

Upbringing Chinese Children in Migration

How Chinese Immigrants Re-Formulate Their Parenting in the 21st Century

Chinese kinderen opvoeden in migratie

Hoe Chinese immigranten hun ouderschap herformuleren in de 21e eeuw

(met een samenvatting in het Nederlands)

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Chapter 1

General Introduction

Introducing the problem: the misrepresentation of Chinese parenting

The parenting of Chinese immigrants who migrate to “Western” societies is often represented by these societies as different from the local mainstream culture. Chinese parenting is often seen as conservative, even hidebound, and associated with self-isolation and a lack of acculturation. In a sense, Chinese parenting stands for how (the development of) immigrant parenting has been pictured in the West both in academia and in popular accounts: as uniform and as characterized by a unidirectional and slow assimilation process (de Haan, 2011; Louie, 2009). However, very few studies pay attention to the actual **process of how Chinese immigrant parenting is (re)formed** and how one can understand such processes in light of the wider sociocultural dynamics of which these parenting practices are a part. This is exactly what this dissertation aims to unpack by studying Chinese immigrants in the Netherlands and by placing the findings on the reformation of parenting of Chinese immigrants in a wider global context of migration processes, diversification of migration waves, and the strategies and policies of Chinese parenting.

The Image of Chinese parenting under standardized Western notions

Discussion about Asian/Chinese immigrant parenting exists in multiple research fields and various social domains. The controversy regarding Chinese (immigrant) parenting, as represented in the popular work *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother* by Amy Chua, is well known. Chua’s description of the “tiger mother” makes people wonder whether Chinese parenting is generally more authoritarian than other parenting styles? The simple answer is yes, according to many studies employing a **cross-cultural perspective**. Specifically, Chinese parents (both at home and abroad) have stronger aspirations for the academic success of their children (Lin & Fu, 1990), even at the level of preschool education (Pearson & Rao, 2003), than their English

or American Caucasian counterparts. They place more emphasis on the obedience of their children and show more parental control (Guo, 2013) and less warmth (Cheah, Leung, Tahseen, & Schultz, 2009) compared to their counterparts in Western mainstream parenting cultures. Cross-cultural studies that focus on the developmental outcomes of children seem to be in line with what is said about Chinese parenting styles: development psychologists found that Chinese (immigrant) children and adolescents were being encouraged to restrain from their own desires for the benefit of the collective; even toddlers were more inhibited than Canadian age-mates (Chen et al., 1998).

Such studies mostly adopt a framework that identifies and conceptualizes universal components of parenting and then apply this framework to parents from all backgrounds, including Chinese, with the goal of comparison. A classical and influential framework, which has been applied in such comparative studies on parenting, is Baumrind's typology of four parenting styles: Authoritative, Authoritarian, Permissive and Neglectful (Ochocka & Janzen, 2008). According to such a perspective, tiger mothering falls in a typical configuration of authoritarian parenting, as one can deduce from the aforementioned cross-cultural studies.

This type of research, which aims at representing and analyzing Chinese parenting by applying a universal conceptual framework to undertake comparisons between cultures, or in other words, an 'etic' perspective, has received critiques from research representing an 'emic' approach for its biased measurement. Specifically, the critique is that the theoretical frameworks implied in the measurement instruments being used are mostly developed and conceptualized from Western notions regarding parenthood and childhood (Chao, 1994). Interestingly, the fact that these same notions are culturally embedded in Western history has long been forgotten by most research that takes parenthood and childhood as its research topic. The current empirical-analytical research approach in developmental psychology (one

of the disciplines that covers the theme of Chinese immigrant parenting) would therefore take these frames as the unitary standard (Koops & Kessel, 2017). As a result, the image of Chinese parenting may be misrepresented and misunderstood due to a research approach that lacks a cultural-historical context.

Putting culture first, but ignoring the dynamics of migration

An alternative perspective that explains the assumingly conservative and strict parenting style of Chinese immigrants links their style to traditional **Chinese culture and philosophy**. From such a perspective, Chinese immigrants' 'authoritarian' parenting style is explained by how authority and family are represented in Chinese culture (e.g., Guo 2013; Chen et al. 1998). In such studies, Chinese culture is seen as strongly collectivistic, in the sense that the benefits of the community are valued over those of individuals (Hofstede, 2017). Therefore, the community to which Chinese people belong, for instance, their family, their own ethnic group, township, etc., ultimately becomes important to them. As a result, Chinese immigrants trust and rely more on each other than on 'others' in almost every respect, including childrearing, and especially in contexts of migration, where more barriers, such as language barriers and different values, can be expected. This isolation, in return, is also believed to help them preserve their Chinese parenting ideology. Moreover, from a cultural point of view, these ideologies are seen as a continuation of certain traditional notions, with little adjustment based on the migration setting. For instance, Chinese immigrant parents require a high level of obedience from their children, which is explained by the traditional concept of "*xiao-shun*" (filial piety) that was greatly emphasized as playing a central role in Confucian ethics. This virtue requires the younger generation to take good care of one's parents and should be

taught to children from an early age. In other words, obeying parents is seen as an exercise of Xiao-shun in childhood (Yee, 2006).

In this line of research, Chinese (parenting) is represented as being relatively stable and homogeneous throughout history and across locations. However, this assumption of cultural homogeneity across time and place is disputable, especially when studying immigrants.

First, immigrants from the same culture do not necessarily have the same motives of migration, do not necessarily represent the same subculture of their hometown premigration, do not share the same experiences during and after migration, nor experience the same settlement process. For instance, research has pointed out that immigrants' settlement considerations are intermingled with their relationship considerations, such as caring for aging parents and future childcare (Geddie, 2013). This consideration reveals that immigrants do not always follow the same migration patterns when societal conditions are set but take into account their specific and diverse personal circumstances. This flexibility can also be found in childrearing. Immigrants' parenting aspirations, practices, ideologies, etc. are also embedded in their own specific personal background. For instance, Tardif-Williams and Fisher, following Bakhtinian's dialogic perspective, proposed that acculturation is negotiated and created by people in their daily interactions. Therefore, immigrant parenting has to do with specific personal and family background characteristics (Tardif-Williams & Fisher, 2009). For all of the mentioned reasons, we cannot form an all-compassing understanding and explanation of Chinese immigrant parenting without paying attention to their (very likely to be diverse) processes of migration, including their settlement strategies, in addition to their cultural influences.

Second, the assumption of cultural stability implies that immigrants from the same (stable) culture develop the same parenting in, presumably, the same (stable) cultural

environment in the receiving country. However, this assumption oversimplifies the cultural dynamics in (most) contexts of migration and in cultural practices more generally. In addition to the fact that cultural stability is an 'idée fixe' in itself (Anderson-Levitt, 2012), it can be said that for the populations addressed in this study, both Chinese culture and the culture in receiving countries have experienced processes of rapid social change, where old cultural norms are fading away and new cultural norms are being generated. Attention to the implications of such rapid changes and how these impacts change cultural norms for parenting is rare among studies regarding Chinese immigrant parenting in the West.

Overlooking immigrants' learning practices

As a cultural practice, especially in the case of relative stability, parenting can be seen as something in which parents are naturally equipped and as being passed down from generation to generation without being questioned (Muir, Bohr, Shepherd, Healey & Warne, 2019). In this case, people would be governed by unconscious rules, values and norms, rather than conscious ones, which could be formed over long periods of time.

Migration, however, brings challenges and specific requirements to parenting. After landing in a totally different society, old ideas and practices will no longer work smoothly. As with other cultural practices, because of this, immigrants have to reform and rebuild their parenting ideas consciously or unconsciously after migration. Cross-sectional research focusing on the comparison of certain populations at only a specific point in time is not well equipped to study this reforming process. A focus on immigrant parents' learning practices during their reforming of their parenting after migration is generally absent in current

scholarship regarding Chinese immigrant parenting. Here, my aim is to include such a perspective in the study of Chinese parenting in situations of migration.

Overlooking the diversity in Chinese (immigrant) communities

Mainstream research tends to see the Chinese (immigrant) community as a homogeneous whole, overlooking diversity. This tendency is associated with the visibility of the Chinese community to Western societies and Western scholars. The cross-cultural approach has been developed in disciplines such as education and psychology since the mid-20th century (Cheah, Leung, Tahseen & Schultz, 2009), when the Chinese indeed represented a quite small and relatively unitary community in the West. According to the literature about Chinese global migration in contemporary history, the majority of Chinese in the West at that time were the descendants of Chinese sailors and merchants originally from the “qiao-xiang,” meaning hometowns of overseas Chinese. These hometowns were mainly located in Guangdong, Fujian and Zhejiang Provinces. Given the small population and the unitary origin, it is not surprising that Chinese (parenting) or Chinese culture more generally was considered homogeneous.

As time went by, different waves of migration to the West developed in the context of China’s opening up and social development. It has clearly been found that these new waves of Chinese immigrants originally had quite diverse motives for migration, had diverse destination choices, represented groups with a diverse socioeconomic status and were each rooted in their specific historical, legal, economic and cultural settings (Zhuang & Zhang, 2012; Zhou, 2006). These aspects of diversity in the study of immigrant parenting will receive serious attention in this dissertation.

This dissertation: approach and goals

As stated above, a nondynamic, **cross-cultural research paradigm** may lead to several problems associated with the misrepresentation of current Chinese immigrant parenting in the West. Instead, assumptions of universality and stability should be avoided, particularly when studying migration.

An important dynamization factor that I will pay attention to in this dissertation is that of the increasingly complex global connections related to increased human mobilization and faster communication. Since the world is increasingly interconnected, and since new communication technologies, such as the internet, are facilitating interpersonal and intercultural interaction, the boundary between cultures has been much blurred. This dissertation will constantly take this information into account when looking at empirical data as well as secondary data. Specifically, to describe and understand the reformation of (diverse) parenting within the overseas Chinese community, how parents utilize tools, including multiple media channels, to facilitate their communication with others will be studied in an explicit manner. In addition, the themes related to how they involve local, distant and global connections with others will also be coded and analyzed.

Last but not least, the current phenomenon of global migration also brings everyone involved into a significantly richer cultural landscape. Specifically, people, including Chinese immigrants, currently have more opportunities to access multiple ideologies from not only their sending and receiving countries but also other places, thanks to communication technology.

In this dissertation, to explain how I am trying to capture and understand Chinese immigrant parents, I take the Tiger Mother as an example. Under the traditional cross-cultural perspective, this type of parenting falls into the category of a typical Authoritarian parenting style, according to Baumrind's typology of parenting styles. However, in this thesis, when trying to understand her specific way of parenting, I question whether this typology is sufficient in capturing the Tiger Mother's parenting. Instead, I am asking: What cultural elements are represented in her parenting which the standard notions derived from the West cannot fully capture and measure? What are the traditional cultural roots of this type of Chinese parenting, and how have these been perhaps modernized (premigration)? How can we take the dynamics in her migration history into account to understand how her parenting has been formed? In my ambition to include migration dynamics, my goal is to include the cultural changes in both her sending and receiving country, as well as her access to certain parenting ideas before and after migration. In other words, my ambition is to pay attention to the changes and developments of the (immigrant) Tiger Mother over time and pay attention to her learning process. Seeing a particular immigrant reforming his/her parenting as a learning process urges us to pay attention to the access of present-day immigrants to different resources. Specifically, to investigate how they (flexibly) learn from all potential sources to fulfil their parenting needs at the microlevel, I argue that paying attention to their knowledge acquisition characteristics, as I do in this thesis, is a useful tool.

The goal of this dissertation is thus to show the formation of Chinese immigrant parenting as a cultural practice and learning process, as it presumably has undergone changes pre- and postmigration. At the same time, I do not assume that these changes are the same for all Chinese immigrants, which is why I pay attention to the diversity within groups of Chinese immigrants.

In sum, the main research question of this dissertation as follows: How can the parenting processes of immigrant Chinese parents be described in relation to the dynamics of migration, and to what extent are parenting processes dependent on differences in backgrounds and aims between subgroups of immigrants?

Content of the book [First](#), in Chapter 2, after reviewing previous studies regarding Chinese immigrant parenting from two traditional research approaches, the etic and emic approaches, I affirm my viewpoint with respect to the theoretical foundation of this dissertation. In this chapter, I also elaborate why I propose that when examining Chinese immigrant parenting, we should consider it as 1) historically and socially specific and 2) as a “hybrid” of two or more parental models. This conceptual stance provides the perspective from which the two subsequent comparative empirical studies must be seen. Both studies deal with the different parental ethnotheories between two types of new Chinese immigrant mothers in the Netherlands: lower-SES economic immigrants versus higher-SES knowledge immigrants. I claim that this perspective helps to explain why these differences take place. The term “knowledge immigrant” in Chapter 2 refers to highly skilled immigrants, and the term “economic immigrant” refers to low-skilled immigrants. The reason for using the two dyads of terms addresses the different audiences of the journal in which the chapter was published and this dissertation.

As I argue that parenting should be socially and historically understood, in Chapter 3, I provide an explanation for their parenting ideologies from the perspective of their specific migration experiences. My goals in that chapter are to explain why the essential differences between my two target groups exist both pre- and post-migration and to discuss how these parenting practices should be seen as being embedded in larger social contexts both in China

and abroad. I take one more step in Chapter 4 when I ask from whom these mothers gain their parenting knowledge. The hybrid parenting perspective I defend in this thesis requires a detailed investigation of how these parents weigh and use various influences and knowledge that shape their parenting. Inspired by Bourdieu's social capital theory, I examine the parental knowledge acquisition of the two types of Chinese immigrant mothers in the Netherlands. I do this by comparing both their social networks and the nonhuman resources they use to build their knowledge on parenting. I investigate the differences between both groups in terms of the components of their networks (i.e., which different people are in their networks), the density of their networks and the spatial concentration of their networks (i.e., where are the people in their networks located?). I also investigate their information needs and how these relate to the different resources they employ in building their parenting strategies. This methodology enables me to show how multiple influences function together in shaping a particular Chinese immigrant mother's parenting practice and ideology. By investigating the detailed process of how Chinese immigrant mothers gain their parenting ideologies, which predominates Chapter 3, and by investigating how this process is also embedded in the use of particular social networks and resources, which predominates Chapter 4, my goal is to demystify a culturally deterministic perspective of immigrant parenting and, also by means of the methodology I am using, to contribute to an alternative perspective that allows us to unravel the cultural dynamics of parenting in migration.

Last, starting from showing the richness and variation of the reconstruction of parenting in such a small immigrant population in the Netherlands, I want to expand this perspective further to discuss how the family dynamics in Chinese families all over the world interplay with their migration experiences. With such a discussion, my additional aim is to contribute to the development of Chinese policies that support the education of overseas Chinese by

including and considering the implications of the variety of migration waves that currently exist worldwide. Therefore, in Chapter 5, I classify four waves of Chinese global migration in contemporary history and ask how the parenting and education needs of each of the immigrant groups belonging to each of the waves are shaped by the particular migration dynamics of each wave. Based on my analyses and my overview of Chinese policies that support overseas Chinese education, my goal is to develop recommendations for Chinese policymakers that support Chinese families that have migrated from China. Based on my analysis regarding different overseas Chinese family patterns and their different visions towards the next generation, my intention with this chapter is to provide policymakers with new information that incorporates the variety of migration waves and the immigrants' subsequent educational needs that should be considered when implementing new policies.

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Chapter 2

How to Understand the Parenting of Chinese Immigrants in Western Societies: A Literature Review

Introduction

A popular work titled *Battle Hymn of Tiger Mother* authored by Amy Chua and published in 2011 has caused an immense public controversy, both in the West and in China. The book tells the story of how Amy Chua, a Chinese mother who migrated to the U.S., brings up her two daughters trying to hold on to her Chinese upbringing in the new context (Chua, 2011). Her “Chinese” upbringing is described as strict, harsh and demanding and the book suggests at times that it leads to more successful outcomes than the more ‘loose’ and permissive parenting in the U.S. In the U.S., people have blamed Chua for her restrictive and relentless parenting, while marvelled at her stereotypically successful daughters¹. In China, while the masses are proud of this kind of success story of their own people equipped with apparently typically Chinese cultural norms and values, Chua’s parenting is regarded as a bit extreme and strange, even by current Chinese standard. Also, in academia, the phenomenon of so called tiger parenting gained attention since the publication of Amy Chua’s book, see for instance, Kim, Wang, Orozco-Lapray, Shen, & Murtuza (2013), who ask the question in their article: does “Tiger Parenting” Exist? This wave of attention from both the public and academia for the myth of the ‘tiger mother’ has renewed the attention for questions as: How have Chinese immigrant parents, represented in the book by Chua, been raising children in a transnational context? And how have they been able to hold on to, or maybe exaggerate, reinforce, typically Chinese parenting practices and beliefs after migration? (How) have they possibly also adapted these practices and beliefs?

¹ Although one can say that Lulu finally ‘won’ the battle, as she succeeded in escaping the authority of her mother, she is still considered to be successful in school and music thank to her mother’s strict training).

In the academia, the parenting of the Chinese immigrants in the West has been studied for over half a century. This field is characterized by a large body of empirical studies devoted to documenting, conceptualizing and interpreting their parental practices and ideas. The majority of these studies come from behavioural sciences (Educational Science and Psychology) and Cultural Anthropology. In this chapter we will review this work, while considering that, based on the underlying conceptual framework in these studies, they can be divided into two different strands of studies: those studies that adopt an *etic* perspective, and those that adopt an *emic* one.

These two terms, *etic* and *emic*, according to Harris, are coined by the linguist Pike, originate from the suffixes of the words “*phonetic*” and “*phonemic*”. Harris summarized that Pike had defined in Linguistics that: “*phonetic* accounts of sounds are recognized by linguists as depending on the activity of the vocal cords; while *phonemic* accounts are based on the implicit or unconscious system of sound contrasts which native speakers have inside of their minds” (Harris, 1976). Anthropologists have adopted this distinction and similarly *etic* has been used when a culture is described by a researcher using some kind of standard that facilitates cross-cultural comparison while the term *emic* refers to studying indigenous practices considered specific to a culture (Schwandt, 2014). In line with this, we refer to studies as *etic* when they use standardized models or concepts to capture the cross-culturally variety in Chinese immigrant parenting. We will refer to studies as *emic* when they use indigenous concepts, such as notions from Chinese language or culture, which are seen as unique and cannot be used to compare the Chinese population with other populations. For instance, if we take Amy Chua’s story, from an *etic* approach, we might judge her parenting from certain assumingly universal scientific parental concepts and classify her parenting style

accordingly, while hypothesizing its influence on her children's developmental outcomes. On the contrary, if we consider the story from an emic point of view, we will explain her parenting style using typically Chinese concepts that explain her parenting from this heritage.

We adopt this dichotomy as a framework to present, discuss and critique these studies about Chinese immigrant parenting in section 2, which is the first task of the current review. As a second task, taken up in section 3, we will answer the question what alternative perspective is needed given some of the critique that will be expressed in section 2.

Two existing approaches for understanding Chinese immigrant parenting

The cross-cultural or etic approach

In cross-cultural studies on parenting, researchers have always been trying to answer this question: what is the difference regarding the parenting practices between different cultures? When talking about difference, people tend to take a 'standardized ruler' to measure and compare parenting as well as its outcome for children's development cross-culturally.

Since the mid-20th century, researchers in Education and Psychology have developed several theories to formulate and measure parenting practices and to distinguish parenting styles (Cheah, Leung, Tahseen & Schultz, 2009). Parenting practices are defined by Darling and Steinberg as specific behaviours of parents to socialize their children (Darling & Steinberg, 1993). Spera has identified three constructs related to parenting: 1) 'parental involvement', 'parental monitoring', 2) 'parental goals, and 3) values and aspirations' (Spera, 2005).

Parenting style was defined by Darling and Steinberg as the social-emotional climate in which parents raise their children (Darling & Steinberg, 1993). Based on the attention for the different socialization strategies in research, scholars developed dimensions in an attempt to capture the variety of parenting styles they came across related to the socio-emotional climate, such as acceptance/rejection and dominance/submission (Symonds, 1939, cited from Spera, 2005); emotional warmth/hostility and detachment/involvement (Baldwin, 1955, cited from Darling & Steinberg, 1993) and control/non-control (Schaefer, 1959, cited from Spera, 2005). Following up these early works, Baumrind and the scholars following her have developed the most influential typology of parenting styles to this day based on her study and analyses of parenting. This conceptual work, which is empirically mostly based on middle class, white families, resulted in four distinctive parenting styles: authoritative, authoritarian, permissive and neglectful. The styles are characterized by two dimensions: one is 'parental responsiveness (warmth)', which refers to the degree the parent responds to the child's needs; while the other one is 'parental demandingness (control)', which refers to the extent to which the parent expects more mature and responsible behaviour from the child, see table 1 below (Baumrind, 1978; 1967; 1971; Maccoby & Martin, 1983).

Table 1. The typology of four parenting styles characterized by Baumrind and her followers

	Demanding	Undemanding
Responsive	Authoritative	Permissive
Unresponsive	Authoritarian	Neglectful

Baumrind's typology has been used in many empirical studies to describe parenting in various cultures around the globe as well as how these styles relate to the development of children (e.g. Glasgow, Dornbusch, Troyer, Sternberg & Ritter, 1997; Leung, Lau & lam, 1998; Dwairy, Achoui, Abouserie, Farah, Sakhleh, Fayad & Khan, 2006). As the Asian immigrants have been one of the fastest growing groups of immigrants in many Western countries since the mid-20th century (Gorman, 1998), in particular in the United States, its distinguished cultural beliefs, particularly in parenting practices and ideas, have caught much attention in academia. In most of these studies the parenting of Asian, including Chinese, immigrants has been typified as 'authoritarian' (e.g. Dornbusch, Ritter, Leiderman, Roberts & Fraleigh, 1987). Moreover, it has been found that, compared to their Western counterparts, Chinese and Chinese immigrant parents tend to endorse parental control (Lin & Fu, 1990), emphasize obedience of children (Chen, Hasting, Rubin, Chen, Cen & Stewart, 1998) and are less likely to use democratic, authoritative styles in child-rearing than North American parents (LeVine, Miller & West, 1988). According to Padmawidjaja & Chao it can be inferred from these results that Chinese immigrant children are highly controlled and expected to be sensitive to parents' wishes and gain less warmth and closeness from their parents (Padmawidjaja & Chao, 2010). Others have shown that Chinese American parenting styles are more variable. By latent profile analysis, Kim, Wang, Orozco-Lapray, Shen and Murtuza have conceptualized eight parenting dimensions (parental warmth, democratic parenting, parental monitoring, inductive reasoning, parental hostility, psychological control, punitive parenting, and shaming) and demonstrated four parenting profiles among Chinese American parents which they have termed: tiger parenting, supportive parenting, easy-going parenting, and harsh parenting. (Kim, Wang, Orozco-Lapray, Shen, and Murtuza, 2013).

As to the consequence of parenting on child outcomes, the authoritarian parenting style of Asian immigrants has puzzled researchers. Although it has been found that among the European American population, the authoritarian parenting style has a negative association with children's academic achievement, the academic performance of children from Chinese (Asian) immigrant families is surprisingly good, and even above other ethnic groups (Dornbusch et al., 1987). Some have suggested that this relationship between authoritarian parenting and negative academic achievement is related to the lower educational level of parents who are defined by both of these factors. However, the results of Chinese children from parents with a lower educational level and a lower family income are still higher compared to groups with similar characteristics in Caucasian Americans (Cheung, 1982).

After describing the differences between the Chinese and the Western parenting practices, it's natural to ask why these differences take place. Researchers, especially psychologists, have extensively explored this question while looking at the determinants of parenting. Derived from Belsky's famous model, according to Foss' conceptual model for studying parenting behaviours in immigrant populations, three domains of variables have been identified: personal, infant and contextual (Foss, 1996). An important focus in this work is to investigate how parents' personal characteristics and infants' temperaments are related to parenting. For instance, it has been found that personality can be an inner resource that impacts upon parenting (see a review by Prinzie, Stams, Dekovic & Belsky, 2009). Within this line of research, we could barely find specific studies that addressed Chinese parenting or the parenting of Chinese immigrants. However, we found several cross-cultural personality studies addressing the contrasts between Chinese and other groups. For instance, while using

standardized measurement instruments, significant differences between Chinese (both at home and abroad) and American populations were found. Using the 'Big-Five personality domains' it was found that Chinese are less open than Americans (e.g. McCrae, Costa & Yik, 1996; McCrae, Yik, Trapnell, Bond & Paulhus, 1998). Moreover, when using a standardized self-administered questionnaire to test young adolescents from different ethnic groups, lower psychological and social well-being was found among Asian immigrant adolescents (e.g. Choi et al., 2006; Greene et al. 2006). Using conceptual models such as that of Foss, these results on personality characteristics of Chinese parents and children imply that Chinese parenting and family life also differs from other ethnic groups accordingly.

Similarly, for infant factors similar research procedures have been followed. For instance, in order to measure infant temperament, psychologists have developed a scale since 1970's in the U. S. (Carey and McDevitt, 1970), which has been applied to the Chinese population. However, unlike for the personality research, the results showed that Chinese infant temperament is similar to infant temperament in Western countries, including the distribution of different infant temperament types in the Chinese population, at least in the early stages of childhood (Zhang & Xu, 1996), and its impact on maternal depression (Jiang & Dai, 1998).

The point I would like to raise here, is that these studies on parents' personality and on infant temperament, as well as the work that looks at the determinants of parenting are drawing upon a similar approach, which can be associated with the etic approach described above. Non-Western populations, in this case the Chinese population, are measured with a concept and corresponding methodology which was originally developed in the Western society for Western populations. Subsequently this concept and corresponding measurement

instruments are used for cross-cultural comparisons. This methodology implies that individual parents, or groups of parents from different cultural origins can be understood based on the same conceptual frame, which is considered universal. An extensive discussion of this issue can be found, for instance, in the work of Rogoff (2003), who shows how certain concepts in developmental psychology do not capture the cultural variety that exist worldwide. This one-sidedness can have the effect that Western populations become the norm, and that other populations can be easily misunderstood, misrepresented or even seen as deviant or abnormal, and thus more likely presented in a less favourable light. Some passages in Chua's book vividly represent such an effect when it relates how the Western mainstream (both in public and academia) sees the Chinese parenting:

I don't believe that all parental comparisons are invidious. Jed is constantly criticizing me for comparing Sophia and Lulu. And it's true that I've said things to Lulu like, "When I tell Sophia to do something, she responds instantly. That's why she improves so fast." But Westerners misunderstand. When I say such things I'm not favoring Sophia; just the opposite, I'm expressing confidence in Lulu. I believe that she can do anything Sophia can do and that she's strong enough to handle the truth. I also know that Lulu compares herself to Sophia anyway. That's why I'm sometimes so harsh with her. I won't let her indulge her own inner doubts. As I often said to the girls, "My goal as a parent is to prepare you for the future—not to make you like me." (Chua, 2011, Chapter 9 The Violin, para. 4)

"Guan": To love *and* to govern. Understanding Chinese immigrant parenting through an indigenous lens: an emic perspective.

As the above shows, the etic approach has not done very well in providing reasons or conceptual models for the differences that were found. For instance, what still puzzles

academia is that Chinese children do relatively good in school regardless of the kind of parenting style they have been experiencing, which is contrary to the pattern found in the Caucasian population, as mentioned above. Again, from an etic perspective, scholars have explained this paradox by stating that among Chinese immigrant children the influence of peers is stronger than that of families (e.g. Steinberg, Dornbusch & Brown, 1992).

Critique on the etic perspective using indigenous concepts

However, in recent years, some scholars, especially those who have an Asian background, have started to provide other answers to this paradox from a different perspective, mostly from Anthropology (Dornbusch et al., 1987), while also providing critique on the scientific approach that has been used. A major element in this critique has been that the measurement in the studies on Chinese parenting has been biased as it lacks a conceptual framework that does justice to Chinese parenting practices and values. The Western conceptual framework, in which particular dimensions of parenting are distinguished, might lead to prejudices of Asian parenting (Suzuki, 1988), and might overlook certain parts of the nature of Chinese parenting. Therefore, these scholars argue that research must consider indigenous Chinese concepts to capture features of Chinese parenting in order to gain an 'insider's' perception on Chinese families and child raising. The argumentation is that this is necessary in order to understand and explain phenomena such as the 'authoritarian' parenting-school success paradox. As extensively argued by Chao, the 'paradox' regarding Asian students' school success and their authoritarian parents is due to the fact that the concept of 'authoritarian' doesn't fully capture the specificity of the child rearing style of the Chinese, especially for the purpose of explaining school success, even though there is a certain overlap between Western authoritarian and Chinese parenting (Chao & Sue, 1996; Chao, 1994). Chao and others have

contributed to this discussion by unpacking important concepts regarding parenting from an insiders' perspective, for instance, on parental obedience, the person and parent-child relationship, which they claim are not translatable and unsusceptible to generalization.

Chinese-American anthropologist Hsu for instance, discussed the Chinese concept of 'personage': *jen*, in which the Chinese intimate society and culture are emphasized above the individual's internal qualities, in contrast to the idea of personality, which is a Western concept rooted in individualism (Hsu, 1971). According to Hsu, in Chinese culture, one's parents, siblings and spouses are likely to continue to have a prominent and permanent place in a person's life and remain constant over the life course. Therefore, when studying the traditional Chinese parent-child relationship, the concept of filial piety (*xiao-shun*) has been strongly emphasized. *Xiao-shun* is a multifaceted virtue. Most importantly, it dictates how one should be a good son or daughter. In the family, it is an attitude of respect for one's parents with tangible acts such as obeying them, providing for them and nurturing them (Liang & Sugawara, 1992). This concept is rooted deeply in the philosophy of Confucius, which has been very influential throughout Chinese history.

In order to explain the paradox of the Chinese immigrant students' school achievement and the 'authoritarian' parenting, Chao proposes the concept of *chiao shun*, meaning training, as well as the practice of *guan*, to adequately capture Chinese parenting as a replacement of describing Chinese parenting in terms of 'authoritarian' and parental demandingness. The concept of *guan* stands for two constructs, which cannot be separated in the Chinese ideology of parenting: to love (care) and to govern. The reason why Chinese parents score high on 'authoritarian' is that this concept may overlap with the Chinese concept of *chiao shun*, as

both of them emphasize a set standard of conduct, but 'authoritarian' does especially not capture the loving and caring aspects of the notion of guan.

Furthermore, scholars have turned the argumentation also towards a critical evaluation of the standards by which parenting is judged in the international literature, and argued that the authoritarian child-rearing style has very specific cultural roots in Western history and has been associated with an evangelical religious fervour. According to Smuts and Hagen this authoritarian parenting style has been a Western preoccupation even before World War II and even throughout American history (Smuts & Hagen, 1985). The concept of *chiao shun* has very different cultural roots, as well as very divergent implications for parenting: it involves early training of children through guidance and continuous monitoring of their behaviors, while also providing parental involvement, concern, and support (Chao, 1994; 2000). Moreover, the core of *chiao shun* focuses on the ability of children to perform well at school (Wu & Tseng, 1985). Although *chiao shun* can be addressed in part by combining the dimensions of demandingness and responsiveness, Chao argues that both of these dimensions have to be conceptualized distinctively from Baumrind's framework (Chao, 2000). All in all, Chao concludes that scoring high on measures of authoritarian within Baumrind's framework, does not have the same meaning for the Chinese as for the European-Americans (Chao, 1994; 1995).

In sum, the studies above indicate that the so-called tiger parenting associated with Chinese parenting and the paradox of Chinese students' school success are mainly due to the limited applicability of the conceptualizations and research frameworks, which are specific to Westerners. Likewise, it is argued that the indigenous concepts used for Chinese parenting are not easily generalizable to other populations. See also the review of Phoenix and Hussain

for a similar argumentation. In this review the universality of much parenting research is challenged showing how particular parenting behaviours have different effects on different groups, depending on the context (Phoenix & Hussain, 2007).

A qualitative approach to studying the parenting of Chinese immigrants

Apart from critique on mainstream, cross-cultural work on parenting, another line of studies started to gain insights on the parenting of Chinese immigrants through qualitative, mostly anthropological studies. For instance, based on in-depth interviews with seven recently arrived Chinese immigrant families in Canada having teenage children, Li has investigated what motives and values drive them in their parenting. She found that school achievement and the building of a moral character was emphasized the most by these parents, as they viewed school achievement as a ladder to (economic) success. While coping with the disadvantage of being a minority in the Canadian society, the parents tend to rely on scientific and technical career aspirations and used cultural integration to maximize the chance of success of their children (Li, 2001; 2004). Likewise, Cheah, Leung and Zhou have found that Chinese mothers in the U.S. adopt different aspects of parenting, coming from both the American and Chinese culture and attempt to achieve a balance between supporting their child's development of autonomy and individuality while also maintaining a sense of relatedness and family-orientation in their parenting. Moreover, Cheah, Leung & Zhou found that Chinese immigrant parents showed flexibility across different areas of their parenting in order to accommodate to the cultural values of the larger societal context in order to promote their child's development in the U.S. (Cheah, Leung & Zhou, 2013). Additionally, based on interviews with twelve Asian American parents, Wong, Wong and Obeng have found that, besides providing practical help (mainly in the academic area), parents' sacrificial love is an

important element in the perceptions of family strength among Asian American families. They show that within cultures that stress collectivism and the family, parents place the welfare and interests of the family and the children before their own (Wong, Wong & Obeng, 2012; Yee, Debaryshe, Yuen, Kim & McCubbin, 2007). They also have found that these two themes have not been included in the family strength theories raised by the western scholars.

In sum, these studies have provided alternative concepts that both show why earlier used concept are insufficient and give insight into the motives of Chinese immigrant parents which were not captured by these earlier concepts. For instance, the concept of parental sacrificial love, which was disregarded in family strength theories, or the concept of “guan” which cannot be captured by Baumrinds dimensions of demandingness and responsiveness.

An alternative perspective to understand immigrant parenting

As presented above, we can see that the main disagreement between the etic and emic approach in describing and explaining Chinese immigrants’ parenting is whether their parenting can be universally measured or understood with universal concepts or not. While in the etic approach researchers try to build universally applicable standards or conceptual frameworks to measure parenting, in the emic approach researchers strongly emphasize the cultural specificity of parenthood for particular ethnic groups.

However, it can be argued that through the fact that global migration has been rapidly increasing, and that new communication technologies, such as internet, has facilitated interpersonal and intercultural interaction, the boundary between an outsiders and an

insiders perspective becomes increasingly blurred. Besides more fundamental critique one might have on this distinction, which I will not address here, I would like to raise the question whether, since the world has become increasingly interconnected, this etic vs. emic contradiction is still tenable or relevant. At the same time the question needs to be asked whether these perspectives are still sufficient to understand current (Chinese) immigrant parenting. The etic vs emic dichotomy assumes that one must adopt either an indigenous perspective or a so called 'objective' 'scientific' standpoint, because it sees the subject of the study (such as immigrant parenting) as a product of two distinct cultures. However, the global context has become more 'multicultural' than ever before, and the dynamic of global migration has brought more than one or two cultural ideas and choices of parenting to immigrants. When the globe, especially in cosmopolitan areas, is experiencing the most frequent migration in history, and multilateral contact that is a consequence of this migration creates overlapping sets of cultural identities (Manning & Trimmer, 2013), isn't it plausible that the parenting of (Chinese) immigrant parents (in the West) will be defined by multiple cultural influences and contact zones that are partly overlapping and in a constant flux?

If this multicultural dynamic is also challenging the foundation of this dichotomy; then we must ask yet another question which is: how can we understand Chinese immigrant parenting in this new context from a new perspective? How should we describe this perspective more precisely? And how can we understand their current parenting context from historical developments in China with respect to how visions and practices have evolved as different from, but also as partly as a consequence of its relationship with the West?

The answers to these questions can provide us with new ways of unpacking Chinese parenting in the current social setting of immigrants today marked by global migration dynamics, which is the second task of current paper.

In order to further develop our viewpoint on how to understand immigrant parenting, partly also commenting on the controversy between emic and etic perspectives, we will first investigate the historical and cultural roots of the idea of childhood/parenthood both in West and China. The assumption that the ideas of (good) parenting in both sending (minority) society and receiving (mainstream) society remain constant, an assumption which seem to underlie most of the studies discussed, irrespective of the etic versus emic approach, can be easily challenged by looking at parenting and childhood from the disciplines of history and sociology, which we will do in section 3.1.

The historical development of childhood and parenthood in the West and in China

The Well-known historian Aries has raised a ground-breaking argument in his work *Centuries of Childhood* (1960) to convince people that childhood had a history. The central thesis of this book is that attitudes towards children were **progressive** and **evolved over time** with economic change and social advancement, until childhood, as a concept and an accepted part of family life, came into being in the 17th century (Aries, 1960). This work explores the historical territory of childhood. Nearly all subsequent historians of childhood have referred to some part of Aries' agenda, at least in the studies of medieval childhood (Cunningham, 1998). For instance, Shahar's *Childhood in the Middle Ages* (1990) proved that a concept of

childhood, which existed in Europe in the Middle Ages, was different from the one which emerged in later centuries (Shahar, 1990). Aries and his followers successfully revealed other concepts of childhood than the one which currently dominates the West. The most profound implication of these studies is that they revealed that childhood is a **social construction** and **historical creation** rather than a biological given (Norozi & Moen, 2016).

How people see children directly influences how people treat them. Schultz in his book *The Knowledge of Childhood in the German Middle Ages, 1100-1350* (1995) revealed that until the 18th century, people didn't believe that how children were treated had anything to do with who they would become when they grew up; alternatively, they believed that the discerning eye could pick out from childish traits what future adults the children would be like (Schultz, 1995). Thus, we can assume that the parents at that time would not reflect on the way they reared children, because they didn't know the impact of that treatment on children's future. Besides, Darling and Steinberg (1993), also pointed out that the discussion about the relationship between parents' behaviour and children's development had been a natural outgrowth for both behaviourism and the Freudian school of thought just since the early 20th century (although they insisted different paths of how it happened) (Darling & Steinburg, 1993). These studies suggest the belief that parenting has a strong influence on children's future outcomes has existed for just around one century - at least in the West.

Historian Stearns has summarized many cultural constructions about childhood throughout history and around the globe. Specifically, he observed that throughout history Western parents had adopted different concepts of childhood until the modern idea of childhood was shaped after the 18th century, mainly due to the industrialization. After that, Western parents have been convinced that perfect children should be well socialized,

cooperative, friendly, loyal, emotionally stable and cheerful, honest, straightforward, and dependable good citizens and good scholars (also see at Symonds, 1939); they needed parents' special investment, should be brought up carefully, had a different life from adults and should be considered as having an equal status when it comes to the interaction between parents and children etc. This is known as the modern model of childhood (Stearns, 2010).

Stearns has also argued that there is a huge variation in the way childhood is socially constructed across time and place. At the same time, associated with the fact that schooling is replacing work as the child's primary social obligation, and that as both birth rate and child death rate are dropping, in many communities the modern idea of childhood has been adopted just in the same way as how it evolved in the West. However, the historical backdrops, as well as the local variations must be recognized (Stearns, 2010). Therefore, when looking at China, we must acknowledge there is a Chinese version of how the concept of childhood has been changing throughout history, which significantly differs from the one in the West.

Seen as a legacy of Aries, *Chinese Views of Childhood* (1995) edited by A. B. Kinney, covered the period from the Han Dynasty (since late 2nd century B.C.) up to the Cultural Revolution (mid-20th century) and showed great similarities to and differences from the concept of childhood in the Western history. Compared to the idea that there was no clear distinction between 'childhood', 'adolescence' and 'youth' in pre-modern Europe, China even had an idea of 'ageless children', a type of 'relational childhood'. This term defines a person, even as a grown-up, always as a child in their relationships with his/her parents due to that Confucian ideology strongly stressed the filial piety (*xiao-shun*), which we already mentioned in section 2.2. When children were little, they could even be seen as private property of parents as parents had the total power to decide over them. The importance of *Xiao-shun*

becomes clear from the fact that it is also one of the most important virtues when evaluating someone in the society more generally (Wu, 1995). Moreover, that was not the only view regarding childhood in the imperial time: for instance, the philosophy of Taoism, which emphasized naturalness of life, was opposed to the controlling, ritual, hierarchical family order in Confucian philosophy (Mather, 1995; Wu, 1995). One claim made by Wu was that 'children were more written about in China than in Europe from the Tang dynasty to at least the 15th century' and showed deeper emotions and feelings about children, especially when losing them, than seen in Europe in the same period of time (Wu, 1995). However, Waltner's study on the other side, showed that infanticide, caused by gender preference, was quite common in Ming and mid Qing dynasty (14th century to early 20th century). The last two historical findings seemed to contradict each other as they illustrated different attitudes towards children. Nevertheless, all of them showed a great variation regarding the concept of childhood in ancient China.

A significant social transition took place in the 19th century, and the life of children in China also changed accordingly. Chinese historian Ping-Chen Hsiung illustrated a rich picture of childhood in that period by material research in her books *A Tender Voyage: Children and Childhood in Late Imperial China* (2005) and *Tong Nian Yi Wang: Zhongguo Haizi de Lishi* (*The history of Chinese children*) (2008). According to her works, the Chinese children in that period were encouraged to commence their academic development early; and this general obsession with the early pursuit of intellectual development had surpassed the previous (Sung-Neo-) Confucian emphasis on moral inculcation; a trend of treating and educating young girls in the same manner as young boys also emerged (Hsiung, 2005). More and more images of children playing games were documented (Hsiung, 2008). Shortly after, China

violently encountered the Western world, which changed every aspect in the society. Although earlier contacts had always existed between China and the West, this encounter, booming in the late 19th century and the beginning of 20th century, caused by imperialism in several European countries and the decline of the Chinese economy, significantly and irreversibly changed the Chinese society, from politics to daily life. Back to the topic of childhood, Saari defines the generation of educated Chinese born around the turn of the 20th century as 'the last to have the world of Confucian learning etched into their memories as schoolboys, yet the first as a group to confront the intrusive Western world' (Saari, 1990). They had an experience of childhood at this moment of historical transition between the established traditions of family and education and the shifts accompanying the rise of modern China.

When examining modern China from the mid-20th century to date, we can clearly see that, associated with industrialization and modernization, the Chinese concept of childhood has shifted dramatically, especially in the urban areas (Hayashi, 2010). Firstly, the ancient family-oriented children, who were seen as the private property of the household in the feudal times, have given way to the state-oriented children, seen as the 'national treasure' and 'future pillar of the state' in Red China. This is explained as the consequence of the Civil Revolution and the subsequent Communist Revolution: at that time, people were encouraged to abandon all the ideas about parenting and parent-child relationship, which were 'adhered to the feudal ages' (Bailey, 1988; Nylan, 2012). Shortly after, the child-centred ideology and the idea of gender equality, similar to what emerged in the late 19th century in the West, have risen in the Chinese urban areas in the late 20th century. Thus, the difference of parenting between the Chinese and the Westerners has become much less than before (King & Bond,

1985). As predicted by Stearns, China is moving towards the modern model of childhood, though under its own social context. As discussed by Hayashi, the changing views on children in the contemporary China induced by industrialization and modernization simultaneously appeared with the growth of urban one-child families under the influence of the national population control policy. This is quite different from the social background which accompanied the development of the modern model of childhood in the West. The changing concept of childhood in China should be understood as a comprehensive consequence of economic development, social transition, urbanization and new demographic trends (Zhou, 2009).

According to these studies, different views on childhood held by the state, society, school and family have been conflicting, compromising and interacting into a complicated system and finally are shaping the life of current urban children and their parents. The importance of children's scholastic achievement, which has been inherited from the past, is highlighted; whereas children's responsibility of helping the household has decreased. Children's innocence is still recognized by parents while the self-disciplined and polite 'little adults' are still highly praised. Children's collective games, played with peers in the past, have been replaced by indoor interaction with other adult family members or unidirectional media programmes with educational connotations (Wang & Zhang, 2008; Hayashi, 2010). As some Taiwanese researchers have suggested, while some traditional Chinese parental values have faded away, the Western ideology of childrearing has not been totally adopted yet. Chinese parents experience the influence of different ideologies on parenting while combining and creating their own styles of childrearing (Huang & Wang, 2002; Qiao, 2012).

How to conceptualize Immigrants' parenting

The former section showed us two important issues. First, China has had its own version of modernization of childhood and parenthood, and second, parents and teachers experience currently a multitude of influences, which apparently come from multiple cultural traditions. We think that both are key to understand the nature of immigrants parenting. The specific history of a China's modernization of childhood and parenthood can help us realize that attempts to capture these concepts cross-culturally from one and the same concepts is bound to be one-sided and runs the risk to underrepresent or misrepresent Chinese immigrants parenting. However, it is important to not over-stresses the "Chineseness" of immigrant parents from China. This would ignore that they are flexible adaptors who are continuously learning and absorbing new cultural ideas post-migration.

Therefore, we think it is tremendously important to see these parents as 'immigrants'. This issue is closely related with the point that practices and their corresponding concepts of childhood and parenthood continuously vary across time and place, as they have always been, and will be, changing. Especially in the current context of globalisation this point is important. Currently the world is characterized by the highest rates of migration and travel in history. Mobility and circulation of cultural practices and ideas have accelerated, changing all aspects of life, including child rearing, which can be considered a hard core of the culture (Navas, Rojas, Garcia & Pumares, 2007). ²Although this issue is well studied in migration studies as a

² Global migration has a long history and has experienced substantial change. Since the Age of Discovery in the 15th century, Westerners have migrated to the 'new world', specifically Americas, Africa, Asia and Oceania, for motives of trade, missionizing, adventure and colonization until the World Wars in the 20th century (Brook, 2007). In the last century, international migration patterns have changed. For instance, people from the old colonies, especially from the developing countries and areas, tend to migrate to the developed countries and regions, especially to Europe, North

branch of sociology, the consequences of this development has only began to be taken up in Psychology and Education. By the time the majority of Western psychologists became aware of the importance of parenting in human development in the early 20th century (see above, Darling & Steinberg, 1998), these issues were not on the research agenda. For instance, when psychologists started to define the parameters of what was considered normal psychological development, they considered only particular populations, that is, mostly white and middle-class children and parents in the industrialized Western civilizations (Schwartz, White & Lutz, 1992).

When Western psychologists and educational scientists started to pay attention to the growing group of immigrant families in their societies, they continued to build their research paradigm on the idea of a universal psychological development of human beings. Also in their attempts to understand and help the immigrant children, researchers continued to rely on this paradigm. The main body of scholarship in the area of immigrant parenting focused on the *transformation* of non-Western parents after their migration to Western societies to the kind of parenting that was acknowledged as the standard. This phenomenon was coined parental acculturation. Since the early 20th century, the academic discourse had been dominated by a view in which the Western culture was seen as superior over other cultures and Western scientists tended to see immigrant parenting as problematic and pre-modern (Gordon, 1964). Thus, the studies which focused on the immigrants' experiences, documented their stress, their loss of status and the inability to develop effective parenting strategies in the new environment (e.g. Juthani, 1992; Shin, 1994). Meanwhile, the

America and Australia. Currently, 3% of the world population is living outside of the countries where they were born².

conceptualization of parental acculturation was also dominated by a uni-dimensional assimilation model, implying that the process of change would develop along a single dimension: the shift from cultural maintenance to full adaptation to the culture of the mainstream population (Vigil & Long, 1981). In this view, cultural models for child-rearing practices were seen as static and the Western mainstream model always as the desired goal or end stage; therefore, the assimilation was unavoidable and desirable (Gordon, 1964).

More recently the acculturation model has been criticized and replaced by one which recognizes that acculturation is a complex and multifaceted process as the impact of original culture cannot be diminished or ignored (Arends-Toth & van de Vijver, 2003). To be specific, Berry, 1970;1980;2005) argued that increasing identification with one culture didn't necessarily require a decreasing identification with another one. He raised two fundamental issues that immigrants are facing: 1) is it of value to maintain one's identity and its characteristics (cultural maintenance)? 2) is it of value to maintain a relationship with the larger society (contact and participation)? Based on their responses to these issues, individuals could be classified as employing one of four acculturation strategies in responding to new stress-inducing cultural contexts: 1) assimilation, 2) separation/segregation, 3) integration, and 4) marginalization. According to this model, integration is a strategy that allows to some degree the maintenance of their cultural identity and relationships with the larger society.

Berry's conceptualization of acculturation has been the most influential model for over a few decades. In the meantime, other interpretive, social cultural approaches have been developed that consider the constant development of cultures, as well as the cultural dynamics of globalisation. For instance, de Haan (2011) proposed another concept – cultural

translation - to better capture this transformation in the child-rearing area, considering that cultures merge and are reinvented in new 'contact zones'. After Papastergiadis (2000), she sees cultural translation as 'a dynamic interaction within which conceptual boundaries are expanded and residual differences respected' (p. 131). When considering the changing practices as the result of process of translation between two or more practices in which all the original systems change, it becomes possible to understand why immigrant practices are neither like those of the country of origin, nor like that of the mainstream culture, and why they are developing according to a separate, situated dynamic (de Haan, 2011).

Conclusive statement

In the beginning of this chapter we raised the question how do Chinese parents hold on to, or even exaggerate and reinforce, some typically Chinese parenting practices and beliefs after migration. Although this question cannot be directly answered, the new research perspectives can provide inspiration. The specific Chinese idea of (modern) childhood and parenting have been, and also will be changing and developing all the time. Moreover, we should realize that the Chinese immigrants are not only adjusting their parenting based on their own cultural model brought along from the Chinese culture and history, but also on the local mainstream parental model, and other cultural models that are present in a culturally plural society. As such, their parenting is impacted by a dynamic in which many parenting ideologies are changing and merging. As a result, their parenting will develop into a new, hybrid model that is a result of its situated status, which is likely differently from its cultural roots.

We suggest, when looking into any ethnicity's parenting practice and style, we should keep in mind that their idea of parenthood and childhood are just interim, and its nature and hybridity needs to be understood from reading its broader social context. To illustrate this we would end with an example from our empirical study described in this book regarding Chinese immigrant mothers in The Netherlands. One of the young Chinese mothers used the word 'peen-peen' referring to a baby nipple when she talks to her toddler. This word is her self-creation by repeating the main syllable of the Dutch word 'speentje (baby nipple)', as repeating single syllable twice is the Chinese affectionate way of talking to children. As a consequence, 'peen-peen' is understandable neither by the 'authentic' Dutch nor the 'authentic' Chinese language or culture, but only by understanding the specific co-creation of this mother who makes use of both cultural heritages for a very specific situation. The example shows, as we argue, that the Chinese immigrants' parenting should be understood, as a new cultural product that came into being through being in touch with the cultures they have encountered. Therefore, we plea for context-based research that is able to understand their parenting as located in the immigrant parent's specific family setting and wider social circumstances. Ultimately, the richness of this reality is calling for a continuous exploration and reorientation of our research approach.

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Chapter 3

Parental Ethnotheories of two groups of Chinese immigrants: A perspective from migration

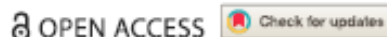
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ARTICLE



Parental Ethno theories of two groups of Chinese immigrants: a perspective from migration

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ABSTRACT

This paper argues against the stereotypical image of the Chinese parent by studying how two groups of Chinese immigrant mothers, economic and knowledge immigrants, rebuilt their parenting ethnotheories after migration to the Netherlands. The results show that economic immigrants believe in natural growth and direct their children through authoritarian relationships, while knowledge immigrants see parenting as a task which demands much personal effort and an equal, transparent and close parent–child relationship. These differences are explained through a focus on both their pre-migration histories and how these are reinterpreted in the migration context.



KEYWORDS

Chinese immigrants;
parental ethnotheories;
modern childhood;
migration history

Introduction

Migration is usually considered to put pressure on the cultural practices of immigrants. Parenting, which can be considered a ‘central sphere’ of a culture, can therefore be expected to undergo important changes during migration. Surprisingly, research on the parenting of Chinese immigrants often ignores these dynamics and emphasizes cultural continuity and stability. Examples of such a ‘culturally deterministic’ approach can be found in studies on the parenting practices of Chinese-Americans in North America (Canada and the US) that suggest that Chinese parents generally value formal school education (Li, 2004) and adopt an authoritarian parenting style (Gorman, 1998), which differs qualitatively from the parenting style within North American culture. Similar results have been found in Chinese populations in other Western countries, for example, Australia (Guo, 2014) and the Netherlands (Geense, 2005). Overall, Chinese parenting is seen as relatively stable and homogeneous, irrespective of the dynamics of migration.

In this paper, our goal is not only to show how the practice of parenting, as a cultural practice, undergoes major changes post-migration, but also that these post-migration changes largely depend on the access particular subcultures and subgroups had to ideologies of parenting pre-migration. In other words, our aim is to show how in migration a variety of new cultural practices are constructed, which also point back to earlier differences between groups, as well as how these are acted upon in migration. Considering such dynamics is an important tool to counter stereotyping of, in this case

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Chinese parenting, and at the same time an alternative to an assimilation approach in which it is assumed that all migrants gradually adapt to mainstream cultures in the same way. Although research is beginning to focus on the process of gradual change in parenting practices related to migration dynamics as an alternative to assimilation approaches (De Haan, 2011), the issue of how the larger migration dynamics might impact on such cultural processes is often ignored (Ochocka & Janzen, 2008). In the study of the parenting of Chinese with an immigrant background, this perspective is particularly absent. Moreover, even if it is largely known that Chinese immigrants differ, for example, in terms of their socio-economic status (Gijsberts, Huijnk & Vogels, 2011) and depending on the migration wave, to our knowledge little research has looked at the consequences of such differences in the reconstruction of cultural practices such as parenting. This paper addresses this gap by showing how distinct groups of Chinese immigrants make use of their cultural roots differently when they build their parenting strategies post-migration. We show how these differences can be explained by their history of migration, including their socio-economic and cultural position pre-migration. Also, in terms of international literature on family migration, this perspective adds an important dimension. Although variety in child-rearing patterns has been observed and some effort has been made to understand this variety from a cultural perspective, few studies include the wider cultural dynamics typical for migration including both sending and receiving cultures. Exceptions are studies that, for instance, document that in Chinese migrant families the extended family provides caregiving to the offspring of their children both locally and internationally (Glick & van Hook, 2002), or Geddie's study among recent postgraduates in the U.K. and Canada (Geddie, 2013), that illustrates that relationship considerations (such as caring for aging parents and future childcare) are intermingled with these young professionals' settlement considerations (Geddie, 2013). This study aims to fill in this gap by documenting how two groups of Chinese immigrants, with diverse migration motives and initial cultural profiles pre-migration, take up and reconstruct their parenting post-migration. We consider that a comparative approach, which includes pre-and post-migration factors, is a useful tool to help us situate the process of gradual change post-migration within the larger dynamics of migration.

Harkness and Super (2006) have suggested that the concept of parental ethnotheories could be an adequate tool when examining parental belief systems in a cross-cultural context. Parental ethnotheories refer to implicit ideas about the 'natural' or 'right' way to think and act regarding children, parenting and families, and are often linked to cultural themes that also operate in other domains of a culture (Harkness & Super, 2006). Using this concept, we explore the parental ethnotheories of Chinese immigrant mothers by analysing how they speak about the ways they should, or do, organize their children's daily lives, and the culturally informed customs that are instantiated within these settings.

The study focuses on two questions: (1) What are the differences in parenting ethnotheories between the two distinct subgroups of Chinese immigrants in the Netherlands (see detailed description as below)? and (2) How can these differences be explained by their cultural roots as well as their migration history? In answering these questions, we move beyond a culturally deterministic model and study cultural practices of immigrants within a frame of pre- and post-migration dynamics.

Before presenting the details of our study, we will first describe the two groups of immigrants our study deals with, as well as provide background information on how

parenting has been conceived and changed in China. We will do this both in general terms, making an argument that modernization of parenting in China does not equal modernization of parenting in 'the West', but we will also show how the groups of immigrants we are dealing with in our study have had different access to this process of modernization, which also puts them in a different position when it comes to taking up their parenting after migration in a Western context such as in the Netherlands.

Two kinds of Chinese immigrants

Although the first Chinese sailors arrived in the Netherlands more than 100 years ago, the number of Chinese who have lived in the Netherlands for longer than 30 years is small. However, the Chinese population has increased considerably in recent years, mainly due to immigration from mainland China, and the Chinese are now the fifth largest ethnic group in the Netherlands with a population of over 120 thousand, including second generation (Gijsberts et al., 2011).

We study two subgroups of Chinese immigrants: '(highly-) skilled immigrants (in Dutch *kennismigrant*, literally meaning "knowledge immigrant")' and their counterparts at the opposite end of the skill scale, 'lower-skilled immigrants'. This typology discriminates between the different groups of Chinese immigrants in the Netherlands and can also be found in international migration literature (e.g. in the US, Wang, 2008; and the UK, 2014). In the Netherlands, while both groups share a Chinese cultural background, they are different not only in skill levels, but also in socio-economic background, associated subcultures within China, and the kind of immigrant communities they have formed. More importantly, they come from different migratory 'waves' that differ at the time and the reason for migration (Wang, 2008).

Specifically, the low-skilled immigrants are mostly small-business owners, and often migrate in groups from small rural towns and retain their community structures and traditions. But this well-known image is no longer all-encompassing, although they are widely spread in the Netherlands as their Chinese restaurants and snack bars exist in almost every Dutch town. The population of 'highly skilled immigrants' has increased in recent decades. These immigrants originally only intended to obtain a degree in higher education within the Netherlands but then settled in the country after graduation. This group of Chinese immigrants are mainly living in the urban areas where the white-collar jobs are allocated. Although there are other types of Chinese immigrants – for example, investment immigrants and refugees – in the Netherlands and elsewhere, these knowledge-oriented highly skilled and economic-oriented low-skilled migrant groups continue to be typical of Chinese immigrants in the Netherlands and worldwide (Wang, 2014), which also means the implications of this study transcend the Dutch context.

Most low-skilled immigrants who migrate to the Netherlands for economic reasons come from a lower socio-economic class and rural areas called 'Qiao Xiang', meaning 'the hometown of overseas Chinese', where the idea of moving abroad is popular (Liu, 2005). For generations, migration was considered the last chance for a better life, as low schooling levels usually mean they are unable to compete in the local labour market (Zeng & Cao, 2005). Chain migration from local communities in China has resulted in relatively isolated Chinese communities in the host country. As a consequence, their contact with the culture of the host society is limited both pre- and post-migration.

In contrast, Chinese skilled immigrants in the Netherlands mainly come from the middle-class, living in more economically developed urban areas of China. They have relatively good job opportunities in China, but their ambition is to pursue higher education of a better quality or a better career abroad. For them, going abroad is not an escape, but a way to 'realize their dream'. Their choice of destination depends less on where they have relatives and acquaintances but more on where they can find the knowledge and resources they need. Their chances of being in touch with different cultural perspectives, both in China and abroad, are substantially higher than for the low-skilled immigrants.

In international literature, although increasing attention has been paid to the newly emerged highly skilled immigrant group, most research has focused on how this group impacts upon local and global economic developments; and important motives related to their life course choice such as parenthood, have remained underemphasized (Bailey & Mulder, 2017). From this perspective, the study adds to this literature by revealing how parenthood is a key factor in settlement considerations.

Historical roots of notions of childhood and parenting

In research, the parenting of immigrants is often implicitly or explicitly evaluated against notions of 'Modern Childhood' as developed in the West (de Haan, 2011). However, to understand parenting practices of Chinese immigrants, it is of paramount importance to be aware of the historical roots of concepts of childhood in China, which only partly stem from Western influences.

Chinese conceptions of childhood have their own traditional roots and paths towards modernization. Confucianism and Taoism are often mentioned as important philosophical roots of traditional views on childhood and parenting in China. Even if Confucianism is seen as a philosophy comprising a more general set of ethical and moral rules, it also plays a significant role in family life and education. Social order is regulated in Confucianism through basic hierarchical relationships which are well defined and relatively fixed. A key concept of the most fundamental relationship, between father (or parent) and child, is 'xiao', or showing filial piety (Hsiung, 2005): children should unconditionally obey and respect parents and seniors. Practising 'xiao' means that children should take care of their parents and support them, and should not be rebellious but show love, respect and courtesy. Making sure that children are 'xiao' is also the task of society as a whole, and parents are expected to be loving and to take good care of their offspring, thereby raising a good member of society. This also implies the obligation to support success in formal schooling, which is considered a key virtue in traditional Confucianism (Chao, 1995).

Although Taoism is less often seen as a resource for parenting, as a philosophy of life it is also influential and has important implications for the upbringing of children. Taoism states that the world is inherently perfect and balanced if people do not disturb it (in Chinese *Wuwei*) (Kohn, 1992) and act according to its Tao/Dao, the principle of 'naturalness' (Ho & Kang, 1984). According to Taoism, children are closest to this naturalness and do not need to learn from adults. Instead, adults should learn from children about Tao/Dao by 'removing the dust (desire and prejudice) on the mirror of the heart' and ideally rediscovering their connection with nature (Wang & Yu, 2015).

Western notions of childhood, such as child-centeredness and increasing parental investment, have had an impact on parental ideology in contemporary China, although it would be one-sided to describe this as a result of Westernization (Stearns, 2006, 2005). For example, since the late 1970s, the one-child policy has generated ideologies of child-centeredness and increasing parental investment strategies in its own right (Nylan, 2003). Especially in urban centres, children from single-child families have become the centre of the family and have been characterized as 'little emperors (or princesses)', who can have anything in the household and claim family members' attention anytime they want (Feng, 2000).

Regional differences in China

It is important to realize that there is immense cultural variety in Chinese society. The low-skilled immigrants coming from particular rural areas live a relatively isolated life before and after migration, which might contribute to maintaining traditional Chinese parenting values. Meanwhile, through a rapid modernization process in China, traditional Chinese parenting values have been eroded in the urban areas, where most of the young, highly skilled immigrant parents come from (Cheung & Kwan, 2009). The transition from state socialism to a regulated market economy has put further pressure on urban parents to ensure their child's success and prepare them for a new kind of future involving merit-based careers (Anagnost, 2008).

The vast amount of literature on the urban-rural dichotomy in Chinese households has documented that this dichotomy also impacts upon childhood and parenthood, which again is associated with the unbalanced pace of 'modernization' between rural and urban areas. For instance, Qian found that children in rural areas spend more time playing traditional games outdoor with peers and helping with household chores, whereas children in Shanghai, the biggest metropolis in China, have very strict schedules of extracurricular activities aiming at facilitating their intellectual development (Qian, 2011).

This means that, even before migration, the highly skilled immigrants have had more access to 'modern' ideologies of parenting, such as the child-centred idea. Furthermore, the two groups have had different scholarship experiences. Even if basic education has become widely available in most regions in China, access to senior secondary school (3 years) and higher education afterwards is competitive. This has led to increasing pressure on students and parents to prepare children for the National Higher Education Entrance Examination, which provides access to higher education. We expect that knowledge-oriented immigrants in our study have had more access to higher levels of schooling and education than low-skilled immigrants.

Methodology

With the purpose of pursuing a contextual representation of the parenting experiences of the two Chinese immigrant groups, a qualitative approach was employed, using in-depth interviews as the primary method. The parental ethnotheories held by mothers were obtained from their narrative regarding how they arrange their children's 'environment of development' (Super & Harkness, 2009) and why they do so.

Sampling strategy

To avoid cohort differences, only individuals who migrated after 2000 and who came from mainland China were invited to participate. With the purpose of making the sample representative for both populations, we decided to recruit parents from Utrecht, which is a medium- to large-sized city in central Netherlands, where representative subpopulations of both groups can be found. Different access strategies were employed according to 'where parents would gather'.

To recruit the low-skilled immigrants, we contacted the three most important Chinese associations in Utrecht to help. Then the 'snowball' sampling strategy was used to invite more. As highly skilled immigrants frequently connect on digital platforms, we recruited this group not only via the Chinese associations but also via the two most popular online forums among the Chinese community in the Netherlands (gogodutch.com and xinhelan.com). Within these communities, the criterion for inclusion was being a Chinese mother of a child between 0 and 18 years of age. Only participants who fulfilled the following three criteria were invited: (1) self-identification (as the distinction between low and highly skilled immigrant is well established), (2) occupation and (3) level of education. This group assignment was also checked after more background information had been gathered.

Data collection

The interview outline included the following aspects: (1) basic demographic information (2) reasons for migration and career perspectives and (3) views on parenting and formal education.

We interviewed 37 mothers between March and November 2012. Based on their reason for migration, their educational level and occupation, we allocated 16 to the group of low-skilled immigrants and 21 to the group of highly skilled immigrants. For example, a participant appearing to be a lower educated restaurant owner/worker who came to the Netherlands to work was assigned to the low-skilled immigrant group, while those who came to the Netherlands initially for higher education and subsequently found a white-collar job were assigned to the group of highly skilled immigrants.

Every participant was interviewed individually by the first author, in private (at home or in an office) or in a quiet public space, such as a café or school. The interviewer introduced herself and described the aim of the project and the principle of anonymity and confidentiality. Verbal informed consent was obtained in all cases. The language of the interviews was Mandarin Chinese, which all of the interviewees and the interviewer spoke fluently. Each interview lasted approximately 50 min for low-skilled immigrants and 70 min for highly skilled immigrants, as this second group was generally more 'talkative'. The interview was conducted in a semi-formal and semi-structured way. In fact, many participants continued to talk about their parenting ideas naturally after they had told the stories of their life and motherhood. All the interviews were audiotaped. After the interview, each participant was given a small gift, such as flowers or a notebook.

Analysis

All the audiotaped interviews were transcribed verbatim into Chinese and then translated into English. The transcripts were coded line-by-line with the help of Nvivo 10.0. The first part of the analyses aimed to understand migration motives and histories in greater depth. This part consisted of describing, identifying and systematizing both groups' life experiences as immigrants, focusing on pre- and post-migration factors, paying attention to socio-economic, educational and psychological perspectives. We focused on the following themes: (1) life before migration, including hometown information (urban or rural areas), migration culture (e.g. was the interviewee from a *qiaoxiang* or not), family network (in the hometown and elsewhere), (2) their ideas on their formal educational experiences, (3) motives for migration and (4) settling down stories, including their vision of the future for themselves and their children.

A second step in the analyses consisted of describing belief systems related to child development and parenting. We paid attention to the following issues: (1) how they viewed their role as a parent, and how they organized the daily lives of their children in practice, including whether they involved others in their parenting and work-life balance issues, (2) their reflections on the kind of relationship implied in parenting and (3) their views on their children's formal education, including the value attached to education, parental involvement in the schools of their children, and their expectations about their children's future schooling. As a third step, we used the more general contextual data to understand how possible differences in ethnotheories on parenting could be explained.

Results

Demographic differences

As expected and implied by our sampling strategy, the differences between both groups in terms of educational level and occupation were salient, as the low-skilled immigrants' highest level of education was in most cases relatively low (middle to secondary school), while the highly skilled immigrants had degrees, ranging from a Bachelor to a doctorate. Overall, the husbands of the participants had similar educational backgrounds to their wives. Furthermore, more highly skilled immigrant mothers (six) had Dutch husbands, compared to the low-skilled immigrant mothers (only one of them). In addition, the participants in the low-skilled immigrant group identified themselves as snack bar or restaurant owners, or housewives, while mothers from the highly skilled immigrant group had higher status jobs, such as managers or computer scientists, as well as some being housewives. There were no major differences between both groups of mothers in terms of age. This is the consequence of our choice to work with mothers who migrated to the Netherlands after 2000. No difference was found in family size. Although it is implied that the groups differed in education and occupation level in our sampling strategy, we would like to emphasize that our goal was not to determine if these two groups differed in background, but to understand how the parenting of these groups, which represent different categories of migrants, has potentially developed differently.

Migration history of low-skilled immigrants: chain migration and owning a business

Xin [28, secondary school, housewife]: ... I didn't go to a senior secondary school. After graduating from middle school, I stopped. In the beginning, I worked as a shop assistant, and then I opened my own small shop. It was not a good job ... On top of this, in my home town we have this idea that it's better to work abroad. Also, my parents wanted me to come. At that time, I had an uncle here, so I came to join him ...

I: Your uncle helped you to find that job?

Xin: Yes, he gave me the job. It was in Assen first, then Arnhem, then Utrecht ... all in restaurants.

Similarly to Xin, most low-skilled immigrants in our study came from Wenzhou, Zhejiang Province, a well-known *qiaoxiang*. Others came from Guangdong Province, which also has many *qiaoxiang* areas, or areas characterized by international migration. Despite different local traditions and dialects, they mostly found employment in the catering industry and grocery business after migration.

A little more than half of the low-skilled immigrants were single and had little savings when they arrived. Their motives for migration could be described as typical for chain migration: their choice of destination had been determined by the fact that relatives had already migrated to the Netherlands a long time ago. They had various solutions to settling permanently: just after arriving in the Netherlands Xin registered as a refugee and Ming [29, MBO, housewife] as an orphan (she was told to destroy her passport, report a lower age and invent a story about losing both her parents). The others officially settled as a result of work opportunities, under a general amnesty or through family reunification/marriage. Most of the work opportunities in the Netherlands were provided by sponsors who invited them or by other Chinese immigrants. Nine mothers in this group reported that they just followed their family members' advice to migrate to the Netherlands. Ting [32, secondary school, snack bar owner] reported: 'I got into a muddle, really, I didn't know. It wasn't clear, [it was] also not clear to me what I wanted ...'. Some of their family members were already in the Netherlands. With the exception of Ming and Yu [27, MBO housewife], who were financially supported by their parents, all the others were sponsored by husbands, relatives or acquaintances. These family members remain important after migration as sources of help in finding housing and employment, for example, and they continue to be a significant point of reference.

Most of the low-skilled migrant group attended middle or secondary school in China and did not seek to study further in the Netherlands. Only two attended school in the Netherlands, having migrated before the age of 18 and for the reason that schooling is compulsory until that age. According to the accounts about their schooling, the low-skilled immigrants did not do well, or had little interest in schooling and reported that there were no opportunities for further schooling in their home towns, and that even if they had earned a college degree, job opportunities would have been limited. 'So why not go on an adventure and explore [the world] when you are young?', as Si [24, secondary school, housewife] stated.

The low-skilled immigrants' visions of the future generally coincided with their current status as small-business owners: to be rooted in and adopted by a particular

place and have a business of their own. Some of them, such as Ting [32, secondary school], Lee [33, secondary school], Ding [36, secondary school] and Alice [38, primary school], already had their family-owned snack bars, while others, such as Xin [28, secondary school, housewife] and Yu [27, MBO, housewife], were looking for opportunities at the time the interviews were being conducted. A job in the catering industry was still what they strived for, even in the case of having a diploma from the Netherlands such as Yu. They envisioned a future for themselves and their children in the Netherlands and felt they had already adapted to the new cultural environment, as is evident in the following:

Yu: ... We planned to have a snack bar, but my husband wants a Sushi shop now. I think it [to go back to China] would be hard for me, since it would be difficult to adapt to that environment again; so does my husband. ... They [her two children] will grow up here; all of us [parents of participant and her husband] are already here [in Europe]. ... it's a free country.

Migration history of highly skilled immigrants: career and globally oriented migration

Wen [35, Master, college teacher]: I became a middle school teacher after graduating from college in China. After working for four years, I felt empty and wanted to study again; I didn't want to be a school teacher anymore. So I came to the Netherlands, changed my subject to business, and studied from the beginning again ...

Highly skilled immigrants dramatically differed from the low-skilled immigrants in their accounts of migration. Although there is a tremendous variety in terms of their hometowns, most of them came from urban areas, particularly from eastern China. Some regarded their family environment as 'equal', 'democratic' and 'open', suggesting contact with Western family values.

They received a good education, and all had at least a college degree before they migrated. Overall, their incentive to study abroad was to pursue an educational opportunity that offered a higher level of career development in the future, or to make a change in their life, as in the example above (Wen). Their choice of destination did not depend on where they had relatives or acquaintances, but was primarily defined by where they could obtain the education and find opportunities they wanted. Most of them reported that they had not planned to stay permanently in the Netherlands when they first arrived. However, after finishing their studies, they chose to stay because of marriage or a work opportunity. When talking about settling down in the Netherlands, the highly skilled immigrant mothers tended to emphasize their individual development, well-being and quality of life, rather than the future of their children:

Huang [34, PhD, Computer Scientist]: To a small family with a child, at least to my own family, I would be sure firstly that I am happy here [in the Netherlands] then I would choose to stay; the child should follow me. She will be happy if I am happy ... I will not stay and sacrifice my own goals. ... I think if you abandon all you have already [learnt] and do something totally irrelevant ... it's not what I want ... If it's not interesting anymore here, I don't mind leaving.

The participants in this group often expressed the potential temporality of their settlement. If there were good opportunities, they would gladly move to other countries or return to China. Huang, for instance, said that her choice of destination depended on her own and her husband's career opportunities. He [32, Master, logistics manager] and Alex [35, Master, industrial manufacturer] both indicated that their family might return to China even though they had Dutch husbands. Tian [33, Master, financial analyst] and her husband preferred to migrate to Singapore because it is a country strongly influenced by Chinese culture and also open to the entire world. Another concern frequently mentioned was their parents' aging. Most participants in this group were from single-child families and were therefore concerned that within a few years their aging parents might need them to provide support.

Ethnotheories of low-skilled immigrants: 'bounded grazing' and traditional hierarchy

The low-skilled immigrants' ethnotheories can best be described as entailing a 'laissez-faire' parenting style with certain boundaries. This style is sometimes compared to a shepherd's work of letting herds graze in certain grasslands, as the animals can move freely and eat as long as they are in sight and safe. In Zhen's words [36, college, international business], she does not have time to learn or to read books on the subject of childrearing, or to watch television to learn any 'good ideas'. She sets a 'big frame (behavioural boundary)' or 'baseline' for her 9-year-old son, which contains only a few general rules such as 'not to break furnishing and 'not to be involved in dangerous activities' and 'as long as he behaves within this big frame, he can do anything he wants, and he knows what to do, it is all fine'. When her 3-year-old daughter is back from kindergarten, she 'plays (as much and as long) as she wishes'. In addition, the low-skilled immigrants spent little time playing with their children, and were relatively permissive, which was also at least partly due to time and energy they spent on their business, as the example of Ting [32, secondary school, snack bar owner] shows.

Ting: So I think I need to spend more time on them. But you know what? Most Chinese who are working in restaurants really have very little time for children! This is a huge problem!

I: Is it because of the time arrangement in the catering industry? When other people finish work and go home, this is the busiest time for you!

Ting: Exactly. We just start to be busy. So in the evening we cannot accompany the children to ... I mean, [we] rarely do something together. Fortunately, my father is here to help me all the time and we have a babysitter ...

I: What do they do during other leisure times?

Ting: They can play by themselves.

The low-skilled immigrant mothers often emphasized certain values or moral aspects of raising children that can be related to Confucianism, as in the example below:

Xin [28, secondary school, housewife]: The most important thing is to be a good person! . Virtue, I mean. For example, open mindedness, willingness to help and kindness ... these

are big words, but I really think so. We say, 'to be a human being first and then start to do things [business].

In comparison with the highly skilled immigrants, the low-skilled immigrant mothers in this group more often, and on a regular basis, tended to ask a relative or a babysitter to help them take care of the children (five of the participants did this). However, it does not always satisfy them. For instance, Yu (27, MBO, housewife) complained that she could not find a suitable person to take care of her two very young children when her father had to return to work and the previous babysitter from another area of China was too lazy and careless; so she resigned from her job in a restaurant and became a housewife.

Furthermore, the low-skilled immigrants were careful in choosing and organizing extracurricular activities for their children. Most parents seem to be rather prescriptive in this, rather choosing these activities based on the personal or idiosyncratic characteristics of their children, or the child's wishes, as the highly skilled immigrants tend to do. For example, Xin chose swimming lessons for her daughter because 'it seems here in the Netherlands everybody should have at least one [swimming] diploma, so we went for it'. Similarly, Ting [32, secondary school, snack bar owner] relied on certain standards when she chose a music class and a sport for her eldest son:

Ting: I've got him to swimming. I hope he can have both civil and military knowledge; as to why I chose Thai boxing [karate] for him; you know boys ... [I think as a boy] he should be more masculine ... And football too. But the time for football clashes with the time for swimming. So now I am still considering football.

In line with this relative 'prescriptive' strategy, the low-skilled immigrants generally valued respect and acknowledgement of their authority by their children, in keeping with the notion of 'xiao' as explained in the introduction. This is illustrated in the example below, in which the interviewer asked how Xin would feel if her child treated her in the way Dutch children treat their parents, meaning in a relationship of equals. Xin replied:

'Ha, ha, ha, no way! It must be ... not good ... I don't say that 'you MUST do this and that', but...they [the children] know ... they will listen.

The confidence Xin shows in her own strategy, as opposed to the 'Dutch way', which they consider too informal and permissive, is illustrative for the parental ethnotheories of this group. They consider it important that children acknowledge their authority as a parent, and consider it their responsibility to make sure the child's education is in line with certain social norms and expectations (such as gender norms or moral norms as was illustrated in the examples).

Ethnotheories of highly skilled immigrants: conscious cultivation and equal relationships

In contrast to the low-skilled immigrants, the highly skilled immigrants explicitly emphasized the value of spending time with their children and designed a rather diverse range of activities for them, both tailored to what they thought were the needs of their children and the goals they had for their development. They read books to their children

(seven of them mentioned that they did this regularly), played with their children and organized special outings. Their accounts indicate an attitude of 'conscious cultivation' of their child's development. For example, He [32, Master, logistics manager] organized nature-related activities with her child to cultivate certain values.

He: Every weekend, we take her to swimming; every Tuesday, when I have a day off, I take her to the library ... basically, every two weeks. ... Then we often go to the 'kinderboerderij', which is a farm especially designed for children that has many small animals. Her birthday, for sure we celebrate, we go to the zoo or ... but for the first birthday we went to a national park. For her second birthday, we decided to go to the zoo, as my parents came to visit. The six of us took her to the zoo. She likes animals. I think children should grow up accompanied by animals instead of being afraid of them. ... We go out to pick up rubbish. Yes, for environmental protection. When she sees rubbish on the ground outside, I'll let her go and throw it in the rubbish bin. I think it can also stimulate her to think of others and the public ...

In addition, the highly skilled immigrants seemed relatively strict, which seems to work well with their strategy of 'carefully cultivating', as in the following example:

Andy [33, PhD, engineer]: I don't think we have special discipline, but we are strict. For example, he [the child] has to go to bed before 8.30 p.m., never later than that; he has to eat by himself and nobody feeds him. So you can say we have rules, but we are still tender; we never shout at him ... we want him to make decisions by himself even about very little things, such as how many biscuits he wants to have, he has to decide by himself. But he has to wash his hands before touching food, because I want him to do so, while he doesn't. So, you can say that he is not totally free.

We also noted that the highly skilled immigrant mothers explicitly emphasized certain values that guided their parenting, such as independence, self-determination and the emotional management of their children, which are quite different from traditional Chinese parenting ideas, both in content and in their explicitness, but they also varied within this group. For example, Tian [33, Master, financial analyst] insisted that her children should sleep alone; Melina [32, Master, computer scientist] was against the idea that parents had a right to smack children; and Huang [34, PhD, computer scientist] believed her child had the freedom to choose at a very young age. These 'child-centred' values also were salient in how the highly skilled immigrant mothers arranged activities for their children as they believed these activities are what the children need in order to develop well. For instance, as in the example above, Andy thinks it is important that her son has a certain independence when making his own decisions, which clearly points at child-centredness in her parental ethnotheory. At the same time, she makes sure that the eating arrangements she sets up for him correspond with this idea, by having him decide how many biscuits he eats. However, Qing [31, Master, housewife] disapproves of the idea that children can get whatever they want as she stresses that 'toys are not always the more the better (as her child wishes)', because 'children need to learn to focus on one thing at a time which is better than becoming a decidophobia in future'.

The highly skilled immigrants especially emphasized transparency between parents and children more often than low-skilled immigrants. In the group of low-skilled immigrants, only Xin mentioned that she wanted to be the kind of mother with whom her

child could talk about everything. In the group of highly skilled immigrants, 16 expressed this wish, of which the following examples are representative:

- Andy: Our baby sometimes calls me AD [Andy's name] and calls him XD [husband's name] directly! (laugh) . But we don't mind. I think in many respects we know more than him, but it doesn't mean that our relationship should be like the one between our parents and us, a very clear hierarchy ... All of us are free, nobody should depend on anybody else.
- Huang: She tipped the glass of water over again and again. I told her, if she did it again, I would throw her glass away, as I thought she had gone too far, as if she did it on purpose. Then the child [still a toddler] asked me 'if you tip your glass over, will you do the same?' I said 'yes, do you think it's fair enough?' She said 'yes, deal'. I was very happy she asked that question, because she thought we should be equal.

So, in terms of parental authority, a subtle but clear contrast between both groups was apparent. Although in both cases clear rules were emphasized, the highly skilled immigrants stressed the dignity of the child, and the equality of the relationship between children and parents. They even expressed their own struggle with not interfering too much with their child as Nan [31, Master, housewife] did when she said that '[when she was buying clothes for her children] the clothes they fancy are too ugly... anyways they are the people going to wear it; so I have to control my inclination to dictatorship (laughs)'. However, the low-skilled immigrants emphasized the importance of a certain distance, in which obedience (listening, paying respect) is key.

Another idea about the relationship between parents and children identified by highly skilled immigrants was that of being close, as illustrated in the example below. Interestingly, here the contrast to Dutch parenting is different from the contrast expressed by the low-skilled immigrants:

Qing [31, Master, housewife]: I don't expect my child to support me [financially] when I am old or do something like that. But we hope our relationship will be a closer compared to that in the Dutch families here ... It's hard to accept that children go to visit parents only once a week or even less. And to visit means just to sit for a while. My Dutch neighbours' parents sometimes come to visit them; every time they leave at around four or five o'clock, even without having dinner, which is unbelievable.

So, in terms of closeness both groups express a different contrast with Dutch parents. While the low-skilled immigrants stress the importance of a stricter relationship (implying a certain kind of distance) than compared to Dutch parents, the highly skilled immigrants stress the importance of an emotionally closer relationship.

Low-skilled immigrants' aspirations in relation to formal education

The low-skilled immigrants, who mostly described their own schooling as a 'failure', tended to emphasize the practical value of education. They hoped their children '[could] learn more useful skills, not study too hard, and be flexible'. Tong [35, college, international business] said she 'even [hoped] children [would] not study so hard and thus not

be too rigid'. They valued personality characteristics, such as flexibility, courage and goodness, more than scholastic achievement.

Xin [28, secondary school, housewife]: Of course, I hope he does well with his study (laugh). This is the hope shared by parents all around the world. We try to educate them ... I hope [they can] graduate from university, even get a PhD, all that we will support. ... And the most important thing is to be a good person!

However, they did not communicate with the school very much, due to the language barrier as well as time limitations. When talking about their expectations and aspirations in relation to their children, the mothers from this group wanted their children to leave the traditional sectors in which Chinese immigrants worked. According to them, the way to attain this goal was through formal education.

Yu [27, MBO, housewife]: The Netherlands is a free country, they can choose to do whatever they want, but not to do bad things ... but it's better not to be in the kitchen like we are. And then [I hope they can have] a stable job ... not in the kitchen [Chinese restaurant] anymore. Chinese people always work in the kitchen! [It's bad that] some graduated from university and then come back to their parents' restaurant continuously! One generation should be better than the previous one. ... At least they should be better than me, I only have an MBO [a type of vocational training in the Netherlands]; their father is [educated] even less than me ... [Do I hope they can be educated at] university level? Maybe ... all parents think the same, of course!

Highly skilled immigrants' aspirations in relation to formal education

All of the highly skilled immigrants were 'winners' in the competitive schooling environment in China. Their reward was the opportunity to attain a relatively good socio-economic status after graduation, and to study at universities abroad which were of higher quality than those at home.

If we look at how they saw the role of formal education for their children, it becomes clear that they value it. The participants in this group were also actively involved in formal schooling of their children, and took great pains to make their children comfortable at school or to help them with their school work. As in the example of Melina, this sometimes also included learning Dutch:

Melina [32, Master, computer scientist]: ... I went to her kindergarten to borrow their CD ... and copied it. So, at home I could play it for her, too. She was surprised to hear it for the first time (laugh). I also taught her some Dutch songs and danced with her; of course, I had to learn to sing first, although it was hard for me (laugh) ... I hoped she could get along well with the other kids. So, I went with her [to the kindergarten] and played with them. First, I tried to remember all their names ... and gradually those kids became familiar with me and became friendly; and they were good to my daughter, too!

In contrast to the low-skilled group, the highly skilled immigrants paid much attention to the choice of school for their children. Five out of six who had at least one school-aged child emphasized that they had thought a lot about the decision. Many aspects, including educational philosophy, facilities and reputation, were assessed, as in the following example of Wen [35, Master, college teacher]. Interestingly, the example also shows how parents were often critical of the competitive schooling system back in

China, and that they hoped that their children would not have to face this pressure caused by schooling. At the time of the interview, Wen had just registered her 1-year-old son for a school:

Wen: We chose a school with a new teaching style and educational theory ... children make a plan for the whole day, study in the morning, and follow their own plan for the rest of that day; if someone is outstanding in a certain subject, for example, Math, he/she can jump to a higher level [in this particular subject] ... His father was very clever when he was little, so he always felt bored when he mastered everything. I think in this way [the chosen school] respects the free development of children. ... I was a teacher at a very good secondary school in China for four years; I was under huge pressure, as well as the students. ... It's a pity. ... Anyway, I don't have expectations about how much he will learn; the most important thing to me is that he has a happy childhood.

Thus, although these parents were the product of competitive and selective schooling ideologies, they had open expectations for their children's future. Instead of scholastic achievement, the highly skilled immigrants resolutely concentrated on other non-material development goals. For example, Liu, Meilina and Wen all encouraged their children to make decisions for themselves and stimulated them to develop interests when choosing extracurricular activities. In addition, others emphasized positive development, including health (e.g. Andy), personality (e.g. Tian) and emotional well-being (e.g. He). In summary, rather than focusing on high expectations regarding their children's academic achievement, they focused on their self-realization.

Conclusion and discussion

In order to discuss the results in the light of the theoretical issues raised above, we would like to focus on the following questions: (1) How can we understand the differences in parental ethnotheories between the two groups of Chinese immigrants given their 'migration histories'? (2) How can we think about these changes broadly, in relation to notions of modernization?

Parental ethnotheories in the light of their migration trajectory

The study revealed substantial differences between both groups in respect of parental ethnotheories: While the highly skilled immigrants carefully and systematically shaped the development of their children by offering them the opportunity to try all sorts of activities to build their identities and skills, the low-skilled immigrants seemed less preoccupied with the idea of being personally responsible for their children's development. The highly skilled immigrants considered care as a task for the nuclear family, while the low-skilled immigrants were happy to share the care for their children with others, also for reasons of convenience. The highly skilled immigrants valued open, equal and democratic parent-child relationships, while low-skilled immigrants pursued hierarchical relationships. Moreover, the parenting ethnotheories seemed more homogeneous for the low-skilled immigrants, while the highly skilled immigrants tended to build 'unique', individually motivated ideas on parenting, based on their reflections on their own childhoods and comparing different systems and ideas.

How can we understand such differences in the light of their migration histories and current realities post-migration? Since low-skilled Chinese immigrant mothers have an intense relationship with their pre- and post-migration communities, they tend to preserve certain parenting ideals associated with these communities. For example, their idea of a hierarchical parent-child relationship, often associated with Confucianism, resembles the idea of 'xiao' as described in the literature. In this view, parents are the absolute authority in the home and children should obey unconditionally (Ho, 1989; Hsiung, 2005). Moreover, their concrete and austere expectations of their children's schooling can be read as a version of the role of education in Confucian philosophy, which still prevails in some of the rural areas in China. Meanwhile, their 'loose' style of parenting and the involvement of many others in the raising of their child seem to be primarily the result of their busy working lives, which does not allow them to invest much time in educating their children or spending time with them. However, it appears that they think they are able to afford this, as they have the opinion that children develop naturally, regardless of who takes care of them, in line with Taoism's respect for the nature of the human being and the idea of letting things grow naturally. Thus, in this case, their economic circumstances almost oblige them to trust in this life philosophy, although not without some concerns. Their attitudes towards formal schooling and how they see the role of schooling in the upward mobility of their children make sense given their relatively unsuccessful education and difficult life pre- and post-migration. At the same time, Confucianism's emphasis on the importance of education seems to support this attitude.

In contrast to the low-skilled immigrants, the highly skilled immigrants seem to be influenced by various cultural factors, both pre- and post-migration, one of which is Western middle-class parenting. In their parental ethnotheories, there were elements of Western 'modern childhood' as well as traditional Chinese values and ideas. In addition, there was more variation in their parental ethnotheories, which can be explained by a more varied range of cultural influences, both pre- and post-migration. Moreover, given their ample considerations of what is best, their parenting is more a product of carefully weighing the benefits of multiple parenting traditions. Their ideas express a combination of the Confucian notion of self-regulation and democratic principles so typical of Western parenting. Likewise, their attitude towards their children's schooling clearly seems to be a product of both – their own academic experiences pre-migration (reconsidering the academic pressure and competition) and the influence of the Dutch educational system, which encourages children to develop their own interests, hobbies and characters. Their involvement in both schooling systems (in China as a student, and in the Netherlands as a parent) has put them in a unique position to weigh and select elements from both sides and has allowed them to be critical consumers of the Dutch system.

As shown above, both groups have access to certain cultural practices related to parenting and education that correspond with the fact that they were raised in different areas in China where different sub-cultures are dominant. However, in neither case is their parenting a 'replica' of their former practices pre-migration. After entering parenthood in the Netherlands, both groups access and utilise various parental philosophies as resources to structure and individualise their parental ethnotheories. Noticeably, both sub-groups' choices of certain Dutch or Chinese parenting ideas and practices, and how they reform these ideas, are highly situated

in what they have gone through pre- and post-migration. For instance, the fact that the low-skilled immigrant parents often involved extended families in child rearing may be associated with their certain ideals or convictions that they bring in from their pre-migration communities, and they clearly motivated by their heavy work schedules and the dense communities they have formed after settlement. Furthermore, the more individualistic, child-centred attitude of the high-skilled immigrant might be explained by their prior contact with child-centred ideologies in the urban centres in China, but it might be fostered further by the lack of extended family members in their case and the need to take full responsibility as a nuclear family for child rearing.

Different trajectories to 'modern' parenthood

As we argued, in both immigrant groups the parental ethnotheories are influenced by their respective migration (hi)stories. This statement has also consequences for how we look upon the notion of how immigrants adopt or relate to mainstream practices of parenthood, sometimes referred to as assimilation. It shows that both groups create different versions of what can be called modern parenthood, which clearly can be traced back to the communities and their ideologies they have had access to pre- and post-migration. Whereas the low-skilled immigrants came to the Netherlands with their parenting ideas relatively untouched by 'Western' ideologies, even if they have adopted other elements of a Western lifestyle, such as clothing and the use of certain technologies, in the case of the highly skilled immigrants, a confrontation of different ideologies had already started pre-migration. However, in both cases, what was 'brought along' was shaped further by the specific economic, social and cultural settings in which the process of dealing with this heritage occurred after migration. For example, the highly skilled immigrants prepared their children for various school and other skill-related activities, in line with how they were raised as a child. However, having experience of both schooling systems allowed them to rebel and resist some of the negative elements that the constant pressure to succeed brings with it.

The findings of the current study shed doubts on theories that imply that immigrants who come into contact with 'modern' notions of childhood and parenting will ultimately adopt these in their parenting. As we showed in the theory section, China has developed its own particular version of modern childhood, which is based on its specific traditional theories on both childhood and parenting. It is necessary to study what these 'modernization' processes mean in their particular contexts, and how they impact upon ideas on parenting and childhood. For example, the highly skilled immigrants, who mostly came from urban areas, adopted more child-centred ideas, not only because they had more access to Western ideology, but also due to the stricter population-control policy implemented in China's cities compared to its villages (Cheung & Kwan, 2009). In addition, as we have argued, different subgroups have different degrees of access to ideologies and contexts of modernization. For example, the two groups' ideologies on their children's formal education were not only based on their own educational experiences, but were also highly related to the uneven distribution of Chinese public educational resources.

We hope to have shown how the study of migration processes is key to understanding particular cultural practices such as parenting. Pointing to the cultural dynamics typical for migration helps to demystify stereotypical cultural patterns, such

as the image of the strict, authoritarian and demanding Chinese 'tiger mother'. The various parenting practices employed by Chinese immigrant parents clearly are grounded in specific contexts and waves of migration, that are again also embedded in broader social transitions, which can only be explained by addressing the social, economic, geographic and cultural factors in combination.

Last but not least, a reflection on the impact of the researchers' role in every stage of this qualitative research would provide a transparent accounting for readers about what was happening throughout the research process (Primeau, 2003). Firstly, the researchers have been fully aware of their similar educational level to the highly skilled immigrants that might have an impact on data collection. For instance, the similar language codes and expressions due to a similar background have most likely facilitated the mutual understanding between the two parties. In contrast, due to the unfamiliarity of some ways of speaking and particular idioms used by the lower skilled immigrants, it took more effort for the interviewer to explain and to understand during the interview. In order to account for this, the interviewer cross-questioned closely to unfold the untold information and to avoid misunderstanding. In addition, the interviewer (the first author), was considered an 'expert' and 'assessor' by some low-skilled interviewees, which might have generated more distance between them. To avoid such social expectations, the interviewer was intentionally modest and honest to gain their trust and to avoid socially desirable answers. Furthermore, due to the similar socio-economic status and access to Western ideologies, the researchers needed be very cautious when assessing the two groups' cultural roots of certain parental practices. For instance, the researchers, as individuals, were more likely to identify and approve certain values held by the highly skilled immigrants than those held by the lower skilled immigrants. Therefore, during the data analysis, the researchers tried to keep an equal distance to the materials collected from both groups in order to judge both from a similar perspective refraining as much as possible from value judgements. In general, the researchers were aware of the subjectivity brought by their own position, self, interests and values during the research. We hope these reflections on the measures taken and attitudes held by the researchers can serve as signposts to the readers about the research process and their readings of our analyses, and give insight into the reflexivity of the researchers.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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Chapter 4

Learning to be a Mother

Comparing Two Groups of Chinese Immigrants in the Netherlands


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- Prof. Willem Koops: supervision of the research design; supervision of the data analysis: supervision of the draft and guided revision of the version to be published

Learning to be a mother: Comparing two groups of Chinese immigrants in the Netherlands

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Abstract

Immigrant parents may have to rebuild their parenting knowledge after migration to keep up with their new milieu. Comparing two subgroups of Chinese immigrants, economic and knowledge immigrants, this study shows that the construction of different parental ethnotheories can be understood through the characteristics of their parenting knowledge acquisition, social networks and networking strategies. Findings from ego-network interviews with 15 economic immigrant mothers and 20 knowledge immigrant mothers indicate that the former tends to obtain practical tips and specific instructions directly from experts and acquire practical help from local, co-ethnic, small and dense networks, while the latter engages in critical peer-based learning in multicultural, open and long-distance networks. This study argues that a social network perspective can shed light on the “black box” of how parenting theories are reconstructed after migration.

Keywords

ego-networks, immigrant mothers, Chinese immigrants, ethnotheories

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Introduction

Migration brings difficulties and complexities to childrearing. Parents not only have to rebuild social networks that can help them with the task of parenting, they also need to rebuild their ideas and ideologies about childhood and parenting post-migration, as “old” ideas often do not work in the new setting. Chinese families have been described in the international literature as a unique case in this respect as they seem to be holding on to certain Chinese family norms and values, such as the emphasis on their offspring’s obedience as well as on achievement via severe discipline. These beliefs are perceived to be so strong that they can be well-kept even after Chinese people have moved abroad (Kaufman, 2004). In the context of the current study, Geense (2005) has described how Chinese fathers working in the catering business in the Netherlands demonstrate their authority over children, in sync with paternal roles in Chinese tradition, which endows the father absolute power to rule the entire family. At the same time, studies also report on the tensions that holding on to such ideologies produces, especially among the second generation and women. For instance, Liu’s (2014) work shows how Chinese immigrant mothers in the Netherlands experience communication problems and conflicts related to this traditional patriarchal order and the isolation felt by women. These issues remain prevalent even for the higher educated and better networked second-generation Chinese in the Netherlands (Zhang, 2013).

Research shows that the Chinese immigrant community is diverse which depends on the so-called migration “waves,” that is, groups that migrate at different times and for different reasons (Wang, 2008). In this study, we will particularly focus on two waves: the so-called “economic immigrants” and the “knowledge (or high skilled) immigrants,” a general typology that is recognized in the international migration literature (e.g., in the US, Wang, 2008; and in the UK, Wang, 2014). While both groups share a Chinese cultural background, both groups clearly differ in terms of their socio-economic background, schooling level and migration history (see below for further details on these waves in the Netherlands).

In our previous research on Chinese immigrant parents in the Netherlands (Zheng et al., 2018), we found that these two sub-groups of Chinese parents, despite their common ethnic background, differed greatly in their post-migration parenting ideologies. While the so-called “knowledge immigrants” carefully and systematically shaped the development of their children by offering them the opportunity to try all sorts of activities to build their identities and skills, the economic immigrants seemed to take the responsibility for their children’s upbringing in a different way. While the knowledge immigrants considered care as a highly personal task, the economic immigrants were happy to share the care of their children with others, also for reasons of convenience. Apart from parenting being “communal” for the latter group,

their parenting ideologies were also more homogeneous while the knowledge immigrants tended to build “unique,” individually motivated ideas on parenting. Another difference is the transparent, close, equal and democratic parent-child relationships valued by knowledge immigrants while economic immigrants tended to have hierarchical relationships with their children.

In addition, both groups may have different network relationships and media resources, which are important for developing their childrearing ideas and practices in their new setting. As stated, immigrants have the task to re-construct their “original” parenting ideologies and practices post-migration. How they do this, is a topic that is currently understudied (De Haan, 2011). Pointing to social and economic status and schooling level cannot adequately explain the particular contours these post-migration ideologies will take. In this article, we apply a social network perspective to understand these differences, as we believe that such an approach may enrich our understanding of parenting after migration.

A social network perspective on parenting

Parenting is usually defined as the parent’s everyday understanding of child development, childcare and parental roles (Bornstein and Cote, 2004). As parenting can vary widely across socially- and culturally-diverse settings, following Harkness and Super (2006), we use the term “ethnotheories” to refer to the contextual variety in parents’ implicit or explicit ideas about parenting (Harkness and Super, 2006). Building on the idea that these ethnotheories can vary depending on social class or ethnic group membership, we develop a social network perspective on ethnotheories based on Bourdieu’s notion of social capital. Bourdieu argued that each individual is not only defined by social class, but also by all kinds of social capital that he or she can articulate through social relations. According to Bourdieu, social capital is the aggregate of resources which are linked to possession of a durable network (Bourdieu, 1986). Parenting knowledge can be viewed as a particular kind of capital that parents articulate through the multiple resources they possess (e.g., Fielden and Gallagher, 2008). By adopting a network perspective, it is not only possible to explain diversity in ethnotheories based on social class or ethnicity, but also in terms of social and cultural resources that parents can draw upon when building these theories.

Knowledge acquisition on parenting, the nature of social networks and media routines

This study is interested in how possible variations in the kinds of network Chinese immigrant mothers have at their disposal may explain the differences in parental ethnotheories found in previous research. The study examined the

following questions: how closed or open are mothers to outside ideas? Do their networks differ in terms of ethnic background? Are they engaged in local or more transnational communities when it comes to ideas on parenting? How do they use the parenting knowledge they have access to?

Research has shown that parents vary in who they consult, the media they use and the resources they trust (Radey and Randolph, 2009; Tornatzky et al., 2002). Such differences ultimately result in varying network configurations that, in turn, define the information and learning possibilities of individuals (De Haan et al., 2014). The media routines of parents also influence their use of resources (Sarkadi and Bremberg, 2005). Books, magazines, television and a variety of Internet resources (Radey and Randolph, 2009; Simpson, 1997) offer information on parenting. Particularly, the Internet, including mobile devices with Internet access, is becoming an increasingly important means for parents to learn about parenting (Madge and O'Connor, 2006). In China, parents' knowledge acquisition patterns and strategies have been remarkably changing along with the historical shifts in economy and politics as well as with the development of social media in the past one or two decades (Luo et al., 2013). Young Chinese parents, especially those with a relatively high educational level, were found to critically merge traditional Chinese parenting values and newly emerged ideas as increasingly diverse available resources have provided them with more ideas to compare (Wang and Chang, 2010). Although this paper does not directly address these developments, we expect that its focus on the specificity of social networks and how it impacts upon media use is able to at least bring in another perspective on this issue.

Different networks, different resources on parenting?

Generally, it is argued that while closed and dense networks are important for mutual trust and support, open and low-density networks with more relationships to those outside a person's "own" community are important for the transmission of novel information (Eisingerich et al., 2010). In addition, research shows that a high concentration of network members in a single residential location is associated with more practical help (Bolt et al., 1998), while wider-reaching networks contain richer information (Lin, 2000). Furthermore, homogeneous networks, in terms of ethnicity, status, gender or educational level, for example, are generally seen as being able to provide more support to the users but offer less variety in information (Wasserman, 1994; Putnam, 2000).

With respect to the networks of immigrants, especially in the earlier stages of migration, people form dense and ethnically homogeneous networks, which help them to stay in touch with people they understand and trust and who can provide them with resources they need (Ryan, 2007, 2009). However, as Levitt and Schiller (2004) have argued, immigrants increasingly

depend on transnational ethnic networks that are not confined to national boundaries or local immigrant communities (Levitt and Schiller, 2004). The literature on Chinese immigrants partly confirms this trend, as it shows how the social networks of the overseas Chinese community play a role in the lives of immigrants, for example, in consulting others on business issues and health care (e.g., Chu, 2009; Wu et al., 2011). However, it is possible that immigrant communities differ greatly in the extent to which they build such transnational communities, depending on their networks prior to migration, socio-economic status (SES) and their integration and networking strategies post-migration. The literature on Chinese immigrants confirms this variety as, for example, low SES Chinese immigrant communities are described as forming closed, relatively isolated, ethnically homogeneous communities in their host countries, both in North America (Da, 2008; Pih et al., 2012) and Europe (Pieke, 2004), while high SES immigrants in the US have been described as having more open networks reaching out to a diversity of communities (Zhang, 2012). Our interest here is how such variety, if it occurs, might impact on the way immigrants rebuild their knowledge on parenting after migration. Do the networks of low SES or “economic” Chinese immigrants differ in spatial concentration, homogeneity and openness from those of high SES or “knowledge” Chinese immigrants? How do these groups employ their social networks to gather knowledge on parenting? Moreover, how are these social networking strategies related to their overall media use, particularly, how do they use the Internet to obtain information about parenting?

About the study

Economic versus knowledge immigrants

The Chinese form the fifth largest non-Western immigrant group in the Netherlands today, consisting of over 100,000 immigrants originating from mainland China and Hong Kong (Gijsberts, 2011). Roughly half of these immigrants, who generally migrated after the new millennium, are referred to as knowledge immigrants. They primarily come from developed urban areas in China and pursued higher education before migrating to the Netherlands to continue their studies. After graduating from Dutch universities, they usually work as white-collar professionals. The other half is referred to as economic immigrants, who began migrating prior to 2000, with the purpose of finding work (Li, 1999). Until recently, this group was seen as typical of Chinese migration. They own small catering businesses, usually have not completed higher education, often come from the same hometown and have generally settled collectively in self-dependent, relatively closed communities. In the Netherlands, the first wave of economic immigrants came mainly from

Hong Kong, followed by those from Wenzhou, Zhejiang Province who arrived in more recent decades.

As already stated, both types of immigrants are also seen as important prototypes of current migration from China across the globe in contemporary history. In the Netherlands, the group of economic immigrants falls under the category of Chinese labor migrants, who migrate to the developed countries to pursue a better-paying job and to improve their economic condition at home. Knowledge immigrants in the Netherlands are part of the rising international student wave from China, whose primary motivation is to pursue a better-quality higher education. Their choice of a place to settle down and raise a family mostly depends on the development of their careers (Chishti and Bergeron, 2011).

For reasons of comparability, we only invited Chinese mothers from mainland China who migrated after 2000 and raised their children in the Netherlands. Fifteen economic immigrants and 20 knowledge immigrants were included in the study. They all live in Utrecht, a medium-sized city in the urban heart of the Netherlands, where most Chinese immigrants have settled. Economic immigrants were recruited, using snowball sampling, from the three most important Chinese associations in Utrecht: a Chinese school, a Chinese church and the Dutch Chinese Chamber of Commerce. As knowledge immigrants use digital media to stay in touch after migration (Da, 2008) and were not represented in the church and Chamber of Commerce, we located them through the Chinese school and through advertisements on two popular online forums: bbs.gogodutch.com and bbs.xinhelan.com. We used the following criteria for inclusion in either of these groups: (a) self-identification (which group they identify themselves with); (b) occupation and (c) level of education.

While economic immigrants are typically engaged in the catering business, knowledge immigrants are in white-collar jobs, such as in the finance industry and engineering, or hold jobs as teachers or academics. Knowledge immigrants are typically highly educated, up to PhD level, while most economic immigrants had secondary schooling as their highest level. The two samples were matched in terms of age and number of children so that both were similar in these respects.

Data collection and instruments

Every participant was interviewed individually in a private or public space, such as their home, a café or an office. Informed consent was obtained in all cases. All the interviews were conducted in Mandarin by the first author and audiotaped, each with a duration of approximately 90 minutes. Data collection was conducted from November 2013 to April 2014.

We conducted an ego network interview followed by an in-depth interview. Ego network analysis, a methodology to map the composition, size,

density and other features of the social network of one person, is particularly suited to obtaining insights into the relationships, composition and structure of the networks of *individuals* as opposed to network analyses applied to groups (Haythornthwaite, 2011). Using a "name generator," we evoked the relationships (called alters) of the mothers (called egos) they considered relevant for their parenting. We asked the "ego" to list a set of alters (up to 30) whom she regarded as helpful in her daily childrearing, using prompts such as, "if you have to leave your child for a day at home, who do you turn to for help to take care of him/her?," "with whom do you often talk about child-raising?" or "is there anyone else who sometimes provides information, knowledge and help about childrearing?" Then, we collected information about the type of relationship (e.g., family, friend, colleague, neighbor, etc.) and the characteristics of these alters (e.g., ethnicity, age, location of residence, rated importance using a 6-point Likert scale; the higher the value the greater the importance), as well as whether these alters knew each other. We registered the name and properties of the relationships a participant listed with the help of Excel software. This allowed us to calculate and compare the composition, homogeneity and geographical location of mothers' networks, as well as the relative openness of these networks later on (for a more detailed explanation, see De Haan et al., 2014). In the interview, we asked the mothers how they used these relationships to build knowledge on parenting, and also about other resources they might mobilize as well as how they valued these resources.

Data analysis

We tested for potential differences between both groups in the network composition (types of relationships, ethnic homogeneity, locations of residence, etc.), its size and density, and differences in resource use as well as the average rank of each resource mentioned. With the aim of comparing two groups of Chinese mothers on these variables, we employed independent sample t-tests and Mann-Whitney *U* tests in the case of any assumption of a t-test being violated. Lastly, the differences between the two groups in resource use were represented by the average rank of each resource.

The audiotaped semi-structured, in-depth interviews were transcribed. Using a discourse analytic approach, and with the help of Nvivo10.0 software, we focused on the resources that mothers employed and how they used digital and other media to build knowledge on parenting in relation to their social networks. As these issues are not independent of what *kind* of knowledge mothers were interested in, or *how* they thought this knowledge might best be acquired (e.g., by asking professionals, by reading books or chatting on social media), both of these elements were included. Our final goal with the analyses was to test whether the combined data (network data as well as

Table 1. Demographic profile of research participants.

	Economic immigrants (<i>n</i> = 15)	Knowledge immigrants (<i>n</i> = 20)	χ^2 / <i>t</i> value ^a
Mean age	32.57 (SD = 6.11)	34.2 (SD = 3.41)	−0.903
Mean number of children	1.86 (SD = 0.77)	1.45 (SD = 0.51)	21.712
Educational level			24.825*
Low (<10 years)	40%	–	–
Middle (10–12 years)	33.3%	–	–
High (13–16 years)	26.7%	20%	–
Very high (>16 years)	–	80%	–
Occupation			26.425*
Catering business	53.3%	–	–
Other business	20%	–	–
White-collar job	–	65%	–
Homemaker	26.7%	35%	–

**p* < 0.05^aThe figures in italics are the results of the two-sample *t*-test for difference of means.

media resource data) could shed light on the earlier found differences in parental ethnotheories between both groups.

Results

Table 1 shows the selected characteristics of our sample. In general, both economic and knowledge immigrants are in their mid-30s and have fewer than two children, most of whom were born in the Netherlands. The knowledge immigrants differ from the economic immigrants in terms of education and occupation. Most knowledge immigrants had very high education and were working in white-collar jobs, while more economic immigrants had low and middle education and were working in the catering business.

Differences in the networks of economic and knowledge immigrant mothers

Network composition and who is important for what. Economic and knowledge immigrants rely on different relationships to support them in their parenting, as can be seen in Table 2. While they both rely on family, professionals, neighbors, friends and colleagues, professionals are significantly more frequently involved in the economic immigrant mothers' networks, while friends are significantly more involved in the knowledge immigrant mothers' networks.

Table 2. Distribution of the network composition, geographical spread per relationship and homogeneity of immigrant mothers' networks.

	Economic immigrants <i>n</i> = 15	Knowledge immigrants <i>n</i> = 20	U/t value ^a
Relationship of mothers to others involved in parenting (%)			
Family	43.85	36.01	1.07
Professional	24.10	6.64	58.50*
Neighbor	7.57	4.74	148.50
Friend	16.24	37.18	70.50*
Colleague	8.25	15.43	111.50
	100.00	100.00	
Rated importance of others involved in parenting (mean of 6-point Likert scale)			
Family	4.23	4.5	-0.83
Professional	4.8	4.08	16.5
Neighbor	3.33	3.93	6.0
Friend	2.98	3.32	-0.73
Colleague	2.42	3.22	-2.10*
Spatial concentration of networks (%)			
In the Netherlands	90.03	77.07	78.00*
Family	35.54	19.35	89.50*
Professional	24.10	6.64	58.50*
Colleague	8.25	15.43	111.50
Friend	14.57	30.90	77.00*
Neighbor	7.57	4.74	148.50
Long-distance	9.97	22.93	78.00*
Family	8.30	16.66	126.50
Friend	1.67	6.28	88.50*
Ethnic background of networks (%)			
Dutch	35.19	44.74	129.50
Single or combined heritages related to Chinese ^b	64.81	42.18	92.00
Chinese in China	6.81	13.96	100*
First generation Chinese in NL	31.73	21.82	112.50
Second generation Chinese in NL	16.48	0.91	66*
First generation Chinese living elsewhere	2.29	4.30	133
Second generation Chinese from elsewhere now in NL	7.51	1.75	116
Single or combined heritages related to non-Chinese	-	14.09	-

(continued)

Table 2. Continued.

	Economic immigrants <i>n</i> = 15	Knowledge immigrants <i>n</i> = 20	U/t value ^a
Gender homogeneity			
Percentage female	76.17	74.14	0.72
Age homogeneity			
Mean age (years)	43.53	42.55	0.59
Mean network size	5.73	10.55	37.00*
Mean network density	0.80	0.54	4.63*

**p* < 0.05

NL: the Netherlands

^aThe figures in italics are the results of the two-sample t-test for difference of means.

^bWe used five combinations of single or combined heritages: Chinese who are and always have been in China (*Chinese in China*), Chinese who were raised in China and migrated to the Netherlands (*first generation Chinese in NL*, similar to our participants), Chinese who were born and still are in the Netherlands (*second generation Chinese in NL*), Chinese who were raised in China and migrated to some other countries (*first generation Chinese living elsewhere*) and Chinese who grew up somewhere else and then migrated to the Netherlands (*second generation Chinese from elsewhere living in NL*).

With respect to the network contact both groups value, colleagues are more important to knowledge immigrant mothers than to economic immigrant mothers.

For economic immigrants' contacts in the Netherlands, family members are more frequently involved than for knowledge immigrants. Typically, parents or parents-in-law (if they are settled in the Netherlands) are considered second in importance for practical help and are engaged as babysitters or to pick up the children from school and cook for them. Neighbors, although far less frequently involved, have a similar function and are also considered rather important (ranked as the third most important) in providing practical help and ability to assist with local information, such as on the local school. Local professionals, who are mainly teachers and the kindergarten staff at their children's school, are ranked as most important and regarded as responsible for their children's education. They also involve significantly higher proportion of professionals than knowledge immigrants do.

Knowledge immigrants rely almost as frequently on friends as on family, although they state that family members rank as most important. Among family members, husbands are mentioned the most often for taking care of and making decisions about the children. The Chinese grandparents (who all live in China), as well as other family members who are not around, are often updated and consulted through digital media, or asked to assist in childcare

during short-term visits to the Netherlands. Following family, knowledge immigrant mothers rank professionals as the second most important relationship, regarding them as an important partner in their children's education. They tend to obtain and share information about childrearing or news on their children's activities from friends (the fourth most important) and colleagues (ranked fifth), but they are rarely asked to babysit.

Geographical location, heterogeneity, size and density of networks. We compared the percentage of contacts that were local (i.e., those living in the Netherlands) with the percentage of long-distance contacts (i.e., those living in China or other countries), relative to the total number of contacts. The results of the Mann-Whitney U tests showed that the networks of economic immigrant mothers tend to be more local while the networks of the knowledge immigrant mothers tend to be more long-distance. Moreover, the long-distance contacts of knowledge immigrant mothers were in various countries. Apart from contacts in China, the economic immigrants only named two relatives living abroad: one was a sister in Belgium and the other a cousin in Italy. For knowledge immigrants, eight mothers mentioned 12 long-distance contacts located outside China who are living in seven other countries: Germany (3), the USA (2), Belgium (2), Canada (2), France (1), the UK (1) and Japan (1).

In analyzing the heterogeneity of their networks in terms of ethnic background, we distinguished between country of descent and country of immigration. Economic immigrant mothers' networks contain only contacts with those having a Chinese or Dutch background. Knowledge immigrants did mention being in touch with people who have an international background besides Chinese and Dutch. More specifically, they mentioned eight different ethnicities, including Japanese, American, Indian, Singaporean, German, Spanish, Indonesian and Iranian. This indicates that the knowledge immigrant mothers form more diverse networks compared with the economic immigrant mothers, both in terms of where their contacts live and what their various ethnic backgrounds are, even if their networks still largely consist of Chinese in China. In contrast, economic immigrants have more contacts who are second-generation Chinese in the Netherlands in their network than knowledge immigrants do. There were no significant differences between the network contacts with respect to gender or age between both groups.

Furthermore, our data showed that knowledge immigrant mothers' networks were significantly larger in size (the number of people in one's network) than economic immigrants' networks while the density (the number of actual ties divided by the number of all possible ties in one's network) of the economic immigrant mothers' networks was significantly higher than that of the knowledge immigrant mothers. This difference in size and density is also visualized in Figure 1, which depicts the two immigrant mothers' networks.

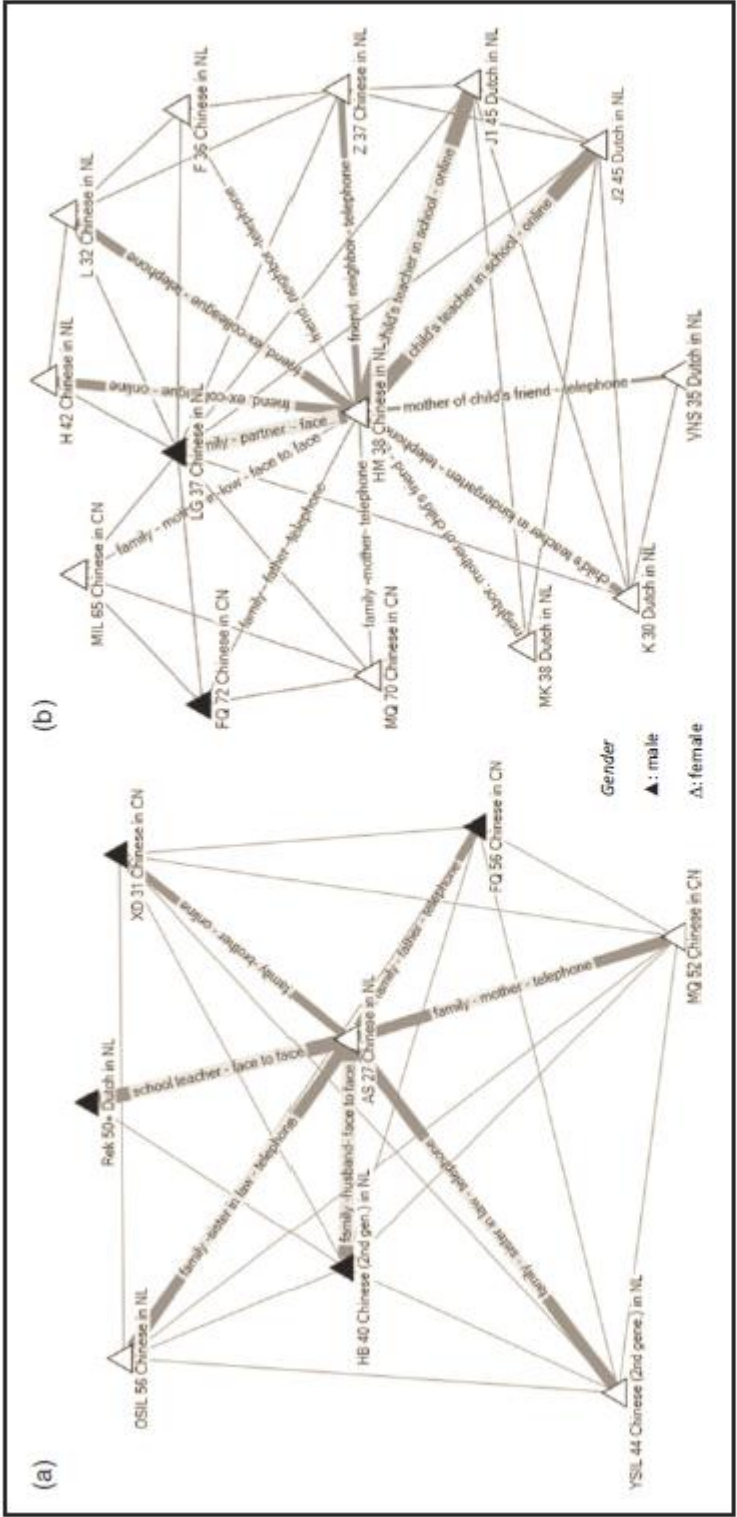


Figure 1. Examples of two mothers' networks: (a) AS (economic immigrant) and (b) HM (knowledge immigrant). Filled triangles: male; open triangles: female. Note: Vertex (where one or more lines intersect): the center is the ego and the other vertices around her are the alters she listed (Label: pseudonym, age, ethnicity and location). Edges (the lines connecting two vertices) indicate the relationship between two alters; those with labels suggest the relationship between the ego and her alters and those without labels indicate that these two alters know each other (width of line indicates importance based on the Likert scale; narrowest to widest indicate least to most important).

Table 3. Average rank and percentage of resources immigrant mothers use to inform themselves on parenting.

	Economic immigrants (<i>n</i> = 15)	Knowledge immigrants (<i>n</i> = 20)
	Average rank (%)	Average rank (%)
Internet	1.36 (73.3)	1.35 (100)
Books	1.42 (80)	2.06 (85)
Professional organization	–	2.23 (80)
Magazines	–	3 (15)
Television	–	4.33 (30)
Newspapers	–	3 (15)
Community center	–	3 (15)

Figure 1 (a) and (b) represent what sociologists call *ideal types*. The figure provides a visual representation of the characteristics discussed: the knowledge immigrants' networks are larger, less dense and their relationships are more diverse in terms of ethnicity and location of networks than those of economic immigrants. The figure also includes details on resource use, which we will discuss in the following section.

Knowledge acquisition strategies on parenting

Economic immigrant mothers. In our study, they usually looked for practical suggestions and help with activities, such as picking up children from school or babysitting, when they were unable to do these themselves due to their business activities. The knowledge they tended to seek was of a practical kind. For example, they were interested in finding out about acceptable and effective means to discipline children, places where their children could obtain additional schooling or free language lessons, which school their children should attend or what books they should buy for their children and where. As can be seen in Table 3, the average rank the mothers gave to each resource they used showed that this group of mothers used the Internet in addition to consulting offline professionals, with both almost equally important. One characteristic of the economic immigrant mothers' attitude was that they valued information from experts, such as teachers, speech therapists or doctors, who could be consulted offline in their neighborhoods. For example, one mother, EL (34-year-old, college graduate, snack bar co-owner) who had a very busy business said:

I don't have time to watch TV or read a book, it is a waste of time, as they [books and TV programs] only talk about virtual theories; they are not applicable to my

child's specific situation at all ... Everybody can talk but I like action ... when I encounter a problem, I go directly to the people who know about it and solve it. If she (my daughter) is ill, I go to the doctor; if she is unhappy, I go to the teachers.

Economic immigrant mothers trust professionals regarding childrearing over others and tend to rely on professional parties' solutions. For instance, TTM (36-year-old, high school graduate, food business) mentioned that her son strongly preferred meat for some time, which she thought as a diet problem. However, their family doctor told her not to worry as her son had developed well. Then she added impressively:

As a mother, I'm too concerned to judge. I always worry about him (my son) and I don't know if I'm doing good enough or not. Then, when the doctor told me he didn't have any problem with eating too much meat, I couldn't believe it. But I had to. She is the doctor!

Moreover, economic immigrant mothers also relied on experts accessed through social and other media, for example television programs, such as *Super Nanny*, which XW (29-year-old, high school graduate, snack bar owner) regarded as "quite good as it really tells you how to deal with some very special children." In addition, they consulted Chinese authorities through their online Chinese social media networks, such as WeChat public accounts (similar to Facebook official pages, WeChat public accounts publish articles to their followers in the WeChat Mobile App), WeChatMoments (personal post of a WeChat user, can only be seen by people who follow this user. <https://wx.qq.com/>) and Weibo (similar to Twitter, <https://www.weibo.com>), which they can consult in Chinese. They often share and repost articles from websites hosted in China that they consider useful, while being careful that what they pass on is expert knowledge, as AS (27-year-old, high school graduate, home-maker) explained:

We who were born in the 1980s are getting used to mobiles and Internet. People always share those kinds of articles [about parenting] on WeChatMoments. You see [showing an article entitled "10 tips from a developmental psychologist" to the interviewer] ... Sometimes I think these are useful. But I only repost those written by experts. Anyway, it's not harmful to get something like this.

A sample article shared by one of the mothers in our study was re-posted via her personal account on the social network site, WeChatMoments (<http://m.xxbmm.com/w/60.html>). The article is hosted by an Internet company (Shenzhen Mom Net), which promotes parenting knowledge among local family activities in Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, where the company is

located. The article contains a blacklist of child-related products, such as baby food or medicines that could harm children. Apart from the information they actively seek on parenting, these mothers are also impacted by information on their social networks that they are not actively seeking.

Although not included in the interview questions, XW (29-year-old, high school graduate, snack bar owner) told me spontaneously:

I followed some people and groups on Weibo; some I know, some I don't. They post what they did today with their children ... You know, Internet is [a] broad [concept]. Like in this group for "hot mothers" [in Chinese, *辣妈 la ma*, an Internet buzzword in China, meaning mothers who stay in shape and have a positive life attitude], people share topics such as food, personal development or even talk about some hit live shows ... I usually browse it for fun.

This random access to parenting issues, through surfing online, which was only typical for the younger, less busy mothers, thus served their parenting needs in an indirect and subtle way. Apart from this kind of professional knowledge, these mothers also download Chinese cartoons or songs for children to teach them Chinese and traditional values.

Knowledge immigrant mothers. In our study, they were critical seekers of information aiming to build up knowledge rather than directly applying it. Even when they were interested in practical knowledge, their concerns differed from the economic immigrant mothers. They seemed aware of the complexity of living between different traditions of childrearing, and often expressed their sense of responsibility as a parent to make this situation "work" for their child. For example, WN (36-year-old, MA holder, college lecturer) mentioned that the second-generation Chinese students in her class were confused and struggled when she asked them if they felt Chinese or Dutch. Her response to this situation was that she felt it was her responsibility to pay special attention to her own son's development of his ethnic identity to prevent him from experiencing the same confusing thoughts and feelings.

Generally, this group tends to generate knowledge on parenting by gathering a relatively large amount of information and various opinions from multiple perspectives, analyzing these and then forming their own opinion based on their own situation. They use a variety of different resources to obtain knowledge about parenting, including the Internet, books, magazines and television, alongside information from professional institutions.

Books are valued as they are, as one of the mothers stated: "a system which is internally consistent." Another mother said she particularly liked books by authors who tell comprehensive and persuasive stories rather than "how to" instruction books. This group used the Internet differently from the economic immigrant mothers, using search engines to obtain specific information on

parenting, rather than relying on information that circulates on social network sites. As HT (33-year-old, MA holder, logistics manager) explained:

We sit behind the computer every day. It's so natural to Google anything we think about. [laughs] When I want to know anything about parenting or child development, that [searching online] is my first reaction. I don't need to bother anybody and I can compare all the different results.

These mothers seek scientific-based parenting knowledge, which they value over practical or traditional knowledge. For example, when SS (29-year-old, BA graduate, businessperson) talked about her mother-in-law's traditional potty training, she referred to research about how a child's bowel functioning develops and hygiene problems that had been proven to be associated with the old Chinese ways. She concluded that "although she [mother-in-law] has successfully raised three children, I won't allow her to do the potty training of my child." Notably, although the information from professional institutes is considered scientific and convincing, not all information from professionals is accepted. For example, JZ (33-year-old, BA graduate, homemaker) complained that the Dutch baby clinic (in Dutch: Consultation Bureau) "only checks the most regular and fundamental things ... If you want to know more about the psychological level or something related to culture, they can't provide anything. So, you still have to explore by yourself."

While these mothers surfed the Internet and read books to form their opinions, they used their social networks as well. Some of them also used their transnational networks outside China to obtain information or contrasting opinions. For example, LH (46-year-old, MA holder, homemaker) mentioned that she sometimes talked with her sister in Canada and also browsed overseas Chinese forums in North America. She explained that she "would like to know what is happening in other Chinese families in the West; if I've made the same mistake, I'd correct it; if I haven't, I'd try to avoid it."

However, usually when they use their social networks for issues on parenting, they use social network sites for Chinese immigrants in the Netherlands, such as Gogodutch.com, which is the most visited online forum by Chinese in the Netherlands. The knowledge immigrant mothers in our study, as a rule, did not personally know the other parents they had met in the forum. As one of the mothers, ML (33-year-old, MA holder, computer science engineer), explained:

I've really learned a lot from it [gogodutch.com], they [other users] are very supportive. Sometimes our concerns are not understood by others, neither Dutch colleagues nor family in China. But they can [understand me] ... And their comments are useful ... We don't actually know each other, but that's the most amazing part.

For example, the social network site (WeChatMoments) tackles many issues related to what it means to be a mother of Chinese descent in the Netherlands. Parents pose problems, ask for help, express and share their opinions, and discuss and contrast various views. The issue of whether and at what point Chinese children should be accustomed to a Dutch school lunch, versus taking a Chinese homemade lunch to school, is illustrative of the kinds of issues brought up. Typically, these mothers struggle to maintain their Chinese heritage, on the one hand, and to deal with the demands of the local culture, on the other.

Discussion and conclusion

Our results revealed that economic immigrant mothers develop different knowledge acquisition strategies to build their parental ethnotheories compared with knowledge immigrant mothers. Both groups also differ in their social networks, as well as how they employ those networks. The economic immigrant mothers who have family members close by depend on this family network for practical help, which includes second-generation family members who know their way around Dutch society. With regard to their ideas on parenting, they rely on professionals. Interestingly, they find this knowledge by consulting Dutch professionals and consuming knowledge published by experts in China, which is passed on through their online social network communities. The Internet has added a new dimension to their parenting. Their locally based, relatively small and dense networks have been extended and bring them into direct contact with professional knowledge that is passed on from China.

In contrast, the knowledge immigrant mothers usually do not have an extended family close by, and thus cannot rely on them for practical help. They feel they are responsible for building their own parental theories making use of a broad range of different resources. In contrast to the economic immigrant mothers, with their busy work schedules, they have more time to sort out things for themselves. They read books, surf the Internet for information and also share and discuss this information with other Chinese mothers in the Netherlands through social network sites. They usually do not personally know these mothers but form online "imagined communities" around the issue of parenting. Although they generally build these networks with Chinese mothers in the Netherlands, they also include relationships and resources from a variety of countries, and thus form more globally oriented, culturally diverse networks. Thus, while economic immigrant mothers form locally based, small networks to provide practical help, the knowledge immigrant mothers build larger knowledge networks to help them develop their parenting ethnotheories.

We can partly understand these differences in relation to the social class or educational level of these groups. Since the economic immigrants have busy

work schedules and have not been trained to find and discuss scientific information on their own, it might be more practical for them to rely on the opinions of professionals. The knowledge immigrants' level of education and white-collar employment, in contrast, mean that they are used to critically examining opinions and combining a variety of resources on their own. The network perspective we applied here suggests further insight into what kinds of contacts both groups of mothers rely on, and also what kind of parental knowledge circulates through their networks. As economic immigrant mothers largely rely on professional knowledge published in China, it is likely that they maintain and transmit traditional Chinese knowledge on parenting, which is considered valuable by Chinese immigrant communities. At the same time, they are confronted with the knowledge of Dutch professionals, which means their ethnotheories are at least challenged and possibly adapted based on other ideas and influences. While a strict and hierarchical parent-child relationship, which is representative in traditional Chinese culture, is valued by most economic immigrants, they are likely to follow instructions from Dutch professionals if they consider these practical. For example, one of the economic immigrant mothers thought she was the person who should decide which middle school her daughter should go to when she graduated from primary school. However, the suggestion by the child's teacher that it was important for the child to make the decision for herself led the mother to change her mind and allow her child to decide based on her own wishes and the teacher's advice. This example shows that while this mother most likely followed the advice of the teacher because of the position of authority the teacher had as a professional, her ideas on hierarchical relationships were challenged.

Knowledge immigrant mothers, whose family members (apart from their husbands) are usually in China or other countries, do not count on local and dense networks to build knowledge on parenting. In contrast, they rely on more open, often virtual and partly transnational networks, which allow them to gain information from different people and multiple resources. This offers them a variety of different perspectives and opinions, which may facilitate the mothers' integration of all this information into their own hybrid parental ideology. The ethnotheories of knowledge mothers typically reflect diverse perspectives, for example, in how they think about parent-child relationships. While they continue to respect Chinese values, such as emotional closeness as represented in Confucianism, they also combine these with more open and democratic ideas common to Western middle-class families.

Although it is notably difficult to explain how differences in parents' ethnotheories come about, we hope to have shown how a social capital perspective can shed more light on how differences in networks might also have an impact on the formation of different parenting theories. By analyzing the kinds and forms of social capital mothers have, and by paying attention to

specific characteristics, such as the composition, spatial concentration, homogeneity and structure of networks, our understanding of the origin and circulation of knowledge has been enhanced (see also De Haan et al., forthcoming). However, our analyses or results do not imply that there are no commonalities between the ethnotheories of both groups. The purpose of differentiating the two sub-groups is to illustrate the variety in the underlying mechanism and how these might impact the reconstruction of parental discourses post-migration. For researchers and practitioners who are working with migrant parents, this perspective means that parenting practices and ideologies should be seen as dynamic systems that are influenced by particular social and networked configurations. These network configurations play an important role in determining the direction in which parental ethnotheories form.

The results of this study on Chinese immigrant parenting in the Netherlands gained from taking a social network perspective could also provide an interesting perspective on the discussion in China on modern parenting and the impact of social media. Since the Internet has blurred the geographic borders between countries, young parents both in China and abroad have witnessed an information explosion, which in principle could facilitate the modernization of parenting. However, as this study suggests, having access to the Internet and other information sources does not lead to similar parental ethnotheories per se, nor would these necessarily develop using the same strategies. The fact that the knowledge immigrant mothers have developed personalized versions of parenting given their diverse and low-dense networks, in contrast with the more homogeneous networks and traditional ideas held by economic immigrant mothers, reminds us to take into account that the nature of their social networks as well as how they use this network to access information resources, will define the outcomes of such transformations to a great extent.

While there have been several studies acknowledging the reliability and validity of network methodologies (Coromina and Coenders, 2006), the stability of social networks and the issue of missing data are sometimes mentioned as threats to the reliability of this kind of data. In our study, economic immigrant mothers had more trouble recalling their network contacts compared with knowledge immigrant mothers. This might have led to an underrepresentation of the size of their networks, although we attempted to minimize reliability issues by preparing our interview in line with standard social network index methods.

As to the method of obtaining data only from an interview, this methodology has been criticized for not being able to register what people actually do or think due to social expectations or shyness (Hewett et al., 2004). In this research, cross-questioning technique and asking for more concrete examples were used during the interview to examine the validity of certain discourses from the interviewees.

In addition, the small sample size of the study, as well as the sampling strategy, means that we should be careful in generalizing these results to overall differences between the groups studied. Moreover, the convenience sampling method may have led to a relatively homogenous composition of each group.

Lastly, an additional weakness might be that within the scope of this study, we were not able to carry out an extensive content analyses of the information on parenting that the participants searched for, re-used and passed on. The network methodology, as we applied it here, pays more attention to the social dynamics of how information is spread, its reach and diversity, and the content we provided on parenting dilemmas was mostly illustrative. Future research could combine network analyses with more extensive content analyses in order to pinpoint more precisely how new ethnotheories are formed post-migration.

However, this should not downplay the fact that our study has shown that a network perspective is a powerful tool for understanding differences in parents' ethnotheories, alongside, or as an alternative to, socio-economic status and/or assimilation perspectives.


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Appendix A: Interview Outline

1. Self-introduction and the project introduction

Thank you very much for participating in my research! I focus on how Chinese immigrant mothers acquire their knowledge regarding childrearing in the Netherlands. I have a few questions about the resources mobilized by you in terms of childrearing, including people, media, etc. I would be very grateful if you could answer these questions honestly and in detail. This interview consists of two aspects. One is about your social network, that is, your interpersonal connections, the other is about all of the resources you use in your daily life.

2. Confidentiality and anonymity principles

I would like to record our conversation for the convenience of research. Do you agree with this? (wait for response). According to confidentiality and anonymity principles, your personal information will be saved securely, with no one else having access to it except me. The people you mention in the interview will also be given pseudonyms in any publication. If you prefer, you need not use their real names at all.

3. Demographic information

Firstly, let's start with some basic information about you (questions on age, occupation, level of education, number of years in the Netherlands, and some questions about partners, and about children, their gender, age and place of birth).

4. Social network (structured)

1. *Name generator*: Each parent (the 'ego') was invited to mention up to a maximum of 30 contacts. They were asked to mention people who are important in terms of

childrearing in their daily life. It was suggested that they recall or imagine the following:

-If you have to leave your child at home for a day, who do you turn to for help in taking care of him/her/them?

-If you meet a problem when raising your child, who do you ask for help?

-With whom do you often talk about raising children?

-Is there anyone who sometimes provides you with knowledge and information regarding childrearing?

2. *Attributes per alter. Questions:* Can you tell me more about these people you just listed? Concerning their gender, age, ethnicity, where they spent most of their life (grew up), occupation, educational level (if you know), location, nature of the relationship with you? For example, friends, colleagues, kin ... How do you communicate with them (face to face, phone, online communication including email and Instant Messaging (IM), mail or others)? From 1 to 6, how important would you rank this specific person?

2. Mutuality. Questions: We will now look at these people one by one and whether they know each other (starting from the first). Does this person know this other one? In other words, are they connected to each other? (0 = no; 1 = yes)

5. In-depth interview (semi-structured)

1. Concerning these people you just listed, what topics regarding childrearing do you often talk about with each other? What do you think about the information and knowledge they offer? You can give some typical examples.

2. In addition to the people you just mentioned, we will now look at some other resources which you utilize to acquire childrearing knowledge in daily life and how you use them. Among these options – Internet, Books, Magazines, Television, Professional Institutions, Radio and Other – which sources do you utilize and how would you rank each of them in terms of how important they are to you?
3. Concerning the options you have chosen, can you provide more details about them? What do you often do to acquire the information you need? For example, when you have a problem regarding childrearing, such as an eating problem, potty training, discipline and/or education, where do you look for help?
4. What do you think about the information from this source? Can you give me an example of how you learned from it? For example, do you think that some of your ideas about childrearing changed after you learned something new from another source? If so, can you tell me more about how your ideas changed?

Appendix B: Two screenshots from the online social network sites where economic immigrant mothers and knowledge immigrant mothers use to generate knowledge

A mobile screenshot of a share from an economic immigrant mother's WeChat Moment and its translation



Black List of Parenting Tools You Have to Know About! Almost Everyone! Scary!

25th March 2014 Shenzhen Mom Net

The illustration is a screenshot of a famous Chinese host reporting news on an official news programme, which implies the authority of this black list (although we cannot verify that the content of this list has been reported by any official news agent).


No.1 : Baby sleep positioner

You may have seen this kind of baby pillow on some online shopping sites, priced between 30 to 80 yuan. And it's popular. But do you know that recently the CPSC and FDA in the US has warned: do not use products that fix infants in a certain position. This kind of product has led to at least 13 infant deaths in the past 15 years. Thus, here we remind you that the best way for an infant to sleep is to lay on a flat bed without a pillow under their head.

No. 2 Vitamin C Yinqiao Tablet

After the Vitamin C Yinqiao tablet was reported to have mercury residue, Guangzhou Pharmaceuticals (GP) has been experiencing a stock price decline. According to CCTV Business Channel, the Vitamin C Yinqiao tablet, produced by a branch of GP, contains traces of a large amounts of mercury and arsenic, which are harmful to human beings. Yesterday, GP declared that it would stop selling this product.

A screenshot of Gogodutch.com thread in which a knowledge immigrant mother is involved and its translation



注册战友

见习海盗

主题： 14

帖子： 47

积分： 67

在线： 14 小时

注册： 2012-9-18

私信 加好友

求教！中饭面包孩子总是原封不动带回怎么办？一个月瘦4斤 [复制链接]

822 14 | 发表于 2015-1-23 00:09:57 | 只看大图 | 倒序浏览 | 阅读模式 | 电梯直达

孩子出生在中国，习惯了中餐，现在上中学饭带的面包，2片SLICE的，里面夹肉片等，总是原封不动带回来，来荷兰一个月瘦4斤。在中国胃口很好，吃的比大人多。

问其原因，就是“我不爱吃面包”

道理给他讲过，硬的软的都试过，他最多吃一片面包。等于早饭后到下午3：15不吃任何东西。（除喝盒牛奶）

孩子其实胃口很大，在中国吃起来吓死人，现在被我管的一个月瘦4斤，觉得自己很失败，非常难过。

现在想出两种方法，大家觉得哪个好？ 第一个是面包不吃掉，回家禁玩ipad（他致命点ipad），晚上没有的吃饭，就坐沙发把中午面包吃掉，禁任何水果饮料， 第二个方法，当他面把面包倒掉，从下午3：30回家到晚上6点间禁一切食物，禁ipad、直到我们晚饭时间，他再吃晚饭。 哪种好？

其他还有什么好方法吗？谢谢大家了。

Looking for help! What should you do if your child doesn't eat his lunch at school? Losing 2 kilos in a month ...

My child was born in China and is used to Chinese food. Recently, he has been bringing his lunch, two slices of bread with meat, etc., home from school without having touched it. This has led him to lose 2 kilos in the last month. But he had a very good appetite when he was in China.

I asked him why. It's just, 'I don't like bread'.

I spoke to him using a carrot-and-stick approach; he then ate one slice maximum. From breakfast until 3.15 pm he doesn't have anything except a small bottle of milk.

He had a good appetite when he was in China and could eat as much as an adult. But here he lost 2 kilos in a month under my care, which makes me feel so bad about myself.

Now, I have two ideas in mind to deal with this. Which one do you think is better? First, if he doesn't eat his sandwich at lunch then he will not be allowed to play on the iPad (he loves it) or have dinner until he eats it. Second, if he throws away his lunch, no iPad playing until our regular dinner time, and then he can have dinner with us.

Can anyone contribute any other good ideas? Thanks in advance!

Chapter 5

Parental Strategies of Chinese Immigrants around the World and Its Policy Implications

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- Lijie Zheng: design of the research; data collection and analysis; writing the draft and final version after revision.
- Prof. Mariette de Haan: supervision of the research design; supervision of the data analysis: supervision of the draft and guided revision of the version to be published.
- Prof. Willem Koops: supervision of the research design; supervision of the data analysis: supervision of the draft and guided revision of the version to be published



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Overseas Chinese Educational Strategies and Its Policy Implications

中国移民关于后代教育的家庭策略及其政策启示

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Abstract

This paper assesses whether China's policies for providing educational support to overseas Chinese match the educational needs of current Chinese immigrants around the world. Firstly, the paper presents the different migration backgrounds of four waves of Chinese global migration in contemporary history: labor immigrants to the Global North, international students in the Global North, businessmen in the Global South and the new rich investors in the Global North. Using the concept of intergenerational contract, we found the four waves have distinct parental investment strategies in relation to their migration background, which comes along with their different educational needs. After carefully reviewing China's policies in overseas education in terms of the assumptions, purpose and background of their implementation, we argue that these policies are outdated and serve the needs of only a limited number of Chinese immigrants due to their ignoring the variety of certain intergenerational contracts. Lastly, some specific suggestions for policy makers are given.

Keywords

education policy – overseas Chinese – intergenerational contract – policy implication – Chinese immigrant parenting

摘要

本文主要考察中国对海外华人华侨教育支持政策是否匹配当前全球华人的教育需求。首先，本文呈现了当代四个主要移民浪潮中海外华人的不同身份背景：流向发达国家的劳工移民；国际学生；进军发展中国家的商人以及新富投资移民。借助代际契约这一概念，通过分析我们发现，这四类移民具有彼此不同的亲代投资策略，而这些不同又和他们身份背景相关。在综述了中国对于海外华人华侨教育政策的前提、目的和实施背景之后，我们提出，这些教育政策有很多已落后于时代要求或者仅能满足数量有限的华人移民的需求，因为它们忽略了海外移民在代际契约方面的多样性。最后，本文提供了一些具体建议。

关键词

教育政策 – 海外华人 – 代际契约 – 政策启示 – 华人移民的儿童养育

1 Introduction

China's overseas policy has always had the purpose of strengthening its influence by providing educational support to the Chinese diaspora all over the world. In this paper, we point to the fact that the assumptions of these policies serve the needs of only a limited number of Chinese overseas immigrants. We argue that these policies are the product of specific historical migration contexts and specific diplomatic goals which served the educational needs of especially the first international migrant population in Asia, but not the subsequent waves of emigrants to other parts of the world. Although it is acknowledged that Chinese migrants are globally widespread and have multiple backgrounds, educational policies do not take this variety sufficiently into account.

In this paper, we take up the challenge not only to describe these different waves but also to analyze their specific educational needs depending on their specific migratory contexts. Finally, our aim is, from the analysis of the

pedagogical assumptions underpinning China's current policies supporting overseas Chinese education, to see whether they adequately match and cover the needs of current Chinese transnational families and what should be done in order to cover the needs of a larger variety of immigrant groups.

We do so from our particular expertise regarding the nexus between parenting and the motives different migrant groups have not only for migration itself but also for keeping the best balance between serving the economic welfare of the family and investing in the education of the future generation. In our earlier work, we have argued that we should understand the variety of parental ethno-theories of Chinese immigrant parents within the context of their specific migration history, paying attention to two different migration "waves," the so-called labor immigrants and the international student immigrants, called first and second wave in the section below (Zheng, de Haan and Koops 2019). In line with this work, in this paper we adopt a pedagogical lens to investigate the nexus between Chinese parents' migration backgrounds and their various parenting strategies across different migration situations, but now with a much broader scope: to map the different global waves of international Chinese migration. Extending this earlier work, we describe the educational strategies of four different waves of Chinese migration and show how educational motives are not only an inherent part of migration but also how each wave copes with different educational and pedagogical issues, which require different kinds of solutions.

In the following sections, we (1) draw an updated picture of global Chinese migration discussing four different waves of migration, paying attention to their motives, destinations, socioeconomic status, and the specific historical, legal, economic and cultural context which stimulated each particular wave of migration; (2) turn the lens to direct a pedagogical focus onto these immigrants while paying attention to the so-called intergenerational contract of each wave, that is, how resources are divided between the different generations and how investment in education is weighted against other factors, such as economic factors; (3) review China's current overseas policy that supports education and pedagogy and analyze its assumptions; and (4) provide policy implications and suggestions to improve current overseas Chinese policy in order to better support Chinese immigrant families while taking the existing global variety into account.

In this article, we focus on the Chinese originally from mainland China, i.e. the P.R.C., and who then migrated (either settling down or changing nationality, or doing both) abroad, excluding Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan. According to a comprehensive estimation of the number of China immigrants by Zhuang

and Zhang, there are currently around 5.5 million first-generation Chinese immigrants living all over the world. If the Chinese descendants are included, the number would be more than 45 million (Zhuang and Zhang 2012).

Although China has a long history of emigration, here we focus on the migration waves in contemporary history. During the World Wars and the Cultural Revolution from the 1960s to the late 1970s in China, emigrants rarely left Mainland China. Since China's economic reform, i.e., China's Reform and Opening-up in 1978, global emigration has started up again (Wei 2014). In this paper, we therefore will take the late 1970s as the starting point of Chinese migration. According to Chinese academics and official statistics, there have been three chronological waves of Chinese emigration since the late 1970s. We add another type of migrants, investment migrants, on top of these and thus distinguish in total four types or waves of Chinese migrants, which we will describe as not only distinct in terms of when they migrated but also in terms of what motivated them to migrate, the conditions under which they migrated, their socio-economic status before migration and what their economic activities have been since migration. We illustrate these four waves in detail in section 3. We would like to stress that all four waves are ongoing. There is no strict time distinction between one wave and another: the previous wave continues while the next emerges. Before we do so, we will review the literature on China's overseas policies as related to the educational needs of Chinese, while also explaining the relevance of the concept of intergenerational contract to our study.

2 Literature Review

In order to tackle the (mis)match between China's policies that provide educational support to overseas Chinese and their educational needs "themselves," here we draw attention to China's overseas policies, current Chinese global migration and Chinese family ideology. Although these themes have been studied from multiple disciplinary perspectives including history, economics, politics and international relations, they rarely do so from the point of view of the educational needs of Chinese overseas.

2.1 *Chinese Overseas Policies: Global Qiaowu and the Ignorance of the Educational Needs of Families*

Conventional studies on China's policies for overseas Chinese take China's perspective and aim to benefit China politically and economically. According

to the political scientist To (2014), *qiaowu*, or the extra-territorial policies and practices of China, has harnessed the power of overseas Chinese communities by means of cultural and economic activities so that overseas Chinese can provide the financial resources and skills to deliver the “soft power” necessary to advance China’s outreach to the world (To 2014). Zhao has concluded that the evolution of China’s *qiaowu* in the course of the past 40 years has been closely linked to the development strategy of China over time (Zhao 2018). In line with this idea, many other Chinese researchers and think tanks have performed studies and developed advocacies concerning how to strengthen the connection between China and overseas Chinese in different geopolitical environments around the world and across time. For instance, in their recent work, Zhang and Huang proposed several means to improve China’s current *qiaowu* to fit China’s Belt and Road Initiative, including enhancing the trust in China of overseas Chinese communities, ensuring mutual benefits and lowering risks for those communities (Zhang and Huang 2017).

Most studies of China’s policies for overseas Chinese on strengthening the connection between China and overseas Chinese have been done from a macro level perspective and have not provided specific policy suggestions about how to strengthen the connection. However, studies from a micro level perspective could provide a more effective means to strengthen this connection, addressing their day-to-day life and activities. Tao (2011), for instance, in her study on how to ensure the personal safety of overseas Chinese, states that immigrants are often more concerned about their daily personal safety and property safety than about issues involving large-scale violence. She states that when a government takes its responsibility for protecting its people from violence, war and riots when they are abroad, their loyalty toward and trust in the home country increases.

In line with this argument, namely that China’s *qiaowu* could be more effective and better serve its goal if it met the daily needs of overseas Chinese, we propose another element that should be taken into account as well as safety: overseas Chinese’ familial needs. As family and education have always been valued as key elements by Chinese, it can be assumed to be relevant to address the wellbeing of Chinese overseas. To our knowledge there is no research that addresses policies for Chinese overseas regarding their educational needs from the perspective of their daily lives. In her MA, Dai has analyzed how China’s Confucius Institutes project adds educational and cultural elements to diplomacy by way of promoting Chinese language worldwide (Dai 2008). However, when analyzing the advantages and disadvantages of this type of government-led project, Dai took China’s perspective and not that of the overseas Chinese

communities. Therefore, to our knowledge, our study is perhaps unique in its analysis of overseas Chinese familial needs as well as in its analyses of how current *qiaowu* have addressed these needs.

2.2 *Reconciling Migration and Education: Intergenerational Contract and (Overseas) Chinese*

Overseas Chinese have a long and complex migration history and have spread over the world, and there is a large body of research that documents the development of Chinese communities in different migration regions across different time periods. However, when these studies talk about the needs of families and their need for education, they tend to emphasize the importance of the Confucian influence rooted in Chinese history (e.g., Meng, 2008) without taking into account the influence of migration on overseas Chinese. This oversimplifies their family situation and overlooks its diversification due to the influence of migration (Zheng, de Haan and Koops 2019). For this reason, the current study sets out as its goal to analyze the current four main Chinese immigrant waves in terms of their family situation and educational needs in a comparative framework making use of the concept of “intergenerational contract.”

Given our stated goal, our next step is to dig deeper into the economic and social situation of each wave in relation to the position of education, seeing education as a form of investment which constitutes part of the intergenerational dynamics that shapes migration. As we announced, we will do so while making use of the concept of intergenerational contract. This concept is positioned precisely at the nexus of the socio-economic and educational motives that we consider relevant for understanding the variation between these migration waves.

The concept of intergenerational contract is defined as the mutual responsibilities and agreement between parents and children. The core of this contract is to decide who provides and gets which resource and according to which resource distribution strategy, at present as well as in the future (Croll 2006). Cultural change (Croll 2006) or economical change (Li and Nie 2012) affects intergenerational contracts. This concept has been applied in studies that operate at the nexus of economy and family studies, often involving a comparative framework (see, e.g., Ehrlich and Lui 1991) or in the context of migration (e.g., van der Meij and Darby 2017). It has also been used to a limited degree to explain changes in family relationships and economic resource distribution in China.

Traditionally, in China, the intergenerational contract is dominated by Confucianism, which stressed hierarchy between the generations and the obligation of grown-up children to support their elderly parents and grandparents

in terms of money and care, in return for their early care during childhood (Slote and DeVos 1998). However, it is acknowledged that migration certainly breaks, or at least affects, this traditional contract. Cong and Silverstein (2011), in a study on intergenerational exchange in rural China, show that the circulation and distribution of resources between generations and within the family are changing due to migration. Specifically, established migrant sons who work in cities tend to provide more financial support but less time and care to their aging parents, while in return elderly parents take care of their left-behind children in the village. Meanwhile, the daughters, as well as non-migrant sons, increasingly share the responsibilities of investing time in and caring for the elders (Cong and Silverstein 2011). As this example shows, in the context of migration within China, families try to maximize their wellbeing at the level of the family as a whole. In doing so, traditional patterns of who gets what are broken, and new patterns of intergenerational agreements are invented. Therefore, and in line with how this concept is used in the literature, the concept of intergenerational contract is a useful tool for understanding the changing familial strategy in relation to migration.

As far as Chinese international migration is concerned, there is little research that addresses these changing patterns between the generations. However, there are good reasons to study this topic. Along with the increasing educational costs associated with the rise of a child-centered ideology, a reversal in intergenerational resource flow is observed in Asian societies: the family resources which tended to flow to elder generations affirming the Confucian ethic are now redirected toward the younger generation (Caldwell 1976, as cited in Croll 2006). The education of the young, especially school education, has become parents' central concern. These changes affect Chinese immigrants in a particular way. In their decision to migrate, they will now also consider the benefits in terms of the quality of education that can be provided both in China and abroad. Based on their assessment, these parents decide where to raise their children to enlarge their opportunity to be successful as a family in future. Simultaneously, as migration brings challenges to the traditional intergenerational contract, it may bring certain pedagogical problems as the original balance is broken.

Therefore, in our analyses of the four migration waves we will answer the following questions:

What is the intergenerational contract that underlies each migration wave? Who is providing what support to whom? Are care arrangements limited to the nuclear family or are grandparents or other family members also involved and why? How are economic means and resources balanced with care and education? Are economic investments sometimes prioritized or postponed with

respect to educational ones or vice versa and why and when does this happen? How do the local settings (social, cultural, legal, educational) define the choices that are made? And since we are dealing with immigrants who consider their options across multiple locations: how are the limitations and opportunities both in China and abroad weighted for the different waves? We will pay specific attention to parents' so-called investment strategies. How do they invest in the future and education of their children, and how do they balance these investments within the intergenerational contract as a whole? We will pay specific attention to the role of formal schooling. How do parents choose where their children will attend school? What are their motives? In each case we take the migrating generation as the starting point, considering them as parents, while at the same time considering other generations when they become relevant for care.

3 Four Waves of Chinese Migration in Contemporary History and Their Pedagogical Needs

3.1 *The First Wave: the Rise of Labor Migration since the "Opening-up" in the Late 1970s*

After China's Reform and "Opening-up" in the late 1970s, Chinese, especially those who are from *qiaoxiang*, the home towns and villages of overseas Chinese, in Guangdong, Fujian and Zhejiang provinces, resumed the tradition of migration to Hong Kong, Japan, Southeast Asia and the U.S. Gradually, people from other areas, e.g. Liaoning province, where migration was not a tradition, also started to go abroad to North America, West Europe, Australia and New Zealand in the 1990s. Economically developed countries in the Middle East, such as Israel, also became popular destinations (Zhou 2006).

The main purpose of the migrants in this wave was to pursue a better-paid job abroad to improve their economic condition at home. The huge wage differential between the receiving countries and China has been very attractive to these low-income and low-educated working class people or peasants from the aforementioned areas. In addition, the need for such workers in highly industrialized societies has accelerated this type of labor-intensive migration to the West (Zhou 2006). This group of emigrants and their offspring make up the majority of overseas Chinese in the current world.

According to Li, in this wave of labor migration four different stimuli for migration can be distinguished, all relating to different regional policies (or legal/social settings). First, the "Touch Base Policy" implemented by the Hong Kong government from 1974 to 1980, which was the earliest opportunity for migrants

from Mainland China to join their relatives in Hong Kong. This policy allowed any Chinese who successfully crossed the Frontier Closed Area and reached the urban areas to register for a Hong Kong Identity Card, even if most of the attempts failed and those who made them were repatriated back to Mainland China immediately. Second, when the Cultural Revolution ended, the strong connection between existing Chinese communities in Southeast Asia, along with the economic cooperation between China and Southeast Asia, finally made it easier for their families in Fujian and Guangdong to join them. Third, people from particular *qiaoxiang* were able to utilize the family reunion policy in Japan in the 1980s. Fourth, in the historical context of the Cold War, Western countries, especially the U.S., implemented certain policies to protect refugees from the Communist Bloc, including China. In 1987 and 1993, two legal acts legalized over half a million Chinese migrants in the U.S. (Li 2011)

The actual numbers of these “Chinese new migrants,” as they were called, have always been a research focus in Chinese diaspora studies. However, due to various ways of estimation, the result varies from 4.5 million to 6.32 million.

After migration, most of this group of Chinese migrants have engaged in labor-intensive industries where local people are not willing to work, including the catering business, construction, the clothing industry, the decoration business, etc. Beside remittance, some of the parents must pay the middlemen who sneaked them into the U.S., which leads to huge economic pressure in the first few years after migration. As many of them have joined already established overseas Chinese communities containing their relatives and fellow townspeople or villagers, they were able to profit from the inherited image of the hardworking Chinese, e.g., as cook or restaurant owner (Zhou 2006).

3.2 *The Second Wave: the Increase in the Number of Chinese Students in the 1990s*

The second wave of Chinese migration consists of an increasing number of international students and is significantly different from the first wave, in terms of educational background, migration motives, and professions followed after migration. These international students migrate to pursue a better quality of high education which is helpful in their career development, although their migration “motives” have varied over time.

In the beginning, these students had little freedom to choose as they were appointed by the Chinese government and all decisions regarding who would go abroad, which university to attend, what to study, etc. were made by the state. The majority of the students were sent to Communist Bloc countries (Netease 2014). Since 1978, because of the Opening-up Policy, the number of government-sponsored students has increased, especially since the new

TABLE 1 The number of Chinese government-sponsored students studying abroad, 2000–2017

Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Number	2,808	3,495	3,500	3,002	3,524	3,979	5,580	8,853	11,400
Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Number	12,000	13,000	12,800	13,500	16,300	21,350	25,900	30,000	32,500

SOURCE: MINISTRY OF EDUCATION OF PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

millennium, as table 1 shows. Their educational level is quite high: half of them pursue PhDs and half are visiting scholars. Meanwhile, a system of mutual selection was gradually introduced (Ministry of Education 2007).

The main category of students going abroad rapidly switched from state-sponsored to self-supporting. Studying abroad has flourished since the 1990s and the main destination rapidly switched from communist countries to the U.S. and other developed countries where world-class universities are located. Since the millennium, self-sponsored students have formed the mainstream: in 2000, 32,000 self-sponsored students went abroad, and in 2013 the number was 384,300, which was more than 20 times bigger than the number of government-sponsored students in the same year.

The majority of the Chinese students abroad were previously master's students, but recently students have also started to undertake bachelor's degrees. Until 2015, 80.7 per cent of returnees received a Master's degree abroad; while in 2016, among those who went abroad to study, 30.56 per cent pursued a Bachelor's degree while those who pursued a Master's degree or a PhD comprised 35.51 per cent, the rest doing degrees lower than Bachelor (Ministry of Education of China 2016). This trend of sending students abroad at a younger age is, according to some, associated with the increasing number of wealthy families from the economically developed areas of China. We will come back to this trend of going abroad at a lower age in 1.4.

As we can see in figure 1, the number of Chinese studying abroad generally increased over two decades, with a small decline since 2002. This decline has been mainly due to heightened visa controls and the screening of international students by the U.S. after 9/11 on grounds of national security, the U.S. being the most popular destination for Chinese students (Chishti and Bergeron 2011). Despite the stricter immigration laws in the U.S., the growth rate in the number of Chinese students going abroad is increasing.

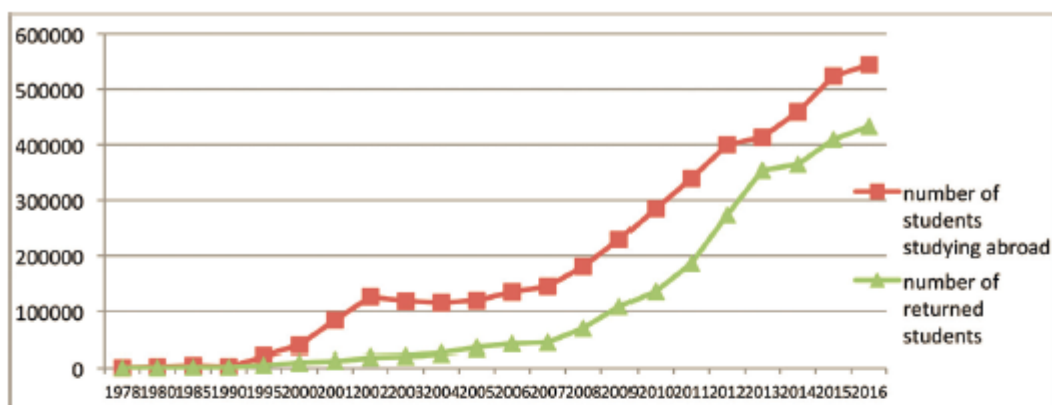


FIGURE 1 The growing numbers of Chinese students studying abroad and returning home
SOURCE: NATIONAL BUREAU OF STATISTICS OF CHINA

In 2012, the top three popular destinations for this wave were the U.S. (25 per cent), the U.K. (13 per cent) and Australia (7 per cent), followed by Canada, Japan, Korea, Singapore, France, New Zealand and Russia (New Oriental, 2013). Among the total 1.91 million Chinese students who studied abroad between 2000 and 2011, 91.3 per cent were self-supporting.

Compared to government-sponsored students, self-sponsoring students are more likely to stay in the countries where they study and thus come to form a second wave of Chinese global immigration. They tend to see studying abroad (with a relatively high tuition fee) as an investment and expect to receive the returns sooner by earning a higher salary after graduation. Therefore finding a job in the receiving countries where average income is higher than in China becomes a rational choice. On average, in the new millennium, around 20 per cent of former international students settled down in receiving countries after graduation (Sciencenet 2017).

Popular majors of Chinese students abroad include management, economics, science and engineering (Ministry of Education of China 2016), which offer them opportunities in the local labor market. The Chinese students who settle down after graduation mostly work as white-collar professionals in the country in which they have studied. Leo found that the new Chinese migrants in developed countries who are businessmen, professionals and technicians don't stick to the Chinese traditional idea of "*luoye guigen*: one has to return back to one's roots (in China) at the end (落叶归根)," as was the case with immigrants in former generations (mostly labor immigrants). Instead, they tend to build a new life together with their spouse and children in places with better opportunities. Together with differences in motives, destination and socio-economic status, this yet again makes them significantly different from the first wave.

3.3 *The Third Wave: Businessmen in the Global South in the New Millennium*

While most Chinese migrants of the previous two waves tend to move to the Global North, a new emigration to “new markets” in the Global South has emerged in the new millennium, adding to the increasing variation of Chinese overseas migration. First so-called developing countries in Africa, Asia and South America, for instance, Nigeria, Congo, Mongolia and Brazil, have become popular among international companies in heavy industry in search of new markets.

A huge number of workers has been collectively sent to industrial projects operated by Chinese state-owned companies because of China's increasing Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). Africa is a typical example of this type of temporary migration. In an early stage, back in 1950, it concerned only a few workers, mostly technicians and engineers working on big public construction projects, and it rarely resulted in settlement (Kuang 2008). In the new millennium, with the FDI growing, the number of state-supervised international workers has increased (Bräutigam 2003). Kuang names this category of Chinese in Africa “Temporary labor migration in connection with big public construction projects” (Kuang 2008). The Chinese migrant workers being sent are generally young males. They live collectively in settlements affiliated to the projects, which are relatively isolated from local people. Most of them live in Africa simply because their job requires them to. They live and work there for a few years until the job is done; then they return to China (Gaye 2006).

A second variant of migration to the Global South is so-called “entrepreneurial migration”: small-scale companies or individuals who travel to newly emerging areas with the purpose of finding new markets for China's rising production of consumer goods. For instance, Johannesburg has several hundred merchants and wholesalers in the biggest Chinese commercial center “China City” market distributing goods to everywhere in the country as well as to neighboring countries (Mulaudzi 2013). In contrast to the situation of the first wave of Chinese immigrants in the Global North, where these businessmen can hardly become part of the upper class, in the Global South they can join the elite. With skills, resources and capital gained in China, they can more easily become wealthy in Africa. In contrast to the Chinese catering businessmen in Chinatown in New York, who were more likely to have been proletarians before migrating, the entrepreneurs in Africa were loaded with cheap Chinese consumer goods on arrival; and they received relatively high returns in these new markets in the Global South (Fang 2013).

In Africa, while there were only around 136 thousand Chinese in 1996, in 2011 there were approximately 750 thousand officially registered Chinese workers and businessmen (Li 2013). French has estimated that Africa has received a million or so of these Chinese newcomers in the space of a mere decade (French 2014). According to Li, the newcomers are widely distributed across South Africa, Angola, Nigeria, Madagascar, Mauritius, Congo (Kinshasa), Ghana, Tanzania and Réunion (Li 2013).

Apart from the described groups, which have clearly economic reasons for migrating, Chinese immigrants to the Global South also include enthusiastic NGO volunteers, doctors and other professionals who are aiming to contribute to the development of the Global South or have been called upon to deliver aid (CNTV 2016).

3.4 *New Investment Migration*

Since the early 2010s, a new trend of migration has emerged, namely investment migration, which is encouraged by some traditional immigrant countries in the Global North. Compared to the previous three waves, the number of migrants in this wave is very small, as only those with considerable wealth meet the receiving countries' requirements in terms of investment migration. However, they have drawn much attention in both China and the receiving countries. According to the Report of Personal Wealth in China (2015), 44 per cent of China's so called "high net-worth" population, the part of the population able to invest large amounts of money, have considered conducting or have already engaged in investment migration; 17 per cent of them decided not to migrate themselves but instead to send their children abroad to live or study. The main reasons for doing so are that they want a better education for their children in the receiving countries, as well as to make their wealth secure (China Merchants Bank 2015). The impressive economic achievement of the Chinese immigrants in this wave indicates that they are very likely to be middle-aged and to have children of school age. Therefore when considering migration, the total well-being of the family, including the children's education, is more likely to be considered.

The precise number of investment emigrants from China is unclear. However, we can see the demand from the statistics of popular receiving countries. According to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), of the total of 10,000 EB-5 visa (immigrant investor visa) holders in 2013, 6,895 were Chinese. In Canada, until June 2013, of the total of more than 60 thousand visa applicants for the Immigrant Investor Venture Capital (IIVC)

Pilot Program, more than 50 thousand were from Mainland China; however, the total IRVC visa quota in the same year was only 8,600 (Nandu Weekly 2014). In the cases of both the U.S. and Canada, the minimum investment amount in 2013 was 0.5 million USD and 2 million CDN respectively, an amount that has been growing every year.

The members of this wave are mainly from China's new middle-up class, who are attracted to the quality of education, financial security and high living standard of countries of the Global North, where the tolerance of immigrants is high—countries like Canada, the U.S. and Australia. In these countries, many overseas Chinese communities have been established in the course of more than two centuries, which makes settlement for new immigrants easier. Some European countries affected badly by recent debt crises, for example, Spain, Portugal and Cyprus, are also attractive to some new rich as the openness of investment migration policy in those countries increases (Netease 2014). One consequence of this new type of migration is that many very young Chinese students, mostly the children of investment migrants, are going abroad to study at the level of pre-college, middle school or even primary school, as we mentioned in 1.2.

These so called “very young international students” are thus partly a spin-off of this new investment migration. We use the term *xiao liuxuesheng*, “very young international students” (小留学生), to refer to those Chinese students who are sent to foreign middle and high schools and even sometimes primary schools without their parents to accompany them. According to Wang, the number of very young Chinese international students in American high schools in 2004 was 433, rising to 26,919 in 2014 (Ministry of Education of China 2016). While some of them are the children of investment migrants, others can also be considered as part of the second wave of emigration: students in search of higher education abroad. The turning point of returning students in 2013 in figure 1 can probably be partly explained by the increasing number of such very young international students, who will stay longer than most BA and MA students in the receiving countries. Being different from the mainstream of international students in the second wave who made their own decision to go abroad, these very young overseas students tend simply to follow their parents' decision regarding migration.

Given that such investment immigrants are capable of expanding their businesses in the receiving countries, we can assume that their living standards will not be greatly affected by migration.

3.5 *Different Intergenerational Contracts of the Four Waves of Chinese Immigrants*

3.5.1 Labor Migrants in Industries in the Global North with High Concentrations of Chinese

While investing firstly in economic growth with the aim of achieving an affluent future, the first wave of labor migrants initially leave their children behind in order to minimize child-raising costs, both in terms of money (the cost of living is cheaper in China) and of time (so they can work extra hours). As many of them migrate abroad in early adulthood, they might be single or have quite young children at migration. If they give birth to children in the receiving countries, many of them choose to send them back to China. These immigrant parents provide financial support to the entire family by sending remittances to China. In return, their aging parents provide care for and spend time on their very young children. These children have been called “*yang liushou ertong* (left-behind foreign kids)” (洋留守儿童) (PBS 2015) by Chinese media. This intergenerational contract is marked by a trade-off between money and care, which makes use of the possibility these families have to exchange cheap care abroad from family members (grandparents) for money.

A typical example of this parent-child separation as part of a transnational family pattern can be found among the Fuzhou immigrant community in New York City. In 2011, the Fuzhou area had at least 10 thousand pre-schoolers whose parents were working in the three China towns in New York, mainly in the catering business. Shortly after being born in New York City and acquiring U.S. passports, these children were sent or “posted” back to their grandparents in the Fuzhou area. Before reaching school age (around 5), they were picked up and taken to New York by their parents to attend U.S. primary school (CCTV 2013).

According to Law, these left-behind foreign children’s parents, who are mostly illegal immigrants and working in low-paid jobs in New York, cannot afford local day-care (Law 2014). Moreover, economic pressures push them to work extremely hard and they are therefore unable to live up to their own pedagogical ideologies or meet the strict guidelines for guardians in most Western receiving countries, including the prohibition on children being left alone at home.

These specific decisions regarding the intergenerational contract are made, we would argue, on the basis of the parents’ careful assessment of the benefits on both sites, and depend also on the local legal and child-care setting.

These labor-immigrant parents in the U.S. generally want a good education for their children (Louie 2001) and they regard the schooling in the U.S. as better for their children's future development than in China, which explains why they take their children back at the point at which they reach school age. Another reason for this reunion at the age of five has to do with U.S. immigration law: because of the existence of birth-right citizenship in the U.S., (illegal) immigrant parents tend to have children in the U.S. in order to acquire a U.S. passport. However, the passports issued for children are valid for only 5 years, so the parents need to re-new them before they expire. In some other Global North countries decisions in this respect are different, depending on the local circumstances.

However, this transnational parenting setting also raises a few pedagogical problems at an institutional, social, family and individual level. Law finds that in China these children cannot attend local public kindergartens or primary schools, and have access only to village-run or private schools, which are not up to the standards of government schools. This is because of the children's foreign nationality (Law 2014). For the same reason, they are also ineligible for Chinese public medical insurance (Guancha 2014). Moreover, these children have to deal with the fact of their separation from their overseas parents as they rarely meet each other in person and have to keep in touch by telephone or the Internet (ChinaNews 2013). This separation affects the parent-child emotional bonding and the pedagogical arrangement more broadly. There are reports that the left-behind children are more likely to have behavioral and emotional problems (Suárez-Orozco, Bang and Kim 2011). One possible reason, according to Liu, is that the grandparents often spoil their left-behind grandchildren and cooperate less with educational institutes. It is also reported that after reunion with parents in the U.S. many children cannot adapt to the new environment, which may lead to further problems (Liu 2010).

3.5.2 International Students in Developed Countries

In contrast to labor migrants, international students, who migrate to obtain a higher-education degree in a western developed country, are generally allowed to pursue an affluent and western middle-class lifestyle after finding a local professional job. They mostly raise children by themselves in the same way as their western peers, because their regular work schedule and better economic conditions allow them to do so. Their parents, who mostly still live in China, can also provide some practical help, but only when they irregularly visit their children in the receiving countries.

As international students, their first concern when graduating from a foreign university is to start a career. At that moment, family-related issues will

not yet have been greatly considered. The place in which to build a family and raise children a few years later on would mostly depend on where such people find a job. We therefore infer that the investment strategy of these career-oriented highly skilled immigrant parents is characterized by a focus on their own career development. In terms of their children's schooling, they are mostly satisfied with the opportunities offered in the location of settlement after migration. They generally regard the local educational opportunities and their quality to be better than those in China. Like their labor immigrant counterparts, the former international student parents also value education and believe that schooling provides access to upward social mobility for the next generation. So good local education facilities are, as it were, a sort of extra bonus that come with migration.

According to many studies regarding Asian (Chinese) immigrant families, the main pedagogical problem they face is the huge gap in language and culture between them and their children. Although the children are generally quite successful at school (Kaufman 2004), as their parents would have expected, they mostly suffer from issues regarding their ethnic identity. Being labeled as Asian, they experience ambivalent pressures both to cultivate their Asian identity and simultaneously to downplay or minimize it (Kibria 2000).

3.5.3 New Businessmen in the Global South

As mentioned in 1.3, the temporary Chinese workers sent to the Global South are generally young men and mostly without children. Therefore family is in no way a concern for them. Even in the case of those who have children, work doesn't often allow them to keep the children with them (Kuang 2008). However, some Chinese workers or businessmen who migrate to the Global South don't return to China a few years on, as they originally planned to do, and instead settle down. One reason is that they find a local spouse and start a family in the host country (Ifeng 2017). As this type of newly emerging transnational family is scarce, little academic research has been done on it. It is known, however, that these small-scale companies or individual businessmen, like the labor immigrants, migrate for economic reasons, and send their children to China or leave them there. Like the NYC labor immigrants, they also provide economic support for the children and the main caregivers, the grandparents. Through the money they earn in the host countries, they can better financially support the whole family in China (Ifeng 2017).

Unlike the labor immigrants, the Chinese businessmen leave their children behind with a different assessment of their local circumstances: they generally regard the place where they work as unsuitable for their children. Firstly, they regard proficiency in Chinese to be more important, and schools in Africa

are unable to provide such education (Lam 2006). Secondly, they sometimes conceive their environment as hostile toward Chinese, for xenophobia, lack of government action on corporate misconduct etc. (IRIN 2012) may bring harm to their children (Sina 2017). Therefore, keeping young children with them is not a good choice. Their investment strategy is to invest first in the family's economic growth and meanwhile keep the children at home where it is considered safer and more suitable, also where schooling is concerned. As to the relatively successful Chinese businessmen in Africa, they can afford an expensive lifestyle including private schooling in exclusive neighborhoods in the big cities. For them, education for children is not a big concern, given their wealth. Instead, they worry more about personal safety (Ifeng 2017).

3.5.4 New Rich Investors in Developed Countries

Among the new rich investors in developed countries, a noticeable pattern of resource distribution is associated with the specific geographic spread of family members. As these parents generally have a high SES and thus can afford high tuition fees in exclusive schools in Western countries, many of them send their children abroad to attend middle school, after the parents have obtained a local residence permit or become nationals of the host country. Sometimes these children are sent on their own to study, but at other times one of the parents, mostly the mother, will migrate together with the children just to accompany them while another parent, mostly the father, migrates only in the official sense, and keeps working in China to provide financial support.

These parents consider migration as a means to realize good parenting as it brings better educational opportunities to their children. At the same time, the decision to send children abroad for schooling is also intertwined with other considerations regarding the welfare of the whole family, for instance, the security of their wealth. As is the case with other waves, the parental investment strategy of this wave of Chinese migrants can be seen as a combination of economic investment strategies with educational ones. According to People.cn, the new middle-upper class favors the education system in Western developed countries for two reasons: firstly, they hope their children will grow up in a safe and comfortable environment; secondly, they don't want their children to suffer under the strict middle and high school education practiced in China (People 2013). Others mention the pollution in Beijing (many investment immigrants are from Beijing), which is a big concern, as is food safety. Unlike the first two waves of Chinese immigrants, who value the education in the West mainly because they are likely subsequently to attend prestigious universities in the West with the hope of upward social mobility, this group of new rich

Chinese immigrants, who are already at the top of the societal ladder, actually value other aspects of the quality educational in the West: the comfortable environment, the student-centered teaching philosophy or the democratic atmosphere and freedom in school.

However, for this group too, separation of children from parents raises serious pedagogical problems. The differences between life in China and in the West in many aspects of life as well as with respect to school bring problems and troubles to these students, problems and troubles highlighted in the mass media. According to an FTChinese report about Chinese high school students studying in Canada published in 2015, many of these students have a tough time. Whereas in China, everything in life was properly arranged by parents and teachers, in Canada the children have to arrange everything for themselves, from lunch to course selection. Moreover, when living with local host families, different habits of life often cause conflicts between the Chinese teens and their Canadian guardians (Yiduo 2015). Another American report in 2014 points out that as teenagers, being emotional and rebellious and developing strong attachments, these young Chinese international students face severe challenges with respect to the formation of their identity, brought about by the separation from their parents and the clash of cultures, which may further lead to mental health crises. Mention has been made of stress and depression on the one hand (Chen and Liu 2014), and serious behavioral problems on the other, such as showing off one's wealth, bullying, ganging up or even engaging in crime (Tan 2018). Even if there has been little scientific reporting on these issues, these media reports reveal serious problems that are matters of concern not only for the newly rich parents but for society as a whole. As we have seen in the case of the second and third wave, in this type of transnational families in which young children are studying abroad alone, pedagogical issues are raised around the physical and psychological well-being of these children rather than around economic matters.

4 Discussion: an Analysis of China's Policies Supporting Overseas Chinese Education

After having portrayed the different Chinese immigrants' family life, we here turn our focus to the policy level. In this section, we evaluate Chinese policies that support these families, with a focus on how China is able to support them as educators. As the review above has shown, access to formal schooling and the availability of good care are important elements in shaping the decisions

these immigrants make to be associated either with foreign countries or with China. Before we do so, we need to make an overview of the current policies that support overseas Chinese education.

4.1 *An Overview of Current Policies in Overseas Education*

The Chinese government has worked hard to facilitate overseas Chinese children's education. The Overseas Chinese Affairs Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China (GQB) is the administrative office that assists the Premier in handling affairs relating to overseas Chinese. This office has formulated most policies, guidelines and regulations concerning overseas Chinese affairs, as well as supervising and checking their implementation (Overseas Chinese Affairs Office 2014). Three terms are often used to address overseas Chinese from China's perspective: *Huaqiao* (Chinese citizens residing in countries other than China), *Huaren* (first-generation Chinese who have changed their nationality) and *Huayi* (Chinese descendants). These three terms indicate different degrees of connection and relatedness to China; however, in the scope of overseas Chinese policies, a more generic term, *Huaren Huaqiao*, is often used to cover the first-generation Chinese immigrants.

In relation to these policies that especially support overseas Chinese children's education, *Huayi* children are the main target group. There are basically two approaches aimed at benefiting them: the first is to ensure overseas Chinese children's right to return to China for (higher) education; the second is to facilitate Chinese language and culture learning alongside local schooling for children of Chinese descent.

4.1.1 *Privilege in Access to Schooling in Mainland China*

Regarding the education of overseas Chinese children who are prepared to return to China for schooling, especially with respect to higher education, the Chinese government implemented the "Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of the Rights and Interests of the Returned Overseas Chinese and the Relatives of Overseas Chinese Who Remain in the Homeland." In this law, the privileges available to overseas Chinese children are specified:

Article 14: For attending higher schools the returned overseas Chinese students, children of returned overseas Chinese and overseas Chinese people's children who remain in the homeland shall be given preferential treatment according to relevant State provisions.

This law stipulates that at a practical level, the children of overseas Chinese or Chinese returnees can receive preferential treatment including priority in

attending certain types of schools, and that lower entry requirements or extra scores can be applied when such children seek to enter a Chinese university.

Moreover, the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China (MOE) organizes a separate National Higher Education Entrance Examination (NHEE) and university admission every year exclusively for *Huaqiao* students (those who have a long-term or permanent residence permit of a foreign country and Chinese nationality) and students who hold citizenship of Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan (in Chinese 港澳台侨联招) since 1981. This policy ensures overseas Chinese students' legal right to receive higher education in Mainland China and even makes it easier for them than for local students to enroll at Chinese universities. Additionally, a relatively generous scholarship is provided to overseas Chinese students studying in China. In 2016, there were 297 Chinese universities entitled to receive students from the above-mentioned categories. The number of students attending Chinese universities by way of the separate NHEE has been increasing in recent years. However most students are from Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan.

4.1.2 Chinese Language and Culture Supplementary Learning

The GQB largely supports and organizes activities for overseas Chinese children to improve their Chinese language proficiency and cultural knowledge with the aim of cultivating their cultural identity and strengthening their emotional connection to China. In these policies aimed at facilitating ethnic Chinese children's efforts to learn Chinese language and culture, the distinction between *Huaqiao*, *Huaren* and *Huayi* is no longer strictly applied.

Firstly, Chinese language education is an important part of the work of the GQB. According to its report, the GQB has accessed more than 60 million Chinese children in 198 countries across the world. In 2013, the GQB provided more than 2.5 million Chinese textbooks to pupils in more than 50 countries, trained around 13 thousand overseas Chinese teachers and sent more than 800 professional Chinese teachers to nearly 300 key Chinese schools to support education in the Chinese culture and language. This investment has been increasing as Chinese education is considered as long-term, fundamental and strategic (Overseas Chinese Affairs Office of The State Council 2015). The GQB and *Hanban* (Confucius Institutes) also regularly organize the "*Han Yu Qiao* (Chinese Language Bridge)" Chinese Proficiency Competition among overseas Chinese children to encourage and assist them in learning the Chinese language.

Secondly, since 1999, the GQB has annually organized "Journey to the Chinese Roots" summer camps for Chinese children from all over the world. Due to the fact that school vacation time differs from one country to the next,

the camps are organized in different seasons although officially they are all called “summer camps.” There are four types of summer camp: regular camps (Chinese language and general culture), camps with a special subject, camps for children adopted by foreign families, and the Chinese culture circuit. The regular camp generally lasts two to three weeks. During the camp, Chinese juveniles from other countries are sent to China as a group to intensively learn the Chinese language and experience (for example) local dance, Kung Fu, and Chinese calligraphy and art. In 2011, the GQB and other local-level Overseas Chinese Affairs Offices have organized more than 300 regular summer camps for more than 13,000 overseas Chinese children. The camps on special subjects, for instance, science and technology, dance and Kung Fu, are organized for overseas Chinese students who have learned these subjects for more than three years. These camps aim to provide participants with intensive and high-quality training and communication with professionals in China. The camp for Chinese children adopted by foreign families started in 2004. It aims at comprehensively introducing China to these families. The Chinese culture circuit has been organized since 2009. Its main target group is overseas Chinese children whose families cannot afford the cost of international travel to China or whose vacation time doesn't coincide with any other summer camp. This circuit organizes professional Chinese teachers in many culture-related subjects to go abroad, especially to the areas where Chinese immigrant communities lack sufficient opportunities to receive Chinese education, in order to provide lectures and lessons to overseas Chinese children.

4.2 *An Analysis of the Purposes and Assumptions in Policies Relating to Overseas Education*

From the policies summed up above, it is clear that the Chinese government invests quite heavily in overseas Chinese children's education. However, when delving more deeply into the purpose and historical context of these policies, it becomes clear that the assumptions that underpin them do not address the variety of migration waves, the variation in intergenerational contracts and the corresponding educational needs of these populations.

The policies that support overseas Chinese education were primarily introduced in certain national and international political contexts, in order to cope with unfavorable situations faced by overseas Chinese communities. In late 1970s and the early 1980s, when the GQB was established, many overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia were treated unfairly due to communist revolutionary influences from China and local state-sponsored discrimination against Chinese in some host countries (Chang 1980). Centuries ago, Chinese immigrants in Southeast Asia were successful economically but shunned politically

and culturally, and even isolated by local governments. This experience made them vulnerable in the receiving countries. For example, in Indonesia, the country that has the most Chinese migrants in the world, the government forbade Chinese schools, newspapers, religions and collective activities in order to curb the development of the Chinese community, starting in the 1950s. The conditions under which ethnic Chinese students were allowed to enroll in universities were very strict. In Malaysia, quotas in public university admissions had been particularly resented by ethnic minorities including Chinese since the 1970s—only 30 per cent or less of places are reserved for non-Malay students. However, ethnic Chinese comprise more than 20 per cent of the Malaysian population (Indian and other ethnic minorities comprise around 30 per cent) (Cohen 2001). Overseas Chinese affairs have been a very important issue in China's political agenda ever since the Opening-up in the late 1970s. At that time, the GQB was established to handle related affairs. Given the very hard situation that overseas Chinese were facing in Southeast Asia, the privilege given to overseas Chinese children in the Chinese educational system should be understood as a measure to protect their basic right to receive education.

In recent decades, another aim has joined the prior one. According to recent Chinese foreign policy, strengthening the connection with the receiving countries to which Chinese immigrants migrate is gaining in importance. Jia Qinglin, the chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) in 2007, pointed out that "overseas Chinese, while learning from other countries, can carry forward and promote Chinese culture; and overseas Chinese can help promote people-to-people friendship between China and other countries in the world" (People 2007). Jia's speech clearly expresses Beijing's intention to incorporate the overseas Chinese communities into its foreign policy, which aims to increase China's soft power. However, without knowing any Chinese culture or language, or without a Chinese identity, how could an overseas Chinese promote Chinese culture and friendship with "another country"? Therefore, when connecting this diplomatic goal to the policies supporting overseas Chinese education, it is implied that China is encouraging overseas Chinese children to engage in this ultimate goal by strengthening their Chinese identity and attachment to their motherland. This purpose might be easier to achieve either by supporting university students in higher education or by assisting younger children to learn Chinese language and culture. Although they are handled in a subtle and indirect way, it is essential to consider the policies that facilitate overseas Chinese education in the light of these Chinese diplomatic ambitions.

As the above shows, the policies supporting overseas Chinese education indeed met Chinese parents' demand for a fair chance in terms of education

and were in line with the needs of the early migratory waves described in 3.1. However, although they could indirectly serve the country's diplomatic purposes, these overseas Chinese policies carried out from the Mao era through until the present deserve a re-assessment, bearing in mind the current variation of Chinese global migration. Moreover, it is important to understand the various intergenerational contracts that underpin the different migration waves to address the educational needs of these waves of immigrants. Another reason for re-assessing the overseas Chinese policies is that the local discriminatory policies in Southeast Asia have been continuously changing in the course of the past few decades (Economist 2013) and have transformed the circumstances in which the Chinese immigrants there live.

When China implemented its policies supporting overseas Chinese children's education, its policies assumed that: (1) Chinese immigrant children must leave their migrant parents for (higher) education because local conditions are very hostile; (2) parents regard joining schools in China as the best, or at least the second best, solution; and (3) they have a strong aspiration to preserve Chinese culture and language. As demonstrated, these policies were aimed at certain groups and implemented in a specific historical context. At the time, the absolute majority of overseas Chinese communities was located in Southeast Asia and were facing similar predicaments. However, as this paper has shown, this monolithic image of the Chinese immigrant has already been outpaced by other types of migrants.

By taking into account our analyses of the intergenerational contracts of the four types of current Chinese immigrants, we will reflect on these policies and assess to what extent the policies still match the present situation. Subsequently, we will propose some suggestions to improve the current policies in order to serve overseas Chinese families better, as well as to serve China's national goal.

4.3 *Ignorance of the Variety of Intergenerational Contracts*

Looking at the analyses of the assumptions underlying the educational policies for Overseas Chinese summed above, it is obvious that the variety of intergenerational contracts among the multiple Chinese immigration families is not yet covered by the current policies.

First of all, among the four waves of Chinese immigrants, only the third wave, Chinese immigrants to the new world, partly fits the assumptions in terms of the intergenerational contract on which current policies are based. As stated in 3.5.3, the Chinese parents doing business in places in the Global South such as Africa generally do not favor local schooling and prefer their

children to attend school in China. To them, the current policies that provide privileges for their left-behind children with respect to schooling and university admission would remain welcome, we assume. However, the labor migrants, international students and new rich investors have mostly landed in the Global North where most of them regard the local schooling to be ideal. The new rich parents migrate primarily because they want to help their children escape the stressful Chinese schools and receive a better education abroad. Therefore these three groups of parents don't really need the policies that guarantee their children's right to be educated in China. The extra scores or lower requirements for university admission aren't attractive enough for the young generation in these transnational families to decide to return to China to attend college. The bonus would only be something that is nice to have but not essential, if the children were to return voluntarily.

As to the activities organized to facilitate overseas Chinese children's learning of Chinese language and culture, these may have been more acceptable to the former Chinese international students of the second wave, as they tap into their children's problem regarding identity development. However, they don't fully cover the emerging pedagogical problems, nor may the way in which they are performed be seen as the most favorable and effective way nowadays. This is primarily because these parents face the problem of how to pursue certain elements of Chinese identity and culture while at the same time struggling with making the connection with the culture of the host country.

Furthermore, from our analyses of the diversity in intergenerational contracts among the four waves identified, we can say that many concerns remain neglected in terms of current policies. We think this has to do with the overall perspective the government has on overseas families, which still remains based on a patriarchal attitude. We think it would be better if policy makers could switch to a more service-oriented perspective. On the one hand, by switching perspective, it would be easier to identify the immigrant families' concerns and tap into them. On the other hand, when the immigrant families' problems are taken care of and concerns are covered by the motherland, the bond between China and people of Chinese descent overseas would be stronger, which could also serve China's diplomatic goal of promoting people-to-people friendship and subsequently its soft power.

In sum, we conclude that the policy of supporting overseas Chinese education has reached its limits, so that it is no longer able to cover current issues brought about by the new Chinese emigrants' complex background. Therefore we suggest employing new policies to support the newly emerged Chinese global migrants. This doesn't mean that the existing policies should be

suspended. They are still functional in certain ways and serve some of the educational needs of some transnational Chinese families, e.g. the third wave and, in part, the second wave. What we want to say here is that the gap between the current policies and the present situation should be narrowed. Below we will propose various specific suggestions in order to achieve that goal.

4.4 *Suggestions for Future Policy Making*

A first suggestion would be to extend the public educational service to more educational stages in order to benefit the left-behind children of overseas immigrants. Especially when the children of immigrant parents encounter institutional difficulties in China due to their foreign nationalities (e.g., finding it difficult to gain access to public kindergarten and medical insurance etc.), it would be very helpful in regard to this group if its members were to receive more support and options regarding public services especially related to education, which has been their main concern.

Another suggestion would be to broaden the scope of current policies in line with the overseas Chinese parents' pedagogical concerns, to prepare their children to manage multiple heritages and identities. Being ambitious parents, some Chinese immigrants expect their children to be successful both in the host country (the North) and in China, or anywhere else in the world. In order to reach this goal, efforts are needed in many respects, especially in terms of finding solutions to the dilemmas of maintaining a Chinese cultural identity while also learning about and surviving in other cultures and communities.

Thirdly, we would suggest delivering new services that enable people to (re-)establish a pedagogical relationship over great distances if parent-child separation is unavoidable. To make use of new technologies might facilitate such a service. For instance, given the fact that new social media have played an increasingly important role in connecting immigrants with both their sending and receiving countries (Zheng de Haan and Koops 2019), policy makers in China could deliver service through social media in order to provide an efficient and timely response to the changing educational needs of Chinese overseas.

Finally, in designing overseas policies, combining the strengths and weaknesses of different kinds of migrant groups might result in the emergence of new ideas. There might be a chance for the different waves of migrant parents to mutually benefit from each other's experience by exchanging their various advantages.

Last but not least, policy makers should understand that the increasingly complex Chinese migration picture is bringing new challenges in its wake. More investigation into the background of their migration, current situation

and life experience, especially in regard to their family's educational needs, is needed to complete our understanding of what overseas policies are needed. This richer understanding would be beneficial and serve as the foundation for a constantly needed updating of overseas educational policies.

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Chapter 6

General Discussion

Over the past century, an increasing number of studies have shown the importance of understanding how immigrant parenting is reconstructed after migration for various reasons. A well-rounded and detailed understanding would not only expand our knowledge about transnational families in our globalized era but also provide a reference to practitioners to better work with diverse immigrant parents in both receiving and sending countries. By revealing the actual (re)formation process of Chinese immigrants in the West and unpacking the dominant, uniform, unidirectional image of Chinese immigrant parenting in the West, this dissertation attempts to provide more insight into the research on Chinese immigrant parenting. This study's aim is to gain this insight by taking the perspective of the social-historical dynamics of which Chinese immigrants' parenthood is a part and how this translates into their learning processes. More specifically, this work pays attention to the broader migration context of different subgroups of Chinese immigrant mothers and asks if and how the migration context might also shape a different networked social learning environment for these parents. Moreover, by studying Chinese immigrants' intergenerational contracts within a wider global migration context that acknowledges diverse migration waves, this dissertation also attempts to contribute to policy issues by unravelling the mismatch of current Chinese family-supporting policies and the diverse needs of the Chinese diaspora in a new era.

In this final chapter, the results of the study will be discussed in light of relevant studies and theories in the fields of parenting studies, social learning and Chinese global migration. In addition to academic discussions, some implications for policymakers and practical workers in these fields will be given as well. At the end of the chapter, limitations, reflections on and potential directions for future research will be provided.

Contribution to existing research

This dissertation aims to contribute to existing research in the following ways.

First, this dissertation clearly discloses diversity within the Chinese immigrant community. Although the empirical studies (Chapters 3 and 4) mainly focus on only two types of Chinese immigrants in the Netherlands, its goal is to point to the fact that parenting strategies differ according to different social settings. The study supports the importance of taking into account within-group diversity when studying and working with ethnic groups. On another level, studying within-group diversity provides a more differentiated picture of Chinese parenting in the West, which helps in unpacking the often one-dimensional and at the same time almost mysterious image of Chinese parenting present both in academia and in the public account in the West and elsewhere. Chinese, as well as other Asian parents, have caught the attention of and have been subjected to research because of the sometimes-controversial image that has been generated of their child-rearing and of the sometimes-extraordinary behavioral outcomes in their children (such as school success and disciplinary behavior). Simultaneously, since differences within the minority groups have been overlooked (Laurence, 1982; Pheonix and Husain, 2007), there is a tendency to make assumptions and conclusions about their parenting based on a very limited and biased representation (Pheonix and Husain, 2007). In an attempt to overcome these shortages, this dissertation tries to enlarge the understanding of (and the variations in) Chinese immigrant parenting.

Second, various research methods used in this dissertation complement each other to collect meaningful data and furthermore answer the overall research question, “How can parenting processes of immigrant Chinese parents be described in relation to the dynamics of migration, and to what extent are parenting processes dependent on differences in backgrounds and aims between subgroups of

immigrants?’ In Chapter 4, ego-network analysis was adopted to capture the networked nature of the learning process of immigrant parents when their original parenting knowledge was challenged in a new social setting. This methodology allows us to gain more insight into the process of how new knowledge on parenting comes into existence and what resources and relationships are relevant for this knowledge to develop (see also de Haan, Koeman & de Winter, in press).

Last, the theoretical contribution of this dissertation attempts to go beyond the long-standing conflict between an etic and an emic research approach. As noted above (see Chapter 2), the conflict between emic and etic perspectives in studying the parenting of Chinese immigrants and other ethnic groups is whether we can adopt a universal conceptual framework as well as standardized tests that are intended to be applied cross-culturally to study diverse ethnic groups. While arguing against the universality idea of the etic approach, the study shows that the emic approach can also be problematic due to its assumption of cultural stability. This dissertation brings the perspective of social-historical dynamics to the front and demonstrates that parenting by Chinese immigrants should be understood as the result of a dynamic reformation process.

Understanding Chinese parenting sociohistorically

As summarized above, many differences in parenting have been found within the Chinese immigrant community, not only in the Netherlands but all over the world. These differences directly challenge a culturally deterministic approach in studying

(Chinese) immigrants' parenting and reveal the importance of contextualization. The studies presented in this dissertation provide a strong indication that immigrants' parental ethnotheories, that is, the set of cultural beliefs regarding family, children, and parenting itself (Harkness and Super, 1992), are a contextualized product of sociohistorical dynamics. I will discuss how this "product" can be explained and understood from factors that range from micro to macro. I will provide examples and argumentation that crosscuts personal migration history, regional social gaps, and the globalization of Western conceptions of parenting. At the same time, I will show how the approach I have chosen allows us to reconsider the impact of culture and gives insight into both pre- and postmigration differences and dynamics in the following two sections.

To what extent does culture matter, and what role does personal migration experience play in the (re)formation of immigrant parenting?

While acknowledging that parenting is rooted in culture, as claimed by groups of studies within the emic approach (e.g. Chao, 1995; Russell, Chu, Crockett, & Doan, 2010), this dissertation argues against (over)simplified cultural models in understanding immigrants' parenting. As illustrated in Chapter 3, despite having migrated from the same country, economic-immigrant mothers and knowledge-immigrant mothers inherited and have already been impacted by different aspects of Chinese traditional parenting philosophy before migrating to the Netherlands. Likewise, their familiarity with Western or "modern" ideologies of parenthood and

childhood also differed prior to migration. These differences again became differently instantiated, represented as well as revised during the settling process.

We must accept the fact that when seeing Chinese parents as a whole or comparing them with other ethnic groups, for instance, with Dutch parents, Chinese parents show great commonality, which can be seen as culturally specific. (Mind that this comparison is not a topic of this dissertation; however, this comparison has been previously mentioned by many participants, reviewers, colleagues and people who knew about the dissertation research). For example, Chinese parents generally value schooling and welcome coparenting with family members, especially from grandparents, which is in line with earlier cross-cultural studies (e.g., Leung, Lau & lam, 1998). However, different subgroups within Chinese parents represent and interpret these cultural elements in different ways. When further investigating why Chinese parents stress the importance of schooling and what makes them think in that way, it is relevant to investigate how their ideas about schooling are associated with their own personal schooling histories and how these histories have been impacted by their migration experience. Specifically, the relatively low-educated and low-skilled economic immigrants want their children to do well in school so that they can leave the labor-intensive catering business and have better economic futures, as they strongly believe in education's universal practical value. This attitude towards schooling can be understood from their tough study and work experiences as well as from their economic motives to migrate. In contrast, highly educated Chinese immigrants see schooling not only as a means for a better economic future but also as an important environment for their child's development, whereby intellectual

development is emphasized alongside social-emotional wellbeing. Therefore, in contrast to low-educated immigrant parents, they carefully choose a school for their children that meets their needs. Again, their attitude towards schooling can be understood by referring to their transnational schooling experience, which allows them to carefully reflect on and evaluate the educational systems in China and in the Netherlands. A similar pattern can be found in the welcoming of coparenting by Chinese parents. Economic-immigrant parents invite family members in their parental network as practical-help providers when being absent for work, which can only be realized in the setting of chain migration and provides them with a small-sized and trustable network to meet their needs for childrearing. In contrast, knowledge immigrants who migrate from all over China can only take advantage of their parents maximally once every half a year due to the strict visa policy. As compensation, they turn to include them as consultants and references in their bigger and more loose (trans)national parental network, where diverse opinions from much wider circles circulate.

These variations in culturally informed attitudes (such as the appreciation of schooling and coparenting) are thus configured by differences in migration histories and the personal challenges these bring. For this reason, the dissertation argues in favor of considering parents' personal migration histories to understand immigrants' parenting rather than understanding their parenting against the background of their "Chineseness."

Including pre- and postmigration gaps

One focus of this dissertation is on how sociohistorical dynamics can explain the current state of Chinese immigrant parenting in the Netherlands. As discussed above, personal migration history could help us better understand the diversity found within the Chinese community. Furthermore, when positioning the two subgroups studied in this thesis into their original, premigration social contexts, as well as those in which they are currently living (i.e., postmigration), it becomes clear that we are dealing with two very different groups.

The differentiation between the two types of Chinese immigrants is well recognized in the Chinese community itself and is also not hard to pinpoint as an outsider. In the postmigration setting, this can be easily determined by having knowledge about his/her (professional) identity (whether one is an international student or a catering businessman) or hometown (whether one is from *qiao-xiang*, the hometown of overseas Chinese or the economically relatively developed areas of China), or by even paying attention to their accent when speaking Mandarin and English (or Dutch). These differences already existed premigration, as the two subgroups were initially located at the almost two extremes of Chinese society in terms of their socioeconomic status and cultural orientation. A similar argument about pre- and postmigration differences was developed for the other types of Chinese immigrants in Chapter 5.

From the perspective on how post- and premigration patterns coincide, it can be argued that the varied parenting within the Chinese immigrant community could also be partly explained from the context of current developments in China. As mentioned, different types of Chinese immigrants learned to emphasize different

aspects of Chinese traditional parenting philosophy; these differences may also be partly due to the uneven socioeconomic situations between the different regions from which these parents migrated. For instance, Wenzhou in Zhejiang Province, a famous *qiao-xiang* area, from where many economic immigrants in the Netherlands originated, suffered from a relatively low economic development level decades ago, which might have led to fewer educational resources for young students. As a consequence, lower-skilled youth were forced to follow their family and townspeople's steps to go overseas, seeking an opportunity to survive. This economic situation, as well as its consequences on the schooling level of these families, continued to impact them after migration. For instance, labor-intensive jobs, such as catering businesses, tend to have longer working hours and less flexible schedules in comparison with middle-class jobs, which urges workers to require more practical help in terms of child-rearing. Again, this situation asks for an intense and homogeneous personal network that can provide this kind of help. This example shows that the resources that parents have available, as well as the kind of support they organize for their parenting, are not independent of their socioeconomic situations pre- and postmigration.

Therefore, in this dissertation, I argue that it is helpful to contextualize immigrant parenting in a broader social context both at home and abroad.

New perspectives for the study of how and from whom immigrants learn to be mothers

As questioned in Chapter 1, the reformation of immigrant parents' practices and ideas is often overlooked. Echoing what Chapter 2 has pointed out, Chinese immigrants' parenting should be seen as a new cultural product made from all the cultures with which they have been in touch. Therefore, this dissertation sees reformation of the parenting of Chinese immigrants as a progressive practice involving many different kinds of information and sources and has developed an approach to investigate the variation in resources. This approach has yielded some interesting results that are worth discussing with regard to the perspective switching I propose in this field of study. In my view, it is able to provide new inspiration to gain an understanding of the parenting-knowledge acquisition of Chinese immigrants in our multicultural and multimedia society. In the following sections, I will point to 3 implications of this study that I would like to bring to attention.

From a bipolar to a global perspective: the hybrid nature of immigrant parenting

The results, especially those of Chapter 4, clearly support that we should go beyond the idea that a diasporic community's culture can be understood by drawing a spectral line from the home culture on one end and the host culture on the other. In our study, we approached this issue by studying the social networks of immigrant parents. The results of our social-network study clearly show that the personal networks and media resources of (new) Chinese immigrants bring them in touch with more

cultures/philosophies than just the Chinese and Dutch immigrants. This is especially apparent when looking at knowledge immigrants, who have formed a very ethnically diverse ego-network that they employ for child-rearing issues. The results also illustrate how the ethnotheories that are formed through these networks can best be described as a cultural hybrid. For this reason, our approach would be biased if we would try to measure immigrant parenting using a completely Western-oriented etic approach (e.g., Baumrind), while it would also be incomplete should we would attempt to understand it with indigenous cultural concepts such as *chiao-shun* (Chao, 1994). To move beyond this dichotomy, we need to build on theoretical approaches that capture the multipolar cultural nature of parenting (re)formation, such as those presented in Chapter 2, which acknowledge the hybrid character of newly formed practices after migration. Such hybrid models are necessary to understand the parenting style of overseas Chinese more generally, such as that of the Tiger Mother in Amy Chua's book (Chua, 2010), which is neither a replica of the Chinese traditional parenting style nor an assimilated version of American mainstream parenting.

Creating networked subcommunities to meet parental needs with a different focus

In addition to understanding the reformulation of parenting from a model that sees their parenting as a hybrid between several different cultural influences, this dissertation has added another dimension to the explanation of the variation that was found: the different strategies they adopt to use the parenting knowledge to which they have access. The results suggest that the two subgroups of Chinese immigrants

utilize their personal networks and media in diverse ways that both facilitate their parenting and challenge their 'pre-equipped' parental ideas. They all need to involve others in this childrearing and parental idea-formation process, which in turn preserves and forms their own online/offline community to formulate their versions of parental ethnotheory. This finding confirms Bourdieu's idea of social capital: people are defined by the aggregation of the resources they can articulate through their social networks (Bourdieu, 1986).

Economic immigrants' dense, local, homogeneous and small networks can meet their needs regarding practical help when they are occupied with their businesses, while knowledge-immigrant parents tend to form relatively diverse, international-oriented, loose and large networks, which can facilitate their obtaining critical feedback rather than practical help. These differences can be explained not only by the two subgroups' different life routines but also, more importantly, by their parenting needs and how they value the role they play in their children's development. On the one hand, economic immigrants have sufficient local helpers with whom they share kinship and/or township. They do not need large networks, as this is unnecessary and might even be confusing for them to deal with the diverse philosophies circulating in a larger network (Eisingerich, Bell & Tracey, 2010). Instead, given this situation, advice from local and/or transnationally available Chinese professionals is needed the most by this group. On the other hand, knowledge immigrants are eager to obtain various ideas to process and analyze for themselves. Ultimately, they formulate their own best practice based on all the ideas to which they have access in their social networks and are less in need of professional help. This

analysis shows how the specific parental needs of both groups can be understood by studying how their social networks are different and vice versa.

From the carrier of culture to proactive learner: a paradigm switch

Last but not least, this dissertation emphasized, in addition to the specific context of Chinese immigrant families, their own personal migration motivations and trajectories, as well as their specific parenting foci and expectations. I suggest that this approach demands an essential perspective-switch in how immigrant parenting should be studied: the social-historical approach as well as the network approach not only see parenting as a product of immigrants' engagement with different cultural and media content but also address immigrants' subjective thoughts, needs and understanding of parenthood. In this way, these approaches claim that parenting is not only dependent on cultural, social, economic, spatial, etc. factors but also considers parents to be pro-active players who have agency in shaping the Chinese diaspora's parental culture.

In this dissertation, my claim is that this perspective-switch is particularly useful in understanding (Chinese) immigrant parenting, given the many misunderstandings that have risen with the adoption of a traditional, bipolar and deterministic perspective (see Chapter 2 of this dissertation).

The practical implications of this study

For Chinese parents

For Chinese immigrant parents in any foreign country, being aware of the diversity existing within their own ethnic group does not seem difficult. However, how to benefit from this diversity would be a point that they could think about, and the results of this study might be a helpful tool for such reflections. The differences in parenting between the two groups of immigrants studied within the Netherlands could possibly be utilized for opening windows for both. Economic immigrants, who seem to be more defined by the preservation of tradition, might gain from the perspective of knowledge immigrants, who strategically “take advantage” of having participated in multiple educational systems. Economic immigrants might also adopt such a strategy by making use of the diversity in their own networks or consciously extend this diversity. Similarly, skilled immigrants, who worry about the cultural identity of their children, might learn from the manner in which economic immigrants have built strong Chinese postmigration communities, which allow the safeguarding of Chinese traditions and identities. In short, it might be enriching for both groups to learn from the diverse strategies of Chinese immigrant parents to reflect upon and extend their own. This could, for instance, be done through purposefully mixed workshops or course material that is able to visualize and explain the benefits of multiple strategies.

For Dutch professionals who work with (Chinese) immigrant parents

For professionals in the Netherlands working with Chinese immigrant families, such as schoolteachers and social workers, this study directly impacts how their professional

advice relates to cultural aspects of parenting. Professionals might not be aware of either the culturally biased nature of their own advice, recognize culturally loaded strategies of parents, nor be aware of how the migration situation has urged parents to opt for certain strategies. For instance, to suggest that an immigrant mother working in the catering business spend more time with her children ignores the fact that such a mother, even if she wants to spend more time with her children, is not in the position to do so due to her busy work schedule. In addition, such advice ignores the solutions these mothers have found, namely, to organize care for their children with community or family members, who can teach their children about the situation in the Netherlands and the Dutch language better than they themselves would be able to do. Alternatively, to provide another example, professionals might not recognize the close connection highly skilled immigrants have with their parents back in China as an effective strategy for adaptation to the new situation, while they might also overlook that the bond between parents and children is one of the most important core values in Chinese family and society. The recognition that such multigenerational arrangements are key for this group of immigrants as they compensate for the lack of social ties they experience in the postmigration situation would be an important insight of this study from which professionals working with (Chinese) immigrant parents could profit.

Overall, both parents and professionals could profit from the key insight of this study: both groups of Chinese immigrants have found distinct solutions to safeguard the Chinese identity of their parenting, and these solutions have developed into their specific forms through the dynamics of migration. Acknowledging the varied ways in

which this reformation process takes place will enrich both the parents themselves as well as the social services provided to them.

Limitations and development for future research

This dissertation has some limitations in terms of its scope and methodology, which can give rise to some potentially interesting directions for future research. Limitations will be discussed with respect to its diversity coverage, the need to catch up with political change, and methodological considerations.

Limitations in research scope

Although aiming to present diversity within Chinese immigrant groups, this study covers less diversity than actually exists. For instance, in the Netherlands, the Chinese immigrant community consists of not only economic immigrants and knowledge immigrants but also refugees. Along with social change both in China and abroad, there has been and will be an increasing number of subtypes of migrants. Therefore, at the end of the dissertation, I also call for constant attention to the newly emerging migration waves and the development of new research models and concepts to capture the upcoming diversity.

The section on policy analysis in this dissertation has faced challenges brought by a recent change in Chinese government administration. In Chapter 5, this dissertation notes that the Chinese policies supporting overseas Chinese are outdated

because they have been designed and implemented under a specific domestic and international geopolitical environment and have served only the needs of a few types of overseas Chinese decades ago. However, in 2018, when the dissertation was nearly finished, the Overseas Chinese Affairs of the State Council, which is responsible for policymaking regarding liaising with overseas Chinese, formerly under the State Council of the People's Republic of China, was merged into a different department: the Central United Front Work Department of the Communist Party. This administrative change, according to some political observers and social scientists, suggests a strategic redirection of China's authority over overseas Chinese that affirms the Communist Party's social control strategy and represents China's return to the ideology of the "party-state" (BBC, 2018; Hu, 2018). This dissertation, although calling for a change in policymaking intentions, does not fully cover this strategic change of the Chinese authorities but limits itself to the policy up until 2018.

Methodological considerations

The present dissertation has several methodological weaknesses. First, all empirical data were obtained by interviews with Chinese immigrant mothers in the Netherlands were are cross-sectional and based on self-report. Although the researcher encouraged the interviewees to recall their personal histories to identify the historical influences of their current parenting behaviors, these cross-sectional data can be seen as less objective than longitudinal cohort studies.

Social desirability is another issue meriting reflection. In the Netherlands, where the current study has been carried out, the general public values democracy within

the family and the autonomy of children. Being aware of this, and the fact that the study was carried out by someone representing a Dutch university, even if the researcher had a Chinese background, parents may have tended to state and perform such that they would not deviate substantially from the standard or acceptable way of parenting in Dutch society, as they perceive it, which may in turn have led to biased self-reports or to holding back ideas and practices during the in-depth interview. Similarly, in terms of the ego-network interview, the two subgroups of interviewees might have provided biased data due to their view of what was expected from them and what they expected from themselves. Economic immigrants might have felt quite hesitating and even insecure while participating in such an interview that goes through their personal contacts in their parental network one by one in detail. As a consequence, they might have given less information than they had at their disposal, as they might have felt embarrassed. Knowledge immigrants, mostly high achievers and seemingly more cooperative, might tend to show off their social skills and large networks. They might have considered it socially desirable to have a high-status network and might have tried hard to list the more “high-end” contacts in their parental networks.

Third, the relationship between the researcher and the two groups may also have affected the data and analysis. Specifically, being more self-identified as closer to the knowledge immigrants, the researcher’s personal background, including home culture, migration track, language and values, makes it easier for her to make connections, communicate, understand and agree with one subgroup versus another. However, to address these methodological shortcomings, some measures during data collection and data analysis were taken to compensate for this, as was especially

reported in Chapters 3 and 4. The measures include effort to gain the trust of the interviewees through modesty and honesty, cross-questioning about unfamiliar idioms and slangs, and an awareness of the difference distance with the two subgroups of Chinese when analyzing their discourse.

Future research directions

Future studies could profit from the above reflections. The scope of Chinese immigrant parenting can be extended to other waves as new types of migration are emerging. For example, multiple transnational families and refugees are still understudied, and their parenting ideas are also under-conceptualized.

The approach adopted and developed in this dissertation to understand immigrant parenting can be extended to studies on other life domains of immigrant families, such as caring for aging parents and (intercultural) marriage. This is particularly valuable in our age of migration, as we should take different life stages and life domains of immigrants into account, such as marriage, career development and aging.

The new challenges brought by changes in China should be taken into account in future research. For instance, currently, the Chinese middle class is suffering from major anxiety related to the education of their children in China, which would in turn generate much online content and discussion regarding childrearing, which will be picked up by overseas Chinese and have consequences for how they think about parenting in the country to which they migrated.

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Summary of the dissertation

Summary in English

The goal of this dissertation is to create insight into the formation of Chinese immigrant parenting as a cultural practice and learning process, as it is assumingly undergoing changes pre-and post-migration. It is argued to consider parents personal migration histories to understand immigrants' parenting, rather than to understand their parenting against the background of their "Chineseness".

The study discusses, contrasts and criticizes the two main research perspectives in the research field of (Asian) immigrant parenting: the etic and the emic approach. The criticism on the etic perspective focuses on the fact that the theoretical frameworks used to identify universal components of parenting have been mostly developed and conceptualized from Western notions regarding parenthood and childhood, while the criticism on the emic perspective is that it ignores the cultural heterogeneity in and mobility of parenting practices. Keeping in mind the different social-historical dynamics of their migration, two groups of Chinese immigrant mothers in the Netherlands, economic and knowledge immigrants, were investigated with respect to how they re-built their parenting ethnotheories. The results show that economic immigrants believe in natural growth and direct their children through authoritarian relationships while knowledge immigrants see parenting as a task which demands much personal effort and an equal, transparent and close parent-child relationship. It is claimed that these differences can be understood through both their pre-migration histories as well as their post-migration re-interpretation of their tasks as a parent. In order to further understand how these differences might have been constructed, these same two groups of Chinese immigrant parents were compared in terms of their parenting knowledge acquisition with a social network perspective. Their different networking strategies were investigated as well. The findings from the ego-network interviews with economic immigrants and knowledge immigrants indicate that economic immigrant mothers tend to obtain practical tips and specific instructions directly from experts and acquire practical help from local, co-ethnic, small and dense networks while knowledge immigrant mothers engage in critical peer-

based learning in multicultural, open and long-distance networks. In line with these empirical studies and to enlarge the dissertation's scope to Chinese global migration, Chapter 5 adopts a pedagogical lens to investigate the nexus between four global waves of Chinese migration, specific migration characteristics of each wave, and their various parenting strategies respectively. The four different waves of Chinese migration, namely labour migrants (referred to as economic immigrants in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4), international students (referred to as knowledge immigrants in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4), businessmen in the Global South, and new investment migrants, have significantly different motives and destinations for migration and also differ in socioeconomic status, while the historical, legal, economic and cultural context of their migration also varies. We found these waves also hold different intergenerational contracts, that is, they differ in their norms and practices on how resources are divided between different generations and how investment in education is weighted with other factors, such as economic factors. Different educational and pedagogical issues subsequently are correlated with different migratory solutions, as well as with different needs for family and educational support. In addition, an extended review was done of China's policies of overseas education, that aim to support immigrant families, in terms of the assumptions, purpose and background of implementation of these policies. It was found that these policies are outdated and only serve the needs of a limited number of Chinese immigrants. The chapter shows that this mismatch is amongst other things due to its ignorance of the variety of intergenerational contracts associated with the respective migration waves. This study suggests taking the existing global variety of Chinese migration into account to improve the current overseas Chinese policies to better support Chinese immigrant families globally.

In sum, by revealing the actual (re)formation process of Chinese immigrants in the West and unpacking the dominant, uniform, unidirectional image of Chinese immigrant parenting in the West, this dissertation attempts to contribute to the research on Chinese immigrant parenting that is able to create insight into the diversification of Chinese parenting in migration worldwide. In addition, by studying Chinese immigrants' intergenerational contracts within a wider global migration context that acknowledges diverse migration waves, this dissertation also attempts to

contribute to policy issues by unravelling the mismatch of current Chinese family supporting policies and the diverse needs of the Chinese diaspora in a new era.

Summary in Chinese

中国移民的家庭教养作为文化实践与学习过程会在移民过程中经历种种变化，而本文的目的就在于对此过程的形成提供洞察。本论文还主张，在试图理解这些移民父母的家庭教养时，除了关注于他们的“中国属性”之外，他们个人化的移民历史与背景也应该纳入考虑。

自第二章起，讨论和对比亚裔移民家庭教养这一领域中两个主流的研究视角——主位（*emic*）和客位（*etic*）。对文献的系统梳理中，作者发现采用主位视角的研究大多致力于发现和理论化家庭教养这一概念中的普遍元素并预先认定这些元素在任何文化中都存在，因此可以直接应用于跨文化比较。这是与致力于深入理解本土概念的客位视角截然不同的。作者认同对于主位研究视角的批判因其理论框架几乎都发展于西方关于父母身份（*parenthood*）和童年身份（*childhood*）的概念；然而客位视角也有其短板，即忽略文化内部的多样性和文化的变化发展状态。因此，本论文的经验研究部分（第三章与第四章）采用一种社会-历史动态过程的视角，比较了居住在荷兰的两个主要的中国移民亚群体，经济移民与知识移民。希冀通过描绘这两个群体如何发展出（不同的）家长民俗理论（*parental ethnotheories*），来试图加深学术界对于亚裔移民家庭教养这一概念的理解。在第三章中，作者发现经济移民父母相信儿童可以自然而然成长并且他们通过相对独裁的亲子关系来帮助其生长。而知识移民则将父母角色视作一个需要很多个人努力的任务，并且这个任务需要平等、透明且亲密的亲子关系才能完美达成。本论文认为这种差异可以结合他们移民前后的经验来理解，而这种经验又嵌合在中荷两国具体的社会变迁之中。为了更进一步了解这种家庭教养方面差异是如何具体形成的，本论文还比较了这两类中国移民母亲的教养信息获取方式与渠道方面的异同。通过个体网络分析（*ego-network analysis*），作者发现，经济移民母亲倾向于获取来自权威或可信赖的人的实际而具体的帮助和信息。而这正好可以通过他们相对比较本地化，同族裔，小且紧密的社会网络而实现。而知识移民母亲们则更倾向于组建基于同辈的，相对较为批判的，且以学习为主要目标的社会网络，而这样的社会网络形态则具有更加多元文化，开放且长距离等特征。基于对两个相对小规模亚裔内部小群体的对比研究之后，本论文继续拓宽研究的视野，用教育学的视角来检视四个主要中国移民群体在世界各地的家庭教养策略与其移民背景的关系。这四个不同移民群体分别为劳工移民（即本论文经验研究中所称的经济移民），留学生移民（即本论文中知识移民），发展中国家的新商人群体和投资移民。这四类移民在移民动机，目的地选择，以及社会经济背景等方面都十分不同，因此他们移民过程的历史、法律、经济以及文化情境也不尽相同。本论文采用代际合同（*intergenerational contract*）这一教育学概念来对这四类中国移民进行比较。这一概念反映了他们在家庭教养这一社会实践中存在着不同的想法，具体来说，他们对于代际间资源分配与对教育的投资所占权重的考量都不尽相同。这一部分非经验研究揭示了教育与家庭因素是如何与他们移民路径，家庭与教育支持需求都是有机相关的。然而，在对中国移民家庭与教育的支持政策进行梳理和考量之后，本论文发现这些政策有很大程度上已经无法对现今非常多样的中国海外移民家庭进行有效支持了。因为这些不足与这些政策制定的历史和社会背景

有关，所以这些政策对于当今多样化的海外华人多样化的需求涵盖不足。因此在论文最后，本论文建议政策制定者在发展新的家庭支持政策时，需重点考虑海外华人的多样性。

Erratum

There are two changes have been made in the current dissertation from the version submitted in May 2020. The changes are as follows:

1. On page 14, paragraph 2, the previous version mistakenly refers to “economic immigrants” as highly skilled, and “knowledge immigrants” as low skilled. In the current version, this mistake is corrected. The term “knowledge immigrant” in Chapter 2 refers to highly skilled immigrants, and the term “economic immigrant” refers to low-skilled immigrants.
2. Chapter 1 General Introduction and Chapter 6 General Discussion have been copyedited to fix some language mistakes that existed in the previous version including spelling, grammar, and punctuation mistakes. No content or structure has been changed.
3. The page number in the Table of Contents has been updated accordingly.