, it can be seen clearly that parents disciplined their children by using "Chinese ways". They explained the meaning of "Chinese ways of discipline" as putting pressure on children, more criticism than praising, and punishments to elicit shame.

These parents asked their children to be perfect and assigned them extra homework. They also saw punishment as a reasonable way to teach the child a lesson and make them feel ashamed. For further discussion about findings see Chapter 5.

MT 3. Difficulties in the New Society

ST6. Family Issues in the New Society

Before discussing the perception about social services in Winnipeg, many parents described experiences and difficulties as new immigrants, living in a new environment. In terms of child rearing practices, the main issues focused on family communications, cultural differences and parental impatience.

1) Family Communications

All parents talked about their concerns regarding communication with their children. Some of them complained that their children did not say a lot about their own lives and relationships at school, and with teachers, friends, or others. Some parents worried that their children didn't tell them if they did something wrong. A couple of parents felt difficulties in communicating with their children because of language barriers.

MA: Maybe he does not want to be criticized. But he talks for so long on the phone with his friends, of course, in English. I didn't know what they were talking about. He did not want us know and closed the door. But sometimes we heard something about him from other kids. We felt upset. One day, we were asked to sign a note from his teacher and knew he broke the window by throwing a snowball. I was so angry. Some information we got was from the parent-teacher meeting. But it was late. Sometimes we were very upset. We don't know how to communicate with him and know what he is doing.

Another mother had the same feeling:

MB: She would not tell me this kind of thing because she knew she did the wrong thing, Maybe I criticized her too much before, she would not tell me the things she did wrong. Lots of things I knew from other parents. I

am so eager to know everything she has in her mind. She writes her diary every day and does not allow us to read it. But sometimes we sneak in her room to have a glance (laughs). We want to know everything about her.

Parents not only had difficulties in communicating with their children, but also had problems in their marital lives:

MA: I had quarrels with my husband sometimes. Most of the reasons were regarding the child. Sometimes it was just for small things. Because of our insecure and unstable situations, we feel too much depression. Sometimes I felt so frustrated and really wanted to go back to China.

The "small thing" she mentioned was also explained, by another mother:

MB: Sometimes we have very bitter quarrels. You know, here because of financial problems, and not finding a job easily, you are just frustrated. Last time, we had a fierce fight just because of a bowl of soup. A little soup was left and he wanted me to put in the fridge. I did not because I didn't think it is worth keeping. When he found I did not, he was angry. He said: 'I work so hard for this family. But you are wasting food'. Having heard this, I was even angrier: 'Are you saying we are depending on you? It is not my fault that I could not find a job here!' I shouted: 'I will leave with my daughter'. I believe I am able to support our own life. We had a big fight but just for a little soup. I always think that women should have their independence and financial self-reliance.

However, the concerns of parents were usually focused on their communications with children.

MA: He (her son) seems not interested in parents' teaching. He does not like our suggestions. For example, on weekends, we hope he takes the free time to study and learn more. He doesn't listen. He wants to play. Last month there was a spring break. We suggested he spend some time on studying. But he didn't want to study. He said that it was spring break; it is for a break not studying. We think that on the weekend, he should take the time to read more and expand his knowledge. But he thinks that is the time to play. This is a problem. He seldom talks about his life in the school. We really want to know what he did there but he does not want to say. We asked what the teacher asked them to do and what the homework was, but he didn't want to talk about it. Usually he tries not to make us angry. But when we asked him to study more, play less or on the weekend to read some books, he was not happy.

When parents learned something about their child from the teacher or other parents, their feelings were complex. On the one hand, they were very concerned about their children's studying, behavior, and the influence of peers (Canadian friends). On the other hand, they wanted to be trusted by their children and hoped their children could tell them "everything":

MB: I really want to know what happened in the school and with peers. My daughter likes talking so sometimes she told me something. But sometimes she didn't especially when she did something wrong. Something I knew came from her friends or other parents. For example, usually I made Chinese food for her lunch, and another friend of hers often brings a sandwich to school. One day, my daughter said to her: "You eat Canadian food every day. You don't love China. You are not a patriot." That girl was upset and told it to her mom who told me later. I gave her a scolding.

Language difficulties also blocked parent/child communication. Children felt it was easier to speak English, especially on the topic of school or with their friends. But parents asked them to speak Chinese.

GME: I didn't understand what she said if she used English. But she doesn't know how to use Chinese to express some words. That is very difficult.

This grandma's concern was not only her own, but was a common concern of the parents.

A mother painfully states:

MC: She (the daughter) talked about things happening at school in English. Usually she talked with her father at supertime because I didn't understand what she said. Although I was sitting there, I could not understand her. When I spoke to her, she did not understand some words because I spoke Chinese. It is a big problem. I am going to ESL class and my English is getting better. But our communication is still not good because she could not understand lots of Chinese words I used.

Reasons given by some children for the lack of communication was that parents were busy and did not have time to listen. Gradually the children lost interest in talking to their parents:

G6: We (I and parents) talked a lot before. When I came here for the first few months, my father was not very busy, my mother had not entered the school, they had time, so we had lots of time to play together, we went to the library and borrowed a lot of books. Later, we moved into Univillage because my mother entered the U of M to study, and my father is busy writing his thesis, so we don't have time to talk and play. Now we don't talk a lot.

Children told me that they liked to talk about their friends because they spent most of their time together (in school and after school). Some parents were interested, but some others were not, because they did not know their children's Canadian friends. Although some parents thought their children told them "everything", all the children I interviewed firmly claimed they had some things they can tell parents and some things they can't:

G4: If I got a grade lower than 90, I would not tell my parents. I threw the paper (with the mark) into the garbage can. Before I threw out the marks lower than 95, now I lowered the standard (laugh). I failed in the sport class several times because I run slowly. I took out the sheet which showed the sport grade from the report card and threw it away. My parents asked once that why there was no sport grade, I said I did not know. They were happy to see a lot of A's, like French I always got A+, and they gave me a dollar as a reward.

Children knew that good performance in school was the most direct and satisfying way of pleasing their parents. They did not want to disappoint parents or be criticized by parents either.

G2: I don't throw my marks away. But if they were not good, I would not tell my parents. If I made mistakes that I should not have made, e.g. I

calculated the wrong result because of my carelessness, my parents would scold me.

2) Cultural Differences

The different culture in the new society created not only confusion and misunderstanding, but also family difficulties and intergenerational conflicts for immigrant families.

MB: I am not very familiar with the environment here. But my husband told me that in the newspaper and TV, there were a lot of reports about teenager mommies. I was shocked. My goodness. It is scary. It is so scary. I told my husband that if our daughter were like that, I would kick her out. My husband said that she is your daughter, can you really kick her out. Although I don't think that kind of thing will happen to my daughter, I worried a lot because those bad things have an influence on young people. Something we think is bad maybe is normal here. I have a concern about that.

Parents noticed that the cultural differences in the new country also affected the effectiveness of their discipline:

MA: You can not use some hard tactics here. You can not even raise your voice. He knows what to do like reporting to the police. It is very difficult to discipline him.

This mother blamed the new culture and thought her son's "talking back", "rebellious behaviour" and "impoliteness" were the result of cultural influences:

MA: Compared to Canadian children, he may have a little knowledge about Chinese culture. But he has been very much influenced by Canadian culture. For example, people here value money, even a child asks money from his parents if he does something for his parents. It is ridiculous. In China, we never do that. How come in Canada you speak about money with your parents?

Because he grows up here, and has been influenced by the culture here, he is not obedient any more, not listening to his parent's words, being

different than a real Chinese child. I think his “rebellious behavior” is learned from Canadian people. And now he is not “polite” anymore, unlike us, we were educated to respect parents and elders. Sometimes he talked back which made me shocked and very angry. When we (my husband and I) were young, we never, never talked back to parents, otherwise, we would be slapped. I feel very sad and disappointed when he is not obedient.

Several parents had concerns about the influence of the new culture and felt they were hurt by children’s misbehaviors:

MC: We bear hardships and suffered a lot just for her future. Sometimes I wonder if it was worthwhile. You bring up children and hope they bring back some comfort to you. We love her desperately so that we give her strict rules, We have a very tough life here in Canada just for her. But she doesn’t understand. She does not see any difficulties. She dislikes our strict demands and “bad temper”. She says that the teachers in the school are nice. She thinks we scold her too much. In the school, teachers always say kind words to them, like “you are excellent”, “you are perfect”, etc.

FD: I have many concerns about her, like her ability to live independently, bear hardship, making friends, etc. Although I have been here eight years, I still don’t like some social phenomena here. There are lots of teenage problems here. So education is very important. She is at a crossroad now. If you pay special attention to her, you will help her to go in the right direction. Later on you don’t need to worry a lot. Otherwise, it will be very difficult.

Facing the new society, parents realized their responsibilities to help their child “to go in the right direction”. At the same time, they were also confused:

FD: She tells us a lot of things about her school, study, and most of her stuff. She is a very pure, innocent girl. We have never talked about money, prices and things like that before her. We wanted her to be a pure girl and not worry about other things. But now we are not sure if we were right. We know in some families, parents let children know their family situation including family income, employment, even buying a car. We are not clear if it is good for a child. She (daughter) has no knowledge and ability to deal with money. She has no idea about money. I don’t know if it is good or bad. Maybe we need a little change. Her school often lets students

sell chocolates or other things, to do fundraising and foster their ability to do out-reach. Maybe it is good.

ME: Sometimes we don't understand *some of her behavior*. We did not teach her that and nobody at home would do that. I don't know where she learned those things.

As we already discussed, "some behaviors" were of concern to many parents and grandparents. A grandmother gave me an example to support her opinion:

GME: I really think we should discipline children strictly especially when they are young. Young children are not able to distinguish right from wrong. You have to teach them. As parents, you must be very clear about what children are allowed to do and what they are not. I talked about this thought with some other grandmas in the building, and they have similar opinions.

Grandma L once said: 'Since these children came to Canada, their manners are getting poor. I just can't stand it. One day, I accompanied my granddaughter to the school. It was cold, and she did not want to return home to wear a coat because she did not want to be late. So, when she got to school, I came back and took her coat to the school. When I got to the door of her classroom, guess what, when she saw me, she bent over the desk, covering her face with her hands! She did not want other kids to know that I am her grandma! I don't speak English, and I pointed at her, but she did not want to talk with me. Her teacher came and gave the coat to her. I was so angry!' Even now when she talks about this, she still trembles with rage.

Most parents shared the opinion that the school system needs to be stricter. They also thought teachers should be stricter, take more responsibilities, and should not just tell parents good things about their children without mentioning the problems. The lack of communication between parents and teachers was one of the common concerns held by Chinese parents.

MA: In China, teachers keep close contact with parents. Even for a small thing teachers will notify parents so that they can work together to help children.

But here it is different. They (teachers) don't tell parents or only say good words even if the fact is that the child did something wrong. I don't like that. I hope to hear from teachers about what we can do to help the child modify his behavior and correct his mistakes. For Chinese parents, it will be good for parents and children as well because teachers know how the child behaved in the school. A child should know his weakness and make efforts to do better and better. You should not always say 'he is good', 'he is excellent'. Maybe it is good for Canadian parents.

As found in the research, Chinese parents liked to make comparisons of their children's shortcomings with the achievements of others. Some parents were upset about teachers' doing the opposite:

MA: For example, my son's English writing is not good, and we really hope the teacher can cooperate with his parents to help him improve it. But the teacher always says: 'His writing is OK, some of his classmates do much worse than him'. So this makes it more difficult for me to teach him. He says that my teacher thinks my writing is very good. Why aren't you satisfied. *There is somebody who is worse than me.* How can I urge him to practice his writing? I really hope the teachers can cooperate with parents and point out something that needs to be improved for their children. A child can not be perfect and needs to be taught to make improvement and progress.

I don't think it is a good idea that teachers say to the student that he is perfect, particularly to say it to the parents in front of their children. It will be better to point out a child's shortcoming and weakness so that the child can make some changes. The teachers here are always saying your child is good, excellent even if he is not.

It was my early impression that parents would feel good when somebody praised their children. I explored whether their responses were to conceal their pride. I asked this mother: "When you hear this (teacher's good word about her son), you are happy anyway, right?" She said:

MA: No. I am not. For example, I really hope my son can improve his writing, and if the teacher tells him about it (writing) he will pay attention to it. But

now he thinks he is good because his teacher said so. How can I convince him? Children listen to their teachers. If the teachers tell child the truth (i.e. improving writing), the child will do it. For instance, we can teach him Chinese at home, but we send him to Chinese school because it works better.

A grandmother told me her opinion:

GME: Sometimes she (granddaughter) was not polite to grandpa. We taught her Chinese culture and told her that she should be always courteous to older people, especially parents and grandparents. Because she has been used to the customs in Canadian school where they treat people "equally", she did not show respect to elder people. Because I am teaching her Chinese, she listens to me most of time. But she does not listen to her grandpa. Sometimes grandpa gets angry and upset. He does not like the tone she used.

This grandmother's account reflected the fact that the cultural differences exist not only in the society, but also at home. In immigrant families, children are more exposed to forces outside of the home than their parents and accept the new culture quickly. This often resulted in intergenerational conflicts.

ME: A friend of mine told me that when she got home after a long day of working, she often has to handle the complaints from older ones (grandparents) and younger ones (children) as well. Her parents told her how the child did not listen and obey, while the child told her how grandparents criticized and reproached her. Her parents (grandparents) said: "Don't I have a right to discipline my own granddaughter in Canada? It is just for her good!"

GME: A lot of grandparents have that kind of experience. We (grandparents) feel they (parents) are too permissive with their children in Canada. We don't like that because it is not good for children. You should not excessively accommodate children.

Although children felt their parents were very strict, the grandparents saw them as being "too permissive". This created very difficult situations for parents.

3) Impatience

Several children told me that they wished their parents would be more patient. They said the parents of their Canadian friends were very patient and did not yell at their children.

When I asked parents' opinions about this, a father said:

FD: The situation in Chinese families is different. In Canadian families, many women don't go to work and they can spend a lot of time with children. But in our immigrant families, both parents have to work or study and they don't have time to teach their children. They are not patient because of so much pressure and many difficulties. (Stress) *They don't have time*. They have a lot of examinations and pressures like employment and research. They have to use the Chinese way to discipline children --that is, discipline them strictly. They don't have time to learn and practice Canadian ways.

MC: I tried to help her (the daughter) in her studies, but like a Chinese saying: 'The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak'. I just can't. For example, I can solve her math problems but I am not able to explain it in English. I asked my husband to help her but he is not patient. Sometimes he became agitated or annoyed.

A grandmother who came here to visit her children and grandchildren also told me her observation:

GME: Since I came here, I found out that most parents spend too little time with their children because they are very busy studying or working. They just don't have any energy to teach and communicate with their children. They don't come home for lunch even supper. After supper, they have to go to the Study Hall to study. This is different in China -- Parents do a lot things with children and grandparents can help a lot (cooking, taking care of children, etc.). So some parents are very impatient. When F (granddaughter) is practicing her piano, her mom is not patient.

Children gave vivid descriptions:

G5: My parents are very busy and we don't have time to talk. The only time we are together is when we have supper. Sometimes I wanted to tell them

what happened in school, but they said: 'Don't talk while eating!' But after supper, I forgot what I was going to say!

G4: My dad often yells at me even when we just start talking. For example, once I just wanted to tell him about an interesting thing in school, when I said: 'Today, in school....', he jumped up and interrupted me: 'What did you do in school?' (*very tense*). He is not reasonable. When I wanted to say something about my schoolmates, he said: 'It is none of your business. You -- watch -- yourself!' Every day, when it's time to eat, he always shouted: "go to eat!"

G2: My mom disciplines me very strictly. No matter what I am doing, she always shouts at me. She is always very strict. For example, she ordered me: 'Put your shoes in order'. Then she shouted: 'Did you hear me? Why don't you listen to me?' Some times I yelled back because she always yells first. This made her more angry. We argued a lot. She has never admitted her fault. Never.

G2: In my home, my mom has never said "sorry" even when she knew she was wrong. Even when they made mistakes, they still scolded or hit me. They did not listen to my explanation. Particularly, sometimes I made very minor mistakes or even no mistakes, once one (parent) started scolding me, the other added 'yes, blar, blar..', (imitating her parents).... Like "echo" each other. (Everyone laughs). They talked to each other but they did not pay attention to what I said. They did not listen to me patiently. Since we came to Canada, they (parents) did not hit me as much as in China, but they scolded me a lot.

Although children did not like when their parents compared them with their friends, they were making comparisons of their parents. Children mentioned their friends' parents who were patient and nice to them. They hoped their own parents would be like their friends' parents:

G4: I like Z's (her classmate) parents. They have never hit their children. They don't spank their children. If the children are not listening, parents explain the reason to them. If my parents were like that, I would listen to them.

G6: I think the effective way to discipline us is teaching and explaining the reason clearly. I like F's (one of her friends) parents best. They are very nice and don't scold their daughter. They care for her study but they don't

yell at her. They are very patient. So their daughter is very well behaved and has good manners -- like a little princess. Even when she did something wrong, her parents explained to her very patiently. But my parents would shout: "Look what you did? Get out of here!"

ST7. *Barriers to Seeking Help*

In the above section, we discussed some problems and difficulties in Chinese immigrant families and their child rearing practices. When I explored their help-seeking patterns, some parents mentioned that they would like to talk with their close friends when they had problems. However most of them preferred to deal with difficulties by themselves because they were in a different society.

MA: If we were in China, I would go to my family or relatives, and friends. But here it is very difficult. Sometimes I talked with my friends here. But everyone is very busy and working hard. You can not bother them a lot. And *they have similar problems too*. What you can do is to hold back your tears and let the time heal you. Sometimes I broke household items to express my grievances.

Your friends can not help you here. We have been in different countries. Just as we established some friendships, we had to move. So it is very difficult to talk with people. We are always facing new environments. It is really tough.

ME: Anyway, maybe I have to deal with the problems by myself. How? Crying, yelling, arguing with my husband, etc. Everything will be fine. Just take your time.

MC: I seldom seek help from others. Nobody can help you here. I pray to God. I know I have to endure this. As a new immigrant, the two biggest difficulties are language barriers and finding employment. Your English is not good so that you can not find work you like to do. Who can help you? Who will give you a job? NOBODY!

Mother "MC" told me that she was a teacher in China and was respected by students and parents alike. But here she can only work as a kitchen helper in a restaurant or as a

babysitter. Like some other parents, she said she had stayed here only for her daughter who did not want to go back:

MC: Sometimes I felt so discouraged and hopeless that I wanted to go back home immediately. There I don't have those problems. I can do the job I really like to do. No language problem at all.

Another mother told me that it was helpful to write to the family in China:

MA: I prefer to write home to China. My parents can help me a bit. For example, sometimes my parents write to me, saying 'now you are in somebody else's country, you should not use the same method to discipline your child as we used'.

I told them there were a lot social service agencies and professionals who could help them to deal with difficulties and problems. But the answers I heard frequently were: "I have never been there", "They can not help you" and "Don't intervene, please!" - (in Chinese, intervene also has the meaning of "bother").

MA: I have never been to a social service agency. We know nothing about the services. No information is available. I think if they don't know our language, at least they should know about Chinese culture and value. If they don't know about it, they can not help. I don't trust them. I don't think they can help us. They don't understand our problems. I think it is waste of time to talk with them. They don't understand you at all. They may even blame you. If they work with you based on their Western thoughts, they will make wrong judgments. You can not communicate well with them.

ME: I have never been to a social service agency. In my work place, there is a Burnout Counselor who they said can help. But I have never gone to see her. You know, I have been exhausted and don't have the energy to make sentences in English, which is so difficult. I don't believe we can communicate well, I just don't think she can help me. Moreover, she does not understand our culture. She may not understand what I am talking about. If she is Chinese, I may go to her. What I want maybe is just to talk with somebody. What I need maybe is just somebody to listen to me.

These mothers mentioned the language barriers, lack of information, not trusting the social services, but, were there any other factors affecting parents' help seeking behaviors? Why did parents see social services as being so strange? A father answered:

FD: Our Chinese philosophy is: 'Jia Chou Bu Ke Wai Yang -- Domestic shame should not be made public'. (laugh). That is for sure. In case of necessity, I will go to talk with my best friends, but that is my last resort. At least your friends know you, understand you. If you go to social workers, they can not help you because they don't understand you. They don't know your marital history, they don't know your family situation. So we don't go to them. I am a straightforward chap, and want to say what is on my mind. When I have problems, I really want to talk with people to release the pressure. But if social workers don't know our language, our culture, our ways of thinking, how can they help? You had better to go to Chinese community activities include churches, and meet friends there. You may find help there. It is better than going to social services.

He tried to make his statement clearer:

For example, Western people may find it difficult to understand the way Chinese people discipline their children. They call it "Child Abuse". This is total misunderstanding. They misunderstand Chinese families. Some Chinese people see the police and social service agency as intervening and are scared of disciplining their children. In fact, in normal Canadian families, they punish children reasonably too. Child abuse only occurs in abnormal families like parental drinking, taking drugs, or having mental problems. So there is a need to have a system or policy to protect the children in those abnormal families. (Very strongly) But in our intellectual families, coming from Mainland China, parents having higher education, child abuse does not exist. No child abuse. Parents punish their children just for their good. They don't treat their children cruelly. They punish children in order to educate and make them better. I think police get involved because they don't understand Chinese families. Once they know a little about Chinese culture and families, they should not intervene. That is the Chinese way to discipline children.

Furthermore, he gave his judgement and conclusions:

FD: On the other hand, there is multicultural policy here, why not allow different ways to discipline children? You should respect our tradition. I think 95% of intervention makes the situation worse. The intervention

breaks up some families, and makes more trouble for the families, like conflicts between parents and children. There is a Chinese saying: 'The more you want to help, the more trouble you make'. Especially the social service agencies need to know Chinese families and the way they function. Don't worsen the situation. Don't be more of a hindrance than a help'.

Almost every parent I interviewed admitted that they had quarrels and arguments. But they emphasized that was just the result of the pressures in the new country and not because of marital problems. They saw their families as normal and harmonious in difficult circumstances.

MB: Since I came here, I have never been to any social service agency. I know society needs social services and there are so many problems in families such as family violence, child abuse, etc. But for a harmonious family, parents having good education, loving their children, the social service should not intervene when parents are arguing or disciplining their children. You just give them help when they need it.

One mother who had been to social services felt that discrimination still existed:

MC: I have been to several agencies to see counselors. I am also going to ESL classes. My general impression is that they are doing their job. But the ways they are dealing with you are not always fair and reasonable. In ESL classes, you can see some teachers are nice to some students but ignore others. Sometimes in the agency you felt you were treated differently and unfairly. Maybe language is a factor. You can not communicate with counselors well so they don't like you. Therefore the result was different.

Although not many parents went to social service agencies, they hoped that the service workers would have cultural awareness and that programs would be more culturally appropriate. One mother gave a deeper analysis of the Chinese way of child discipline:

MA: I think it is very important for service providers to know our tradition, our life style and behavior. Only by understanding Chinese culture, can service providers help our families, especially newcomer families. If they don't understand, they will not know where to start (to help). It is different with a

food bank when people are hungry, you just give the food. That is simple. But child rearing, discipline and marital problems are not that simple. They don't know our culture, so they can not help.

A father further explained:

FD: There is an old Chinese saying: 'Gun Bang Di Xia Chu Xiao Zi -- Spare the rod and spoil the child'. That is completely true. Like Fu Lei (a celebrated translator and scholar whose son is a well-known pianist in the world) praised highly the rule of 'milk and rod'. Can you call it child abuse? You spank your children by having a sense of propriety not recklessly. You choose the position (of her body) to spank. You make sure you don't hurt her severely. But she has to remember the lesson.

Some parents hoped that service providers could enhance their service quality and ability to help Chinese parents:

MC: I just hope social workers or other professionals are fair and treat people equally. I don't need a favor bestowed but fairness. Just do their job well and treat people equally without discrimination.

The findings highlighted three major themes, 1) parental responsibility to support children's development, 2) Chinese ways of discipline, and 3) difficulties in the new society. These provide a clear picture about parenting and related issues experienced by Chinese new immigrant families.

I was surprised that parents did not have favorable attitudes to the social services. Most of them have not used the services, but they did not even want to. On the other hand, they admitted that there were problems in the family and they needed help. This phenomenon deserves more discussion. Further analysis of this and other issues will be included in the next chapter.

Chapter 5 Discussion

Denzin points out that "interpretive interactionists endeavor to capture the voices, emotions, and actions of those studied. They focus on those life experiences which radically alter and shape the meanings persons give to themselves and their experiences" (1992, p.xvi). One of the primary contributions of this study is the interpretation of child rearing practices in Chinese new immigrant families based on symbolic interactionism theory.

Findings from the study conclude that culture plays an important role in Chinese parenting practices, and the new immigrants are trying hard to adapt to the new environment while wanting to retain their own culture and identity.

This research suggests an alternative understanding of child rearing -- different meanings of child/parent interaction in new Chinese immigrant families in the new environment. Cultural factors strongly contribute to the intergenerational conflicts and child/parents communication. In turn, parents' confusion and difficulties and children's dissatisfaction of their parents bring great challenges to social services delivery systems to effectively provide culturally appropriate services.

5.1 Culture and Parenting

There are numerous definitions of culture (e.g. Daniel, 1975, Devore & Schlesinger, 1981, Tseng & Hsu, 1991, Keats, 1997, Woods, 1975, Cushner & Brislin, 1996.). Brislin (1981) quotes the central idea concluded from over 150 definitions of culture:

Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached value; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other as conditioning elements of further action. (Brislin, 1981, p. 5)

Keats (1997) points out that culture influences the goals parents have for their children and the methods they use to achieve those goals. From the study, it can be seen clearly that the expectations of Chinese immigrant parents are soundly based on Chinese culture and values.

Ho's study found that "Chinese parents in Taiwan and immigrant Chinese parents tended to rate higher than Euro-American parents on: (a) parental control, (b) emphasis on achievement and, contrary to what has been commonly believed, (c) encouragement of independence" (Ho, 1994). This conclusion is partly confirmed by the findings from my research and the consistent "emphasis on achievement".

5.1.1 Confucianism and Academic Achievement

"Forty-four percent of Asian-Americans have graduated from college, as compared to only 25% of the general adult population of the US" (Chen, 1995, p.7). The pressures to advance in school in the Asian countries that "share a common cultural heritage - the oldest with an unbroken Confucian heritage" (Ho, 1994, p.286), such as China, Japan, and Korea, has become world famous. The media frequently report that Chinese-American children won honors like the Westinghouse Science Prize. Recently, six Canadian high school students were scrupulously chosen from 200, 000 high students to

participate in the International Math Olympiad held in Taiwan in July, 1998. Four of the six were Chinese-Canadian students (Prairie Chinese News, July, 98).

In her research on culture and the child development, Keats (1997) states that the Chinese children have very good scores on examinations and ability tests and appear more often than other ethnic groups in the top grades of University entrance examination. She also points out that "the habit of spending long hours in study is ingrained early, but the cost in anxiety can be high"(p.40).

Lee Yuan-Tseh, a Nobel Prize winner, who is the president of Taiwan's Academia Sinica, declares that the secret of Taiwan's success is that Chinese parents place great stress on their children's education (Chen, 1995).

In my study, all the parents I interviewed explained to me that their major expectation of children is "You Chu Xi - Having a bright Future." They put their stress on "*Xue Xi Hao* - Study Well". From the findings in the last chapter, one can see that parents so emphasized education that most of them hoped their children would attain a master's degree.

Chen (1995) states that Confucian culture shapes the attitude many Chinese parents have towards educating their children. Ho (1994) points out that "because of the Confucian emphasis on education, Chinese children are socialized to achieve academically.

Accordingly, academic achievement motivation should be exceedingly strong" (p.293).

Ho mentioned a study in Hong Kong regarding parenting and education that found that "doing well in school" was the most frequently mentioned quality or behavior most likely

to win approval from parents. The findings from my research support this conclusion. In the interviews, I observed that not only did parents focus on the children's study, but also children worked hard to get "high marks" to please parents.

Many researchers (e.g. Ho, 1994, Keats, 1997, etc.) give explanations about Chinese attitude towards education. For centuries, "studying" was the only means of climbing the social ladder. The Chinese have great respect for scholars and professionals. Chinese culture emphasizes the majority rather than individuals, because the individual is only part of the family and social structure. If a child is able to do well, the credit goes not only to himself, but to the family and community. If a child fails to do well, he not only brings shame unto himself, but on to the whole family including parents, relatives and ancestors. Educating children has been taken very seriously by Chinese parents. "It is widely accepted that scholarly achievement not only is a symbol of success and an honor for the family but actually leads to economic betterment" (Soong and Soong, 1980, 158). In a word, academic achievement is seen the guarantee of "You Chu Xi - Having a bright future".

The parents in my study explained the meaning of academic achievement. They believed success in studies will lead children to a good career, a secure financial situation and a certain social status, thus they will have a better life than their parents. Therefore, they asked children to do extra homework and encouraged children to be competent in school. On the other hand, children, although some did not understand why parents were so demanding, worked very hard to please parents. Some children mentioned that they did not tell parents if they got "lower" marks. They did not want to be criticized nor to

disappoint their parents. They also knew that when they got first place in class they honored their parents and family because their parents could compare this with other families and felt happy about it. This finding supports Ho's conclusion (1994) that "Chinese achievement motivation was positively associated with face consciousness and group orientation" (p.294).

5.1.2 Filial Piety and Self-sacrifice

"Although there have been major changes in the way society treats children, it would be very difficult to agree on the costs and benefits of those trends from the viewpoint of the child, the parents, or society. While many applaud the increasing individualism and freedom for children within the family, others lament the loss of family responsibility and individual discipline" (Vinovskis, 1991, p.533).

Ho (1994) points out that Chinese achievement motivation is rooted more firmly in the collectivistic than in the individualistic orientation. "As a derivative of filial piety, collectivism links individual achievement to family-oriented achievement" (p.294). When I asked children about "filial piety", they did not understand the meaning of the words. But they clearly knew that they should try their best to make parents happy. Several girls mentioned that their high grades made their parents very happy and proud.

Many years ago, when a Chinese Consul-General at New York was asked by reporters to comment on the low Chinese crime and delinquency rates in the United States, he said:

"Filial Piety, the love for parents, is a cardinal virtue my people have brought over from China....A Chinese child, no matter where he lives, is brought up to recognize that he cannot shame his parents....Before a Chinese child makes a move, he stops to think what the reaction of his parents will be" (Hsu, 1971, p.9).

The traditional Asian (including Chinese) may nurture a feeling of "owing" their parents: Children owe it to their parents to be obedient, to submit (S.U.C.C.E.S.S., 1990). This may affect parents' expectations of their children. Parents feel frustrated and disappointed if children do not perform according to the subjective expectations after they had dutifully cared for them. In my study, some parents mentioned that they were disappointed when their children talked back and did not listen to their teachings. On the other hand, children who are growing up in a mainstream culture who did not share this concept of "owing" might feel confused or frustrated. In my study, some children thought their parents were not reasonable.

Hsu (1971) lists several features of the "ideal Chinese family" which include: loving parents, supporting parents, and obeying parental authority. Not a single one of these features can be dispensed with. Confucius said: "Dogs and horses can also support their parents, what is there to differentiate human beings from such beasts if you do not respect your parents?" (Translation in Hsu, 1971, p.22). Not violating parental wishes and not doing anything to defame the parents are very important in traditional Chinese values. From my data, it is very clear that the expectation parents had of their children, such as academic achievement and having a better life than the parents are the most important factors in parental pride in their children. However, one change was evident - parents did not expect their children to support them financially when they get old, which is one basis for the older meaning of "filial Piety". Detzner (1992) points out that "meanings are interpreted and reinterpreted over time through the cultural and experiential lenses of each person" (p.88). For Chinese new immigrants, the meaning of "filial piety" is

different than the old definition. In her research on child rearing and personal relationships in the families in Taiwan, Wolf (1970) found that

"[B]oth the mother and the father of a Taiwanese child share the same broad goals in the training of their son. They want him to become a strong healthy adult who is obedient, respectful, and capable of supporting them in their old age. They want a son who will not embarrass or impoverish them by his excesses, No matter how alienated man and wife may be from each other, they nonetheless share these common aims in regard to their children" (p.40).

In my research, no parents mentioned that they hoped their children would be capable to support them in their old age, although they did hope their children would be obedient and respectful.

Chu (1985) cited an old Chinese saying: "One's body, hair, and skin are gifts from one's parents. One is not at liberty to do harm to them" (p.258). Based on this belief, the parents exert control over the lives of their children. Traditionally, should a child act against the wishes of the parents, he or she could be punished severely.

However, this is not the case in the new Chinese immigrant families. In current Mainland Chinese society, the "One Child" family norm under the population policy of the government places the child at the center of family attentions. Of the seven families I interviewed, more than two thirds (five families) had only one child, while the other two families had two children. No family had more than two children. This represents the situation of most new Chinese immigrant families from the Mainland. In the new environment, even if they want to have more children, the pressures from their work and study don't allow them to do so. They don't even have time to spend with their only child.

On the other hand, Korbin (1981) states correctly that "child mistreatment in the Peoples Republic of China is broadly defined. Parents or caretakers may be called into account for any actions that harm the physical, moral (political), or intellectual development of child" (p.170). He explains that because the functioning of each individual as a member of the group is seen as a valid concern of the entire society, children's well-being is very important because they are the future of the country.

Generally speaking, in modern China, as Ho (1994) observed, children are valued, more than ever before, within the family. The society has become "less age centered and more child centered". In my interviews, I also observed that the child's needs and interests have top priority. This can explain why some parents used the word "sacrifice" and the metaphor "a burning candle" to describe how much they did for their children.

When discussing the "contrasting ways of life between Chinese and Americans", Hsu (1953) states that "the important thing to Americans is what parents should do for their children; to Chinese, what children should do for their parents" (p.72). This is not exactly consistent with the findings from the study. In my study, parents described their duties and responsibilities as supporting children's development. They explained the meaning of their support as self-sacrifice, role-modeling, financial abilities and making active adaptation. They repeatedly stated that they would do everything they can to support their children's education. Although they expected their children to listen to parents' words, they did not expect children to do things to help them (not like old Chinese immigrants who hoped their children to help in their family business and support parents when they

are old). This also demonstrated the different parenting style in the new Chinese immigrant families.

Although there were so many pressures such as language barriers, employment difficulties, cultural barriers, and lack of support, parents worked very hard to help their children, especially to support them in their studies and to financially prepare for their future higher education. As Chen (1995) states, parents don't balk at investing money or effort for their children, "when it comes to putting up for their children's education, Chinese parents usually do so without a word of complaint" (p.11).

Ho (1981) states that filial piety acted to create and maintain cultural blind spot against the awareness of childhood psychopathology and its connection with parent-child relationships. He cites a well-known Confucian saying: "There is no wrong parents under the heavens" to show the Chinese concept of parenthood was deeply rooted in filial piety. However, in my observations, parental authority was just at the surface. The deeper meaning was based on parents not wanting to lose face because they were afraid of decreasing their children's respect for them (particularly in this new environment). For example, in several interviews, children revealed that their parents did not say "sorry" even when they knew they made mistakes. Sometimes parents did not listen to children's explanations and blamed them unreasonably. This attitude caused confusion in the children because they were encouraged to develop assertiveness and independence in the school while at home they had to comply with parental authority. It was also one of the root causes of family conflicts. However, through my study, I found that parents had positive attitude towards children's openness.

5.1.3 Discipline and Conflicts

In many Chinese families, there is a scroll hung on the wall on which is written a popular Chinese saying: "The sea of learning knows no bounds; only through diligence may its shore be reached". This saying was used not only to impel parents themselves to work hard, but also to encourage children to make unremitting efforts to be successful.

Confucian thoughts such as "Only if you suffer can you surpass others" affects Chinese parents' disciplinary practices. They believed that if their children work hard enough they will do better than others -- "stand out". Therefore, they put pressures on children and set very high standards.

In this research, Chinese parents saw diligence as the key to successful academic achievement. They attributed children's failures predominantly to lack of effort. No matter how high the mark children received, parents always found something that needed to be improved. For example, a girl told me that she received 99 percent and lost 1 percent because of her carelessness. Her parents were not happy and spend more than one hour to educate her to be careful to do the calculation. This finding is consistent with the research conducted in Taiwan which has shown positive relationships between achievement motivation and internal attributions to effort and ability, and negative relationships between achievement and external attributions to luck and task difficulty (Ho, 1994).

Based on the emphasis on effort in the Confucian tradition, Chinese parents paid a great deal of attention to children's homework. Ho (1994) found out that Chinese children

received more help from family members with their homework than did U.S. and Japanese children, and had more positive attitudes about homework than did U.S. children. He also found that in Hong Kong students spend an enormous amount of time on homework, leaving precious little time for outside reading, leisure, or other activities.

I did not observe any sign of "positive attitudes about homework" from children, probably because these children are in Canada, not in China. They all complained about the homework parents gave them. Actually, homework sometimes became a source of conflict. The parents admitted they added "lots of homework" (mostly in Chinese and math) for their children, but explained it was because teachers did not give children homework. This is consistent with Ho's (1994) statement "immigrant parents from Hong Kong and Taiwan often complain that not enough homework is assigned to their children" (p.303). On the other hand, children did not understand why other children (mainly their Canadian friends) did not have to do homework and had lots of time to play, but they did not. Although some parents tried to explain the reason (see Findings chapter, MT2 - ST3), children still did not like it.

Based on the influence of Confucianism, "rearing without education is the fault of the father; teaching without strictness is the negligence of the teacher" (The Three-Character Classics, cited in Ho, 1994), parents not only set very high standards for their children, but also hoped teachers "take more responsibilities" which meant "give more homework and push the children a little harder". They disliked the fact that teachers always "say good words not bad things" so that they did not know how well their children really did in the school and how to help at home. On the other hand, although the traditional duty of

the father is to "educate" the child, my research found that in Canada, some Chinese mothers also take responsibility to teach their children mathematics, Chinese languages and some other subjects. One reason was that most fathers were busy studying, researching and working. Another reason was that most mothers have had higher education in China.

It was very interesting that in the building these Chinese families live, there are not only Chinese language and painting classes, but also mathematics classes. Although children thought math class in the school was "too easy", parents voluntarily started two different levels of mathematics classes which ran after school time. For example, a mathematics Ph.D. student "replenishes" mathematics knowledge to children on weekends. The possible explanations may relate to two factors. One is that, as Ho (1994) discovered, Chinese (both mainland and Taiwan) consistently surpass U.S. children in mathematics achievement. Chinese parents see mathematics as the fundamental knowledge in most academic areas. The other explanation reflects the concern of parents toward the school system (by hearing children's comment "too easy") and the quality of education their children are receiving.

Parents realized the differences in school systems between China and Canada. In China, the school environment is orderly and authoritarian, and discipline is very strict. The children are educated to respect and obey teachers. The teaching methods are formal and teacher-oriented. More importantly, teachers help every child to improve their academic record and take great responsibility for the children's progress. Schools here encourage students to think (not memorize), ask questions and find out answers for themselves.

There is less learning by repetition and more learning by research, experiment and observation. Obviously, parents need to have more information about the Canadian school system.

No matter how hard parents pushed children so that the children "study well", both parents and children thought that if children went back to China now, they would find that their level of knowledge of Chinese language and mathematics was much lower than their Chinese friends. Some parents told me that even if they really wanted to go back, they worried that their children could never "catch up". All children I interviewed did not want to go back because "school here is very comfortable and there is not much homework to do". (Although they all would like to go back to "visit and eat", they really enjoy school here). This concern of parents was confirmed by research which found that although Asian American children received higher score in mathematics than other ethnic groups of American children, their scores were significantly lower than those of children in Beijing (Ho, 1994).

Wolf (1970) states that child-training practices among the Chinese are not particularly open to Western influences and "are likely to accurately reflect traditional goals and values - as long as those goals and values are maintained" (p.39). The data I obtained from interviews favorably affirm Wolf's statement. However, some parents admitted some methods they were using did not always work.

Parental plans and expectations are sometimes based on the ideal child, but these may not be suitable for the actual child. It is not always possible to bring up a child according to

set plans. Should the child fall short of parental expectations, he/she will always feel frustrated. The child will start to think, "Why am I always being reprimanded? I must be useless". Children who are not able to meet their parents' expectations and hence are considered "disobedient" might rebel. First, they may give up -- give up on being obedient. Then under further pressure, they may rebel. They will talk back when parents scold and conflict will result. When all other efforts to control fail, parents may resort to physical punishment (S.U.C.C.E.S.S., 1990). In the families I interviewed, the children, even those who were sometimes "disobedient", understood their parents. They tried to please their parents and had no intention of rebelling.

Keats (1997) points out that many parents encourage their children to do well at school to acquire a high level of competence in some areas. This results in some serious problems for children of different cultural backgrounds. One is the high level of anxiety which the pressure to achieve creates in many children. Another is that parents can set unrealistic goals. The parents' goals may not be shared by the child, and can result in many conflicts. However, children in my research did not have clear signs of a high level of anxiety, even though they talked about pressures from parents. I will discuss adjustment issues in the Section 5.2.2 Cultural Adaptation.

On the other hand, Chinese parents rarely touch or hug their children to show their affection. Wolf (1970) explained the meaning of not showing open expression of affection by Chinese parents: "One must not praise children for accomplishments or they will feel they have done well enough and will stop trying to do better" (p.44). This explanation was supported by most of the parents I interviewed.

The children told me that their parents did say some words to encourage them, even bought presents for their accomplishments, although they did not hug or kiss them. This contrasts with Wolf's (1970) statement "The father may swell with pride as he discusses the matter later with the child's grandmother or mother, but he will show no pleasure in the child's presence" (p.42).

5.2 Cultural Changes

5.2.1 Cultural Identity

Parents expected their children to succeed in Canada, but not become Canadians. While they were proud of their children's achievements, they did not like to accept the new values and behavior of their children, such as "talk back". They pushed children very hard to keep their Chinese language ability and educate them in Chinese culture. They also hoped their children would be more comfortable and learn "good stuff" in the new environment.

Hutnik (1991) points out that members of a minority are excluded from taking a full share in the life of the society because they differ in certain ways from the dominant group. The attitudes of discrimination and prejudice against minority members serve to strengthen the internal cohesion and structure of the minority group. The children I interviewed did not feel as much discrimination as their parents did. One girl mentioned that some children called her "teacher's pet" because the teacher liked her. Most children told me that their teachers were nice and school friends were friendly. But most parents felt that they were living in somebody else's country and that it was almost impossible to

"fit in". That was also the reason they tried to strengthen their internal connections. For example, they had their own choir - The Winnipeg Chinese Students Choir, a senior's group and a Chinese school (As mentioned above, the classes in the latter included Chinese language, Chinese painting, mathematics, chess, etc.), etc.

At home, parents read Chinese newspapers (most families had "People's Daily" which is published in Beijing and printed in Toronto, and local newspapers), cook Chinese food, spoke a Chinese language (Mandarin), and borrow Chinese magazines and videos from CSSA (Chinese Scholars and Students Association). At the same time, they paid special attention to their children's language ability and hoped they would become multi-lingual (Chinese, English, French, etc.).

For the children, the question of identity had different answers. Three older children (11 years old) said they were certainly Chinese and two of them had more Chinese than Canadian friends. Three younger children (8 to 10 years old) called themselves "Chinese Canadians" and only one girl said she had more Canadian friends than Chinese. I found that this identity question related to the language ability. The girl who had more Canadian friends had difficulty communicating in Chinese (for example, with her mother) and said she did not like Chinese clothes because they were "ugly".

In 1992, Hutnik (1992) proposed that the ethnic composition of the peer group would reflect whether the child retained his/her culture or adopted a new one. He mentions research on second generation Yugoslavian children in Australia and provides the following results: 1) subjects with all Australian friends have the highest rejection rate of

Yugoslav customs and traditions such as food, language preference, national identification, rules for social interaction, etc.; 2) subjects with all Yugoslavian friends have the lowest rejection rate, and 3) subjects with friends from both groups are intermediate in their rejection of the parents culture. Although there were sampling differences (his data came from "a large sample", while mine is fairly small), my findings seem to confirm these.

5.2.2 Cultural Adaptation

In 1960, Oberg introduced the notion of culture shock and the U-curve of adjustment. This curve suggested three main phases of cross-cultural adaptation: the initial state of elation and optimism; a second stage of frustration, confusion, and depression; the third stage of a gradual increment in confidence and satisfaction with the new society (in Hutnik, 1991). Most parents I interviewed seemed to be in the 2nd stage but some of them were positive and had some hope for the future (the first stage). I would emphasize that the 3rd stage is an ideal situation. As long as racism and discrimination exist, it is always very difficult to get satisfaction in the new environment for minority groups especially visible minorities.

Parents were frustrated because they had to deal with many difficulties in the new environment. But they also hoped that "Tomorrow will be better" because they believed their education (in China and Canada) and skills were valuable and would be recognized some day. Some researchers (e.g. Hutnik, 1992) conclude that the involvement in the new culture is the single best predictor of acculturation by the measuring index of

intermarriage, group membership, social activities, consumer habits, familiarity with the language, and attention to mass media.

In the section 5.2.1 "Cultural Identity", I discussed the parents' interaction within groups and found that it would take a long time for them to be very involved with a high frequency of social intercourse with people of the new culture. Children, although they adapt to the new environment much faster than their parents, also had difficulties because they are required to act within two very different cultural frameworks. At home, they are asked to behave based on Chinese values and norms. But at school, they have to act in the peer-acceptable way.

"As adolescents, the theory suggests, they would be likely to find it extremely hard to develop a consistent style of life and a unity in their ordering of experience. ... They might be supposed to have a particularly strong tendency to reject identifications with parents and others in the Asian community, while perhaps having insufficient contact with the kind of people with whom they could realistically identify elsewhere."
(Kitwood, 1983, 132).

Some parents interviewed in my study realized that they should adjust to the times, while not discarding traditions. One mother who had been in Canada just two years mentioned that we, as immigrants, needed to expose ourselves to new ideas and methods.

Jenkins (1981) states that "moral education is important in traditional teaching, and even when children are very small they are taught manners, filial piety, and respect for teachers" (p.118). But in my research, children did not know the phrase "filial piety". They knew they should listen to their parents otherwise the parents would be angry or disappointed. But they did not understand the meaning of "filial piety" in both English

and Chinese. Parents also gave filial piety different meanings and did not think their children would support them when they get old. One reason was, as Chu (1985) states, "the new Chinese self no longer maintains a continuity with the past as closely as the traditional Chinese self did" (p.273). Because of the Cultural Revolution (1966 - 1976), the thread of cultural continuity among the Chinese has been disrupted. Another explanation may be that this generation (new Chinese immigrants) had been more exposed to western culture due to the "open door" policy in China since early 1980. I also think the parents realized that they are in Canada, a different cultural environment and it was not possible for children to keep Chinese values and traditions.

In the discussion of the links of child rearing and children's prosocial behavior, Holden and Coleman (1992) identify four types of child-rearing mechanisms: a) the parent as model of prosocial behaviors; b) parental discipline and teaching techniques; c) affective relationships between parent and child; and d) family structure and functioning.

In my research, parents all used "role modeling" as a major way to help children's development. They study and work hard. They don't seek their own ease and comfort. A parent mentioned a Chinese saying: "A fine example has boundless power." This is similar to Western social learning theory which states that "the more competent, powerful, and warm the model is perceived by the child to be, the more likely the child is to model that parent's behavior" (Holden & Coleman, 1992, p.16).

For the second mechanism which is "parental discipline and teaching", there is a big difference between Canadian and Chinese parents. Although they direct teaching, moral

exhortations and preaching, Chinese parents use strict discipline at the same time. Even though the research found that authoritarian or power assertive disciplinary responses can undermine a child's prosocial behavior (Holden & Coleman, 1992), Chinese parents still think strict discipline is an effective way to teach a child. As parents explained, the influence of the new environment and a different school system makes them concerned not only about their children's studying, but also about their behavior. The parents' cultural roots may not be accepted by their children because they want to be accepted by their school mates and don't like their parents' teaching. Therefore, "the parents are caught in both the generational conflicts and the culture conflict "(Jenkins, 1981, p.177).

Some parents realized that the parents' affective relationship with the child is very important. One mother described that for a period of time, every evening, she entered her daughter's room and prayed with her daughter, for her and her friends. For that period of time, her daughter seemed to be more receptive to discipline and closer to her parents. But for most parents, seldom express their caring and understanding in words was due to the cultural factors discussed above, and pressures from the new environment,. This indeed affected the communication between children and parents. Children complained about their parents' impatience, and "unreasonableness".

"There is no doubt that residence abroad, even for a brief period, creates opportunities for some change in behavior....When the familiar restraints are absent and new social and cultural ingredients are added, anyone is liable to behave differently. But the extent of change and the kind of change when away from home are not a foregone conclusion. They are very much dependent upon the cultural soil from which the travelers have sprung and the circumstances in which they find themselves abroad" (Hsu, 1971, p.29)

The change in parenting in Chinese immigrant families expresses itself in two ways. First of all, parents are trying very hard to learn English to develop good communication skills with their children and the society as well. Parents also want to know more about the new culture, and to encourage children to adapt positively to the new environment. For example, parents see children's self-expression and confidence as good signs. Secondly, parents invest a great deal of effort in maintaining their children's Chinese language and culture, as well as pushing them very hard to do well in school.

The reasons parents worry about children's study habits include not only the Chinese tradition of emphasizing academic achievements, but also the difficulties and confusions parents experience in the new environment.

"[P]arenting must be assessed in terms of the emotional resources available to the parent, together with the material resources that can be drawn on and the physical environment in which parenting is taking place.... , the ecological perspective means that attention must be paid not only to individual characteristics but also to the social and environmental contexts in which people are parenting" (Quinton & Rutter, 1988, p.10).

In the discussion of cultural barriers, Daniel (1975) points out that extremes represent a failure to adapt culturally: "one extreme is to see everything as hostile, alien, and to be rejected; the other is to see everything as better than anything there is at home" (p.61).

I did not find these two extremes in the cultural adaptation of the parents I interviewed. Most of parents I interviewed realized that being new immigrants meant having to adjust to a new environment, new language, and new roles. However, some of them felt it harder to accept some of the "Western Culture" and had concerns about the influence of the new environment on their children.

Ho (1994) points out that there is the evidence to suggest that there are "mental health costs incurred on account of the pressure to succeed in school, such as (a) high level of anxiety, (b) depression, (c) school phobia, and (d) psychosomatic and neurotic disorders" (p.301). In my study, what I observed is that some children felt somewhat depressed by the pressure from parents in terms of extra home work and strict discipline, but every child is healthy, happy, and doing very well in school.

There was also a very different finding in terms of extra-curricular activity participation. In Ho's (1994) research he states that teachers in the U.S. complain that the newly arrived students do not actively participate in class and extracurricular activities, and are too preoccupied with examinations. But I found that all the parents I interviewed, although emphasizing academic achievement, encouraged their children to participate in extracurricular activities such as attending different interest classes, volunteering in the school, joining in the school band or in cultural groups. They also saw their children speaking out in the classes as a great positive change. A mother gave a reward to her daughter when she was appointed "Mediation Captain".

5.3 Seeking Help in the New Environment

5.3.1 Cultural Difficulties and Adaptational Problems

Henderson (1994) lists several stress inducers which affect all clients in general and people of color in particular: a) value conflict stress; b) social change stress; c) acculturation stress; d) life events stress; e) goal-striving discrepancy stress; f) role

discrimination stress; and g) role conflict stress. These stresses have been experienced by Chinese new immigrants and their families.

"Uproot a person from his/her place of birth, into an entirely different country and ask that person to start again from scratch is by no means an easy task. Besides geographic and climate differences, one has to adjust to a new language, possible role change and the resulting effects on self-esteem. People in important positions in the country of origin may have to accept low paying jobs in the newly-adopted country. Career women may now turn into full-time housewives. Not only will they miss the job satisfaction enjoyed previously, they may find themselves ignorant of simple knowledge about everyday life" (S.U.C.C.E.S.S., 1990, p.7).

As Henderson (1994) points out "because of their national origin, ethnicity, and race, people of color have become disabled - an appropriate metaphor" (p.83). Every parent has told me about various experiences of living in a new country and struggling with many difficulties. They also mentioned that they had to deal with the feelings of being discriminated against and having being disadvantaged socially.

Daniel (1975) points out that characteristic of cultural difficulties is "(the inability) to be unable to behave as usual in a new cultural environment. Emotional instability must make it harder to manage without the support of a familiar background of life" (p.61). Some parents told me that since they were far away from their families and friends, they were experiencing isolation, helplessness, and depression.

Korbin (1981) explains what he observed in terms of the family problem-solving process in China:

"If a person exhibits problems with his or her child, the underlying cause of trouble or dissatisfaction is sought within the entire fabric of the

individual's life. Is there a problem at work that is causing the individual to take out his or her frustrations on the family? Is an unhappy marriage causing the parent to resent the child? Is an in-law interfering with parental instructions? Once the cause of the problem is ascertained, members of the community-fellow workers, family members, neighbors -- seek to remedy the problem by pointing out the proper behavior both to the individual and to others concerned in the troublesome situation" (Korbin, 1981, 172).

But here it is different. For Chinese new immigrants, the causes of family problems are different, the Canadian ways of dealing with problems are different, and their support system (family members, friends, and neighborhoods) does not exist. Information about dealing with family problems in Canada is difficult to access and understand since very little is translated into Chinese or languages other than English or French.

5.3.2 Perception of Social Services

Jenkins (1981) found three areas where parents reported deficits in services that were specifically related to ethnicity. "The first was what they perceived as condescending or stereotypical behavior by workers, the second was discrimination by agencies, and the third was based on community ignorance of cultural patterns" (Jenkins, 1981, p.109). He emphasized that ignorance of cultural patterns was the most common complaint of Chinese parents and "sometimes the lack of understanding went both ways" (p.109).

My research supported Jenkins' point of "the lack of understanding went both ways".

From the data I gathered, several parents expressed their opinions about Canadian society which revealed misunderstandings and inaccuracies. For example, a mother talked about interracial marriage and thought Western women did not value their family and were self-centered ("They are not stable. Maybe after two years of marriage, she will say Bye Bye

suddenly and leave"). Some parents thought teachers lacked a sense of responsibility ("The teachers here are always saying your child is good, excellent even when he is not"). One mother seemed very confused and helpless in disciplining children: "You can not use some tactics here. You can not even raise your voice. He (her son) knows what to do like reporting to police...."

Although parents talked a lot about their difficulties, they did not talk much about their help seeking. How did they see and use the social services? Kitano and Maki (1996) list six general factors that lead to Chinese Americans' underutilizing of mental health services. They are: 1) a lack of knowledge of available and existing mental health services; 2) the belief that mental disorders cannot be prevented; 3) the belief that self-help is the means by which problems should be handled; 4) lack of knowledge and understanding as to how psychological problems can be treated; 5) low priority given to seeking professional help for prolonged depression; and 6) a slightly greater tendency toward self-help as a means of dealing with problems.

All these six factors are applicable to Chinese new immigrants in Canada, not only in the mental health field, but also for various social problems. In the interviews, parents emphasized that self-help is their main approach in dealing with their difficulties. This has its base in Chinese culture (see Section 5.3.1 Cultural Difficulties and Adaptational Problems).

Chinese immigrants did not see depression and stress as a mental disorder but rather a short period of difficult time. They saw conflict with children as a family matter. They

considered the difficulties and problems in the new environment inevitable and accepted this as a part of being a newcomer here. One parent said: "Your English is not good enough to be able to find job. Who can help you? Nobody!" The reality is that new immigrants have no access to information of available social services because their knowledge of the English language is insufficient.

What Kitano and Maki (1996) did not mention is that the lack of trust toward social services is also an important factor affecting immigrants seeking help. One parent said if she went to see a Chinese counselor, "at least I won't be discriminated against". She did not trust the social providers and worried that they would be "discriminated against" because of the skin color. Parents emphasized the importance of a high degree of culture awareness by social service providers. "If they don't know your culture, how can they help? They don't know where to start!..."

Jenkins (1981) points out that cultural factors are important in delivering services in terms of both knowledge and empathy. He quotes an Indian father: "Choose the one that understands your problems and lives with them. The one from outside has got a lot of book learning, but it would be hard for him to catch on to what you're trying to tell him" (112). Quite a few parents I interviewed made a similar point.

In Jenkins' (1981) research, "a majority of the articulate parents opted for a helping person of their own group" (p.111). He found out three reasons related to this: language, prejudice, and cultural awareness. "Language was particularly important for the Chinese parents, even more than for the Hispanic respondents, probably because more white

workers were likely to know some Spanish than to know any Chinese" (p.111). The identification of the three barriers was consistent with findings from my study.

Parents would like to seek help from people who have the same cultural background. Language is a very critical factor since parents find it difficult to communicate with helping professionals: "I am so exhausted that I don't have the energy to make sentences in English!" This is supported by Kitano and Maki's (1996) discussion. They point out that although there are disagreements regarding the need to match client and clinician in ethnicity, language, gender, and the acculturation of the client, there are some studies which "demonstrate that when language and ethnicity of client and therapist are matched, utilization increases, length of treatment increases, outcome of treatment improves, and scores on the Global Assessment Scale increase" (p.133).

From my research findings and the above discussions, we can see that immigration has a significant impact on family dynamics. The changes in parenting are associated with the acculturation of Chinese immigrant parents. Cultural differences and the difficulties in the new society brought challenges for these new immigrant professionals and affected their child-rearing practices. The data and research also showed the different values and culture between new Chinese immigrants from Mainland China and the old generation Chinese immigrants. These differences and difficulties of new Chinese immigrants call for social services to develop programs which meet specific needs of different immigrant populations. The results of the study are summarized in Section 6.1.

CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This final chapter summarizes some of the major points from the data analysis and presents some suggestions associated with social service delivery issues.

6.1 The Results of the Study

This study provided a picture of child rearing practices of Chinese new immigrant families in Winnipeg. Three themes emerged from the data: 1) Parental responsibilities to support children's development, 2) Chinese ways of discipline, 3) Perception of social services of Chinese new immigrants. The narratives from Chinese immigrant parents "make their actions explainable and understandable to those who otherwise may not understand" (Miller and Glassner, 1997, p.107). The changes in parenting in Chinese immigrant families can be summarized as follows:

- (1) Culture plays an important role in child rearing practices and can be used to explain parents' behaviors.
- (2) Academic achievement is greatly emphasized in Chinese parenting practices. The children are encouraged to work hard in order to have a bright future, i.e. becoming better off than their parents.
- (3) Chinese immigrant families are in the process of transition, and traditional values and norms are changing (e.g. the concept of filial piety).
- (4) Although Chinese parents have some new explanations about "filial piety", they see that the respectful love of parents from children is of paramount importance.

- (5) Immigration for Chinese with higher education means they have to start from scratch. A new language, new culture, and the loss of all they had in their home country, especially social status, brings about significant changes in their family life and in the parent/child relationship.
- (6) Chinese parents are actively trying to adapt to the new environment, but at the same time, they firmly retain their identity and are proud of their culture and values. They hope their children will do so as well.
- (7) Strict discipline has two layers of meaning for Chinese parents: a) Parents have concerns about the environmental influences on their children so they have to be stricter (than in China); b) Children will feel shamed by being punished so they will try not to make mistakes.
- (8) While parents put pressures on children and discipline them fairly strictly, they are doing their best to support their children's development. They put a child's development as a top priority in their lives. This is one the reasons for parental pressure and stricter discipline.
- (9) Language difficulties exist not only in society but also in immigrant families. Because parents (speaking Chinese) and children (speaking English) lack a common language by which they can communicate easily, two way communication (parents ⇔ children) becomes more and more difficult.
- (10) Due to lack of information, language barriers, cultural differences, discrimination, and stereotyping of social services, the utilization of social services by Chinese

immigrants is extremely low. Language barriers and cultural differences such as "don't talk about family problems to outsiders" are two major reasons which prevent Chinese parents from seeking personal and family help.

- (11) Besides self-help, Chinese immigrants hold very strong preferences for "same-culture" practitioners - people from their own community, who are in short supply due to complicated political, economic and social policies.
- (12) A culturally appropriate social service delivery system which attends to the above and more will help people from various ethnic backgrounds to adapt to the new environment faster and better.

6.2 Recommendations for Social Service Delivery Systems

The cultural and racial diversity of Canadian society creates significant challenges to our human-service delivery system, where social service agencies are expected to provide services that are responsive and sensitive to the diverse needs and expectations of their clients and participants. Because of the prominence of consumer movements and of political and economic demand for better delivery of social services, minority clients can be expected to become more critical and outspoken about how they are treated in the future (Tator, 1996).

From my study, I concluded that social services should be provided to people in ways which are culturally acceptable to them and which enhance their sense of ethnic group participation and power. It is our obligation to meet the client not only in terms of the

specific problem presented but also in terms of the client's cultural and community background as well.

To develop a culturally appropriate service delivery system, some recommendations emerging from my research, experiences and literature review are given below:

Firstly, on the micro level relating to cultural adaptation and parenting:

- 1) From my data, I found that Chinese new immigrants did need accurate information about social services. They also wanted to learn the new culture and system including parenting and family services in the new environment, but they did not know where and how to start. Family services and parenting education should be based on an empowerment model which focuses on enabling Chinese new immigrants to improve their lives, develop their communities, and achieve greater influence and control over their social, economic, and political environment.
- 2) Chinese immigrants call for specific services provided by the people who can speak their languages and know their culture and history, and are sensitive to their background. The specific services may include, parenting classes facilitated in Chinese Mandarin, counseling programs offered in Chinese to deal with stress management and mental health, intergenerational conflicts, marital problems, employment issues, etc., multicultural recreational programs which combine Western with Chinese culture so people can learn from each other, and information sessions which help Chinese parents know more about Canadian policy and family law.

- 3) The participants in my study talked about their isolation and loneliness. There is a need to establish regular programs to help Chinese immigrant parents to acquire certain skills such as the ability to communicate with children and teachers, establish realistic expectations, and demonstrate flexibility and empathy.
- 4) Social workers in mainstream service agencies should be very sensitive to Chinese new immigrants. They need to have a full understanding of the impact of migration on child development as well as parenting in the families. For example, the Chinese parents I interviewed had obtained higher education and had a certain social status in China. After migrating to Canada, the values they held and their family practices met strong challenges from the new culture. If social workers use the same practice methods with them as with Canadian clients, the interventions and services would not be effective.
- 5) The need to work cross-culturally brings new challenges to social workers. Social workers should help Chinese families overcome their discomfort, confusion, and distrust while appreciating their perspectives. They need to learn the cultures different than their own through reading about the culture, talking and working with people from the culture and participating in the activities of the ethno-communities.
- 6) In dealing with the issue of physical discipline, social workers need to have culture-specific awareness and understanding. They need to understand the cultural differences and working with Chinese families in a culturally appropriate way. In my interviews, some parents explained that they "punish children for their

good". They saw the intervention from the social services as disrespecting their tradition and culture. If social workers understand the meaning of discipline in Chinese culture and for Chinese new immigrants, they will focus more on education, resources, and information rather than just "punishment".

- 7) Although the Chinese parents in my research talked about self-help, they realized it was very difficult because they, as new immigrants, were struggling to survive and there is no community organization providing services to them. Chinese mutual aid societies that were created to protect and provide help to the Chinese people from discrimination many years ago are not functioning anymore. Social workers should help to promote community development and help to establish partnerships between mainstream agencies and communities. They can go out into the community and establish some programs aimed at helping people to help themselves.

- 8) Child and Family Services agencies must have Chinese-speaking social workers who can work directly with Chinese immigrant families. These agencies should also approach the schools where there are a large number of Chinese children (e.g. Dalhousie Elementary School, Chancellor School, Acadia Junior High School, and Fort Richmond Collegiate) and provide education to teachers and students about respecting and appreciating different cultures. When dealing with intergenerational conflicts, CFS agencies need to consult with the community to find the effective and culturally appropriate solutions.

Secondly, on the macro level there is a need to restructure the system to achieve the goals of providing culturally appropriate social services:

- 1) With the increasing numbers of Chinese immigrants, family service agencies needs to look at the phenomenon of underutilization of services by Chinese immigrants and make fundamental changes.
- 2) Hence, these agencies need to evaluate their own target population, their resources, their staff strengths and weaknesses, and their program goals. Priorities and goals should be established for change through consultation, research, and training.
- 3) Social service agencies, especially those which provide service for immigrants need to develop outreach efforts to increase their presence in not only the Chinese community, but also in other culturally diverse communities. For example, a family service agency can translate its pamphlets into Chinese and other languages, and put this information in the ethnic community newspapers. The agency also can recruit volunteers from Chinese and other ethnic communities to help immigrants access the social services.
- 4) The social service system also needs to become proficient in receiving and integrating divergent forms of input from all parts of the community. The organization itself needs to hire and incorporate culturally diverse staff. Hiring minority service providers would be very beneficial not only to the social service agency but also to the community at large. This, particularly, will be helpful for new immigrants to adapt to and integrate into the new society faster. These

minority workers can use their culture specific knowledge and skills and be actively involved in the community to help newcomers. In addition, they can also empower new immigrants and increase their confidence by role modeling.

- 5) The board, the administration and staff in human service organizations need to work collaboratively to motivate staff members to accept the goals of cultural competence. Staff members should participate meaningfully in decision-making so that the needs of all the community can be recognized and met.
- 6) Agency administrators and staff must share a clear understanding about the required level of cultural skills and knowledge necessary to deliver effective services to the Chinese population (as well as to other minority communities).
- 7) "One-Stop shopping" services should be created to reduce the experience of many immigrants being shuffled from one service to another. "One-stop shopping" services should include different programs designed to help individuals and families deal with various kinds of problems that affect their family functioning. Some parents I interviewed had not been to the social services because they heard that they would be referred to other agencies which were difficult to find.

Social service agencies are experiencing growing pressure from a wide range of external constituencies (such as funding bodies, government agencies, and community advocacy groups) to adapt their policies, programs, and practices. To develop more effective, accessible, and equitable human-service delivery systems, it must be realized that cultural and racial diversity are defining characteristics of Canadian society, and access to all areas of the social service system should be equitable.

6.3 Suggestions for Further Studies

Research serves numerous functions in social work practice (Kropf, 1992). Kropf comments that "research is involved in all aspects of practice, from individual practitioners evaluating their interventions with a client to an analysis of a policy on a group of people" (p.224). Research can be described as providing a framework for practice activities, building knowledge for practice, and providing data for interventions, program evaluations, and instrument development. Several suggestions for further research are as follows:

- 1) This study focused on the parenting experiences of Chinese independent immigrants who came to Winnipeg recently. To fully understand the Chinese immigrants as a whole community, it would be significant to carry out some studies with business immigrants and people of other status such as those holding Employment Authorizations or Student Visas or Family class. In my research, I observed that there were adaptation differences between independent immigrants and business immigrants. However I did not explore these as they were beyond the scope of my research.
- 2) There is a need to conduct research into the relationship of cultural adjustment and educational levels. The participants in my study were all well educated and professionals in China. What are the differences in adjustment between them and those who have less education and are doing physical labor? Does education level and social status have an impact on the acculturation process? If so, how?

- 3) Research is also needed to examine variations in parenting in different Chinese families, e.g. dual career families, single parent families, inter-married families, etc., and families from different areas (China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Southeast Asian countries, etc.).
- 4) In the Chinese immigrant families I researched, the children weren't yet in to adolescence. It would be significant to conduct research about teenagers in Chinese new immigrant families. What is the quality of their relationship with parents, with their culture and traditions, with their peers, and with the new culture?
- 5) There is an urgent need to conduct practice effectiveness research. For example, under which conditions are programs most helpful to Chinese immigrants? How do Chinese clients get involved with social work practitioners?

In general, we need to develop a theoretical framework for understanding the role of the family in immigrant adaptation to the new country. In addition, "there is need to study parents in more of a developmental way (Holden & Coleman, 1992, p.23)". Parenting practice is a very complicated process and there are many ways and levels by which the parent/child relationship can be described and studied. Qualitative, applied research is needed on the specific experiences of immigrant families (e.g. Chinese new immigrant families) which can build on cultural and community knowledge.

I would like to quote James' (1996) regarding the implications of diversity in our multicultural society as my final words for my thesis:

- Every culture or system has its own internal coherence, integrity, and logic. Every culture is an intertwined system of values and attitudes, beliefs and norms that give meaning and significance to both individual and collective identity.
- All cultural systems contribute to variations on the human experience.
- All persons are, to some extent, culturally bound. Every culture provides the individual with some sense of identity, some regulation of behavior, and some sense of personal place in the scheme of things"(p.34).

"The road is tortuous, but the prospects are bright". If we develop more understanding of changes in immigrant families, and the process of acculturation as they adjust to life in this new country, we, as social workers, will be better prepared to help them.

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APPENDIX A A SMALL GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Acculturation – “The process of becoming familiar and comfortable with and able to function within a different culture or environment, while retaining one’s own cultural identity ” (Compiled & edited by *Niels Agger-Gupta*, 1997, Terminologies of Diversity 97: A Dictionary of Terms for Individuals, Organizations & Professionals. Citizenship Services branch, Alberta Community Development, Government of Alberta).

Assimilation – 1. “To become absorbed into a society, to make it one’s own” (Webster’s Dictionary). 2. A process, distinct from integration, of eliminating group characteristics so that newcomers to a society ‘blend in’ to the host society. (Compiled & edited by *Niels Agger-Gupta*, 1997, Terminologies of Diversity 97: A Dictionary of Terms for Individuals, Organizations & Professionals).

Culturally Appropriate Services – Services which have been designed to meet the needs of clients from diverse backgrounds (Compiled & edited by *Niels Agger-Gupta*, 1997, Terminologies of Diversity 97: A Dictionary of Terms for Individuals, Organizations & Professionals).

Cultural Diversity – the differences between people based on a shared ideology and valued set of beliefs, norms, customs, and meanings evidenced in a way of life (Compiled & edited by *Niels Agger-Gupta*, 1997, Terminologies of Diversity 97: A Dictionary of Terms for Individuals, Organizations & Professionals).

Cultural Sensitivity – Awareness of one’s own cultural assumptions, biases, behaviours and beliefs, and the knowledge and skills to interact with and understand people from other cultures without imposing one’s own cultural values on them. Cultural sensitivity is required at both an individual level and at systemic, professional and organizational levels (Compiled & edited by *Niels Agger-Gupta*, 1997, Terminologies of Diversity 97: A Dictionary of Terms for Individuals, Organizations & Professionals).

Culture – consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached value; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other as conditioning elements of further action. (Brislin, 1981, p. 5)

Discrimination – The conscious, or unconscious act of dealing with a person or persons on the basis of prejudicial attitudes and beliefs rather than on the basis of individual merit (Compiled & edited by *Niels Agger-Gupta*, 1997, Terminologies of Diversity 97: A Dictionary of Terms for Individuals, Organizations & Professionals).

Diversity – All the ways we are unique and different from others. This term describes the differences that exist within Canadian society, across all four levels of diversity – individual, team/organizational, professional and societal. In some contexts diversity can be discussed narrowly as individual style differences, or much more broadly across demographic and systemic, historical/socio-political differences. In the latter context there is a relationship with exclusion and inclusion (out-group/in-group) power dynamics. These qualities are included in the term, *culture* (Compiled & edited by *Niels Agger-Gupta*, 1997, Terminologies of Diversity 97: A Dictionary of Terms for Individuals, Organizations & Professionals).

Ethnicity – refers to a consciousness of having a shared history, nationality, language, religion, or life-experience based on such factors (CASSW, 1991, Social Work Education at the Crossroads).

Ethnic Group – refers to a people who consider themselves to be alike due to common ancestry or history, and interact together voluntarily to develop social organizations and to maintain a common culture. This term is sometimes also used to arbitrarily place people who do not consider themselves alike into an ethnic category (CASSW, 1991, Social Work Education at the Crossroads).

Face – “In collectivist societies, a quality attributed to someone who meets the essential requirements related to their social position” – Hofstede, Geert, 1991, Culture and Organizations: Software of the Mind. Loss of face, particularly in management or interpersonal conflict, is a significant factor to be considered in working with people from collectivist societies (Compiled & edited by *Niels Agger-Gupta*, 1997, Terminologies of Diversity 97: A Dictionary of Terms for Individuals, Organizations & Professionals).

Integration – The incorporation of past experience and personal goals into a new, coherent and effective system compatible with the predominant economic, social and political framework of the predominant, or host, society. Integration, unlike assimilation, acknowledges and respects the cultural differences brought by new Canadians (Compiled & edited by *Niels Agger-Gupta*, 1997, Terminologies of Diversity 97: A Dictionary of Terms for Individuals, Organizations & Professionals).

Mainstream Social Services - refers to agencies and organizations that provide services to any person who meets general eligibility criteria. There are no stated requirements based on belonging to a particular cultural or racial group (CASSW, 1991, Social Work Education at the Crossroads).

Marginalization – To cause to live on the margins of society by excluding from participation in any group effort. People can also be said to be marginalized when they, as individuals, are ignored and disempowered in a social or organizational context because of rules or practices which eliminate the possibility of their participation (Compiled & edited by *Niels Agger-Gupta*, 1997, Terminologies of Diversity 97: A Dictionary of Terms for Individuals, Organizations & Professionals).

Race – refers to an arbitrary classification of populations conceived in Europe, using actual or assumed biologically determined traits (e.g., skin color and other physical features) to place populations of the world into a hierarchical order, in terms of basic human qualities, with Europeans superior to all others (CASSW, 1991, Social Work Education at the Crossroads).

Racism – refers to the belief or ideology that races share distinctive and immutable cultural and behavioral traits, and are unequally endowed with human qualities such as intelligence, morality, and industriousness, by virtue of genetic heritage (CASSW, 1991, Social Work Education at the Crossroads).

Systemic Discrimination (or institutionalized racism) – refers to the operating policies, structures, and functions of an on-going system of normative patterns which serve to subjugate, oppress, and force dependence of individuals or groups. This involves establishing and sanctioning unequal rights, goals, and priorities and sanctioning inequality in status as well as access to goods and services (CASSW, 1991, Social Work Education at the Crossroads).

Visible Minorities – refers to individuals who can be visibly identified and are perceived as belonging to racial groups other than those solely of European origin (CASSW, 1991, Social Work Education at the Crossroads).

Resources:

1. Niels Agger-Gupta_(Compiled & edited) (1997). Terminologies of Diversity 97: A Dictionary of Terms for Individuals, Organizations & Professionals. Citizenship Services branch, Alberta Community Development, Government of Alberta.
2. CASSW, 1991, Social Work Education at the Crossroads.
3. Brislin, R. W. (1981). *Cross-Cultural Encounters - Face to Face Interaction*. New York: Pergamon Press.

APPENDIX B CONSENT LETTER (ENGLISH VERSION)

May 15, 1998

Hong Wang
Faculty of Social Work
The University of Manitoba
Winnipeg MB R3T 2N2

Hello:

My name is Hong Wang, and I am a graduate student in the Faculty of Social Work at the University of Manitoba. Currently, I am completing a Master's degree in Social Work and writing a thesis on the topic "Changes in Parenting for Chinese New Immigrant Families in Canada and Implications for Social Service Delivery".

This study will identify the child-rearing problems facing Chinese Immigrant families. I am interested in interviewing you to learn more about your experiences as Chinese immigrant parents and your opinions of the social services available for you and your family. I would like to interview you for about an hour and half, or more, at your convenience. You do not have to answer any questions with which you are uncomfortable, and you can stop the interview at any time. You can also call me after the interview and tell me not to use parts or your entire interview. During the interview, you will be given a short questionnaire to complete to help me have more understanding of the situation of your family. Again, you have the freedom not to answer any of these.

The information you give me is confidential, and I will make every effort to protect the identity of participants in my study. I may quote you in my paper, but I will not use your name or any information that would let someone know that you made that comment.

With your permission, I will tape record the interview to collect accurate information. You can turn off the tape recorder at any time during the interview, and I will not record your name on tape. The tape and notes will be put in a secure place in my home and destroyed when I complete my study. You are free to use Chinese or English.

To gain children's reflection about the complexities of the Chinese new immigrant family interactions, I would also like to interview your child, with your permission. Because I may interview children in small groups (two or three together) based on their willingness, there can be no confidentiality. If you have any concern or comment about this, please call me at _____. If you prefer me to interview your child individually, I can do so.

There is also another limitation to the full protection of your identity. Where information involves a child abuse or neglect situation, I have an obligation to disclose this to Child and Family Services or the police. This is done to protect your child.

A summary of the thesis report will be available when it is completed in August 1998.

Thank you for participating in this research. Your participation and support are valuable contributions.

Sincerely,

Hong Wang

I, _____, (Participant's Name) agree to participate in this study.

Participant's Signature _____ Phone Number _____ Date _____
Parent Signature (if child is under 18)

APPENDIX C GENERAL SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC DATA

No.

Questions	Father	Mother	Children
1. When did you arrive in Canada (month, date, and year)?			
2. What was your status when you came? (e.g., student, visitor, etc.)			
3. How old are you?			
4. What was your occupation before you came to Canada?			
5. The highest level of education that you have completed before coming to Canada?			
6. The highest level of education you have now?			
7. What is your present occupation/grad in school?			
8. What language do you speak at home?			
9. Do your children attend Chinese school or study Chinese at home?			
10. Do you attend Chinese community (or church) activities?			

APPENDIX D INTERVIEW GUIDE.

Introduction

A) Greetings

B) Introduction of General Purpose of the Study

- Know what people think about their culture and families
- What changes in their family interaction and parenting roles
- What kind of help they as parents need to better adapt to the new environment

C) Outline Format

- The questions I will ask are about your opinions about family life in the new environment. There are no right or wrong answers.
- No individuals will be identified in my thesis.
- The time of interview will be 1.5 - 2 hours.
- If some family members like to be interviewed together rather than individually, that is fine.
- You can ask questions at any time for clarification.

INTERVIEW GUIDE / PROBES

(Interview to be conducted in Chinese and English)

1. Parent/Child Communications

Communication, both verbal and nonverbal, is central to the acquisition of cultural form of behaviour and thought. Four general questions will be asked to get the experiences from parents and children. From these general questions, several specific questions are identified to probe the communication patterns in the family.

- **What kind of conversations do you have with your children/parents?**
 - ❑ Do you talk about friends?
 - ❑ Do you talk about teachers?
 - ❑ Do you talk about schoolwork?
 - ❑ Do you talk about your concerns and problems?
 - ❑ What do you want to learn when you ask about above issues?
- **How do you speak with your children/Parent?**
 - ❑ Do you speak with humor?
 - ❑ Do you speak seriously?
 - ❑ Do you speak by watching your words?
 - ❑ Do you speak very openly?
 - ❑ Why do you use the above?

- **What difficulties do you have in your communication with your children/parents?**
 - Do you select the topics to talk?
 - Do you think there is something you should not talk about with your children/parents?
 - Do you often feel frustrated after talking with your children/parents?
 - Do you completely understand what your children/parents mean?
- **What are the differences between the ways of communicating in China and Canada?**
 - In China, how (did) would you communicate with your children?
 - If there are any differences, What are they? What might the reasons be?
- **What language do you speak at home?**
 - When you speak to your children/parents, what language do you like to use, English or Mandarin?
 - If you and your children/parents use different languages to communicate (e.g. Parents talk in Chinese while children respond in English), what do you feel?
 - Do you have any difficulty to communicate with your children/parents because of the language you each use?

2. Parent/Child Interaction

Parent/child interaction is a major aspect in child-rearing practices. Following general questions and probing questions will be asked to identify the parent/child interaction patterns which include discipline, expectations, cultural identity and parent-child relationship in the family and its impact.

▪ **What are the responsibilities and duties of parents/children?**

- What responsibilities should parents take to help their children (For example: Parents should set models for their children; Parents should sacrifice themselves for the life of the child, etc.)? What ones are important to you? Explain.
- What duties should parents and children have? (e.g. Should children listen to their parents and obey them? Should parents be more restrictive rather than permissive? etc.) ? Explain.
- Would these be the same responsibilities and duties as parents/children would have in China? If not, what are differences? Explain the differences in your ideas now.
- Are you able to meet these responsibilities in Canada? If not, what are the difficulties?

▪ **If children have done something right or wrong, what happens?**

- What are the effective ways to discipline children? Explain.
- How do you punish your children? (to parents)
- What do you think (feel) when your parents punish you? (to children)

▪ **What do you expect of your children/parents?**

- What do you think the parent/child relationship should be? (e.g. authoritative, independence, equal, etc.)
- Do you think it is important for your children/parents to have academic achievements? Explain.
- What kind of expectations do you have for your children's/parents' future (i.e., careers, social-economic classes, marriages, etc.)?
- What concerns do you have for your children/parents? Explain.

▪ **If children do not meet your understand expectation, what would you do?**

- What don't you like about your family (parents/children)?
- If you don't like your children's/parents' behaviour, what would you do?
- If you don't like your children's/parents' friends, what would you do?
- If some children have changed their behaviour since coming to Canada, if this is the case, what do you like? What don't you like?

▪ **What do you think of your identity and culture?**

- Do you think you are a Canadian or Chinese? Both? Other? (Especially children)
- How do you feel when you are seen as "being different"?
- Do you (parents) encourage your children to study Chinese? Explain.
- Do you (children) like to go to Chinese schools or study Chinese? Explain.
- What aspects in Chinese traditions and values (such as obedience to parents, honoring of ancestors, financial support of parents, harmony with others, self-cultivation, personal steadiness and stability, courtesy, protecting your face, having few desires, etc.*) do you think are important to retain? Explain.

*: The Chinese Culture Connection (1987): "Chinese Values and The Search for Culture-free Dimensions of Culture" in *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, Vol.18 No.2, June 1987, 143-164.

2. Help-seeking Patterns and Behaviors

▪ **If there are some problems in your family life, whom do you usually turn to for help?**

- What kind of problems around parenting do you have with your spouse?
- What kind of problems do you have with your children/parents?

- ☐ What other family problems or difficulties do you have?
- ☐ When might you seek help?
- ☐ If you were very frustrated/upset, what would you do?
- ☐ If you got upset about something, whom would you talk to (e.g. for parents: friends, classmates, co-workers, social services, etc.; for children: teachers, schoolmates, friends, school counselors, etc.)? Explain.
- **What do you think about the social services in Winnipeg?**
 - ☐ What do you know about the social service programs in Winnipeg?
 - ☐ Have you ever been there? To which ones?
 - ☐ If you have been to some agencies, what do you think about the service there?
 - ☐ If you have known some programs but did not go, why?
 - ☐ If you know some services are available, will you go there for help? Explain why or why not?
- **What suggestions do you have in order for you and your family to receive help from the social service systems if they need it?**
 - ☐ If you think the social service can help you, what they should do?
 - ☐ How can social services be helpful?
 - ☐ If you want to attend some programs, what kind of programs would these be?