

Chinese immigrant children's first year of schooling:

**An investigation of Chinese immigrant parents'
perspectives**

Tiffany Min-Tzu Liao

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of Master of Education

Unitec Institute of Technology

2007

Abstract

Research shows that immigrant families generally go through a process of acculturation when they first arrive in a new country. As they face a different set of cultural norms and beliefs, immigrant families need to decide what values and beliefs to maintain, what to give away, and what to adopt as their new values and expectations in the host country. Chinese immigrant parents and New Zealand teachers also have quite different values and educational expectations. A lack of understanding of the different expectations may potentially result in difficulties in adaptation to New Zealand education leading to dissatisfaction and other problems such as a lack of partnership, negative acculturation, and communication barriers. Thus, this research aimed to examine Chinese immigrant parents' educational experience and expectations of their children's first year of primary schooling in New Zealand. This study is a qualitative investigation where two data collection tools, a questionnaire and a focus group interview were used to answer the research question: what do Chinese immigrant parents expect and experience in relation to the first year of their children's primary education in New Zealand? The findings highlight that Confucian values continue to remain central in Chinese immigrant parents' educational expectations and practices. On the other hand, these parents are also prepared to adopt some New Zealand educational values and practices related to play and child-centred approaches. Furthermore, the study suggests that there is a lack of partnership concerning educational practices and goals among the teachers and the parents which results in Chinese immigrant parents' educational dissatisfaction. The parents exhibited concerns over the communication between the parents and the teachers in relation to children's learning content and progress. They were also

dissatisfied about the lack of homework, discipline, and system-wide learning materials for their children's learning. They identified problems such as language, communication, and socialisation as their children's common experience. In conclusion, the research proposes that teachers should take the initiative to understand and appreciate the differences between their own and Chinese immigrant parents' educational expectations, practices, as well as their underpinning values. In order to achieve effective parent-teacher partnerships and foster positive learning experience for children, Chinese immigrant families' values, beliefs, expectations and practices need to be better understood.

Acknowledgements

獻給我的父親

感謝他辛苦耕耘，給予我們安穩的生活及學習環境

獻給我的母親

感謝她勇敢的移居紐西蘭，陪伴著我們學習與成長

也獻給我的兒女

希望他們感恩因緣，不忘根本

把握當下，努力學習

The journey would not have been possible without the ongoing support and inspiration from my families, professors and the participants. I would like to acknowledge my husband, Vincent, and my parents for their continuous support and encouragement. A special thanks to my professors, Professor Carol Cardno and Doctor Bronwyn Reynolds, for their constant guidance and inspiration. Many thanks to the Chinese community centres for their help in recruiting research participants and to the Chinese immigrant parents for sharing their educational beliefs, values and experiences about their children's early primary education in New Zealand.

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iv
Table of Contents	v
List of Tables	vii
List of Figure	vii
Chapter One: Introduction	1
Research Background	1
Research Central Question	7
Outline of Chapters	8
Chapter Two: Literature Review	10
Educational Expectations and Underlying Values	10
Assumptions Made about Chinese Parents	22
Different Teaching Expectations and Practices	33
Problems Encountered by Chinese Immigrant Families	41
Chapter Three: Research Methodology	48
Research Question and Objectives	48
The Theoretical Underpinnings	50
Sampling, Data Collection and Analysis	53
Validity and Reliability	71
Chapter Four: Research Findings	74
Section One: Questionnaire Findings	74
Section Two: Focus Group Interview Findings	110
Chapter Five: Discussion	121
Chinese Immigrant Parents' Educational Expectations	121
Responses to Different Expectations and Practices	130
Challenges Experienced by Chinese Immigrant Families	138
Chapter Six: Conclusion	145
Educational Expectations and Underlying Values	

Different Teaching Expectations and Practices
Problems Encountered by Chinese Immigrant Families
Recommendations
Limitations and Future Research

Reference List

Appendices

Appendix One: Questionnaire Covering Letter (English)
Appendix Two: Questionnaire Covering Letter (Chinese)
Appendix Three: Questionnaire (English)
Appendix Four: Questionnaire (Chinese)
Appendix Five: Preliminary Questionnaire Results (English)
Appendix Six: Preliminary Questionnaire Results (Chinese)
Appendix Seven: Focus Group Interview Questions

List of Tables

Table 1.1	Country of Origin	75
Table 1.2	Home Language	76
Table 2.11	Children’s Personalities and Characteristics	78
Table 2.12	Children’s Knowledge	79
Table 2.13	Children’s Abilities and Behaviours	80
Table 2.21	Schools’ Environment	82
Table 2.22	Schools’ Resources	82
Table 2.31	Teachers’ Personalities and Characteristics	84
Table 2.32	Teachers’ Knowledge and Teaching Ability	85
Table 2.33	Teachers’ Teaching Content and Strategies	86
Table 2.34	Teachers’ Teaching Style and Practices	87
Table 2.4	Parents’ Own Style, Content and Strategies	89
Table 2.5	Parents’ Ways to Assist Children’s Settling at School	90
Table 2.6	Difficulties Encountered by Children	91
Table 2.7	Teacher-Parent Communication Methods	93
Table 2.8	Parents’ Ways to Overcome Communication Barriers	94
Table 2.9	Areas for Improvement	96
Table 3.11	New Zealand Curriculum – Essential Areas	100
Table 3.12	New Zealand Curriculum – Essential Skills	100
Table 3.13	New Zealand Curriculum – Values and Attitudes	101
Table 4.1	Children’s Characteristics and Personalities	102
Table 4.2	Children’s Behaviours and Abilities	103
Table 4.3	Goals for Children	104
Table 5	Schools’ Learning Environment and Resources	104
Table 6.1	Teachers’ Teaching Attitudes	105
Table 6.2	Teachers’ Teaching Content and Practices	106
Table 7.1	Parents’ Own Attitudes	107
Table 7.2	Parents’ Content and Strategies	107

List of Figures

Figure 1	Research Design	54
----------	-----------------------	----

Chapter One

Introduction

This research is a qualitative investigation of the educational expectations that Chinese immigrant parents have for their children's new entrant and year one of primary schooling in New Zealand. It also aimed to gather views about Chinese immigrant families' experience about New Zealand primary education. This chapter provides an overview of the research background. It presents a simple introduction of Chinese immigrant parents' cultural educational values, expectations and practices, as well as some possible tensions that Chinese immigrant families may encounter when their children start primary schooling in a Western country. The chapter also includes the central research question and concludes with a summary outline of the chapters in this thesis.

RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Over the past decade, New Zealand has become a popular country for Asian families to migrate to including Chinese. The *2001 Census of Population and Dwellings* confirms that "the Chinese ethnic group is the largest Asian ethnic group in New Zealand in 2001" (Statistic New Zealand, 2001, p.11). The *2006 Census Quick Stats About New Zealand's Population and Dwellings* also states that "Asian ethnic groups grew the fastest, increasing from 238,176 in 2001 to reach to 354,552 in 2006 (an increase of almost 50 percent). The number of people identifying with the Asian ethnic groups has doubled since 1996, when it was 173,502" (Statistic New Zealand, 2006, p.4). These findings show that Asian ethnic groups, including Chinese

immigrants, are growing into a larger population in New Zealand. As a result, it is important for New Zealand society and its people to gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of the culture, values, and beliefs of its residents.

All parents have goals and expectations for their children. Differences in parental goals and expectations arise in part because parents have children for different reasons and because societies have different expectations for the members of their communities (Okagaki & Diamond, 2000). Chinese immigrant parents' educational expectations and practices reflect their values and beliefs and are also largely influenced by cultural factors such as Confucian teachings and collectivism values (Biggs, 1996; Ho, 2001; Lee, 1996; Li, 2001). Li (2001) states that "Although these [Chinese] families have resided in the new country for several years, they still strongly connect themselves to their motherland and to indigenous Chinese cultural values" (p.179). They uphold Chinese Confucian values and educational expectations such as high academic achievement, a sense of filial piety, effort and family obligation, discipline, moral development, interdependence and harmonious relationships (Biggs, 1996; Chao, 1994; Fuligni, 2001; Gorman, 1998; Ho, 2001; Lee, 1996; Li, 2001 & 2004; Liu, Ng, Weatherall & Loong, 2000; Watkins & Biggs, 2001). In particular, Liu et al.'s (2000) research confirms that Chinese immigrant students in New Zealand generally link to strong traditional filial piety obligations and expectations. Creel (1953) further concludes that "Confucianism continues deeply to influence every Chinese, whether he likes it or not, for it is an essential ingredient of the culture that has made him what he is" (p.241-242). Most literature affirms that Chinese immigrant parents remain deeply influenced by Chinese Confucian values, and this may include our Chinese parents in New Zealand too.

Children's academic achievement is especially important for Chinese families. It is important because education in Confucianism is seen as the medium to assist children to reach to their fullest potential, develop their rationality, and attain the notion of human perfectibility (Lee, 1996). As a result, Chinese parents start preparing their children for formal schooling by setting up learning tasks, structuring their use of time, and introducing formal learning since their early childhood years (Okagaki & Diamond, 2000; Parmar et al., 2004). Moreover, they expect their children to do well all the way to achieve university education (Dandy and Nettelbeck, 2002; Li, 2001). High academic achievement and a university qualification are important for Chinese families because they represent the access to financial, professional and life success (Dandy & Nettelbeck, 2002; Li, 2001 & 2004; Sue & Okazaki, 1990). "There is a perception among these parents that university education will lead to professional occupations where success and financial reward are less affected by racial discrimination and prejudice" (Dandy & Nettelbeck, 2002, p.625). These findings show that education and academic achievement are extremely important to Chinese families, and it brings honour and happiness to the families.

On the other side, new entrant teachers in Western countries including New Zealand have quite different educational expectations, practices and approaches than Chinese immigrant parents (Brown, 2003; Lillemyr, 2000; Moyles, 1997; Parmar et al., 2004; Renwick, 1997; Trussell-Cullen, 1994; Wong, 1999; Wylie & Smith, 1995). Instead of placing a strong focus on children's academic achievement like Chinese parents do, New Zealand new entrant teachers tend to perceive children's happiness and positive learning through social interactions more important (Trussell-Cullen, 1994; Wong, 1999; Wylie & Smith, 1995). New Zealand primary school teachers provide a lot of

group and hands on activities, and encourage children to learn through play. They believe that these playing, hands on, and group activities enable children to “learn through making physical and mental connections with the world, through sensory explorations, personal effort, social experience and the active seeking of meanings from experience” (Moyles, 1997, p.9). New entrant teachers also like to give a lot of positive feedback and encouragement such as ticks, stickers and stamps because they consider children learn best in a happy and encouraging environment (Wylie & Smith, 1995). Brown (2003) explains that teachers in New Zealand focuses on the nurturing and apprenticeship processes such as encouraging expressions of feeling and emotion, building self-confidence and self-esteem in learners, and linking content with real settings of practice or application. They like to use “praise, rewards, and positive means of reinforcement for good work, rather than punishment for poor achievement” (Renwick, 1997, p. 27). New Zealand new entrant teachers practice a very positive teaching approach and have a rather higher focus on the nurturing processes than the academic pursuit.

However, while Western including New Zealand teachers encourage children to learn through play, group or hands on activities, Asian (including Chinese) parents pay more attention to children’s academic achievement and perceive play with little developmental value (Ebbeck & Glover, 1998; Okagaki & Diamond, 2000; Parmar et al., 2004). These parents do not believe that play enables children’s readiness for school. They stress the idea that “getting a head start in early academics is important for the cognitive development of children in the preschool years” (Parmar et al., 2004, p.102). Okagaki and Diamond (2000) further explain that “play and a constructive approach might be viewed with suspicion if the parent does not see a clear academic

focus in the curriculum” (p.76). While New Zealand teachers and Chinese immigrant parents have different perceptions towards children’s learning approach and method, there develops a greater possibility for expectation clashes.

As literature shows that differences do exist between Western teachers and Chinese immigrant parents’ educational expectations and practices (Ebbeck & Glover, 1998; Okagaki & Diamond, 2000; Parmar et al., 2004), the two sets of very different educational expectations and practices and a lack of mutual goals between the teachers and the parents may confuse children’s learning goals and attitudes. Okagaki and Diamond (2000) state that “when there is a lack of congruence between parents’ and teachers’ expectations, children may have the additional burden of determining the implicit rules and expectations” (p.76). They may be confused about what appropriate learning attitudes and habits are. Different expectations and practices may further cause psychological or psychosocial problems among immigrant children such as cultural identity split, poor social adjustment, intergenerational and familial conflicts, negative self-image, low cultural identity, low self-esteem, dissonant (subtractive) acculturation, loneliness, language barriers and cultural shock (Florsheim, 1997; Gibson, 2001; Igoa, 1995; James, 1997; Leung, 2001; Lin & Liu, 1999; Prewitt-Diaz, Rotter & Rivera, 1990).

A lack of understanding of different expectations and practices or a lack of communication and mutual goals among the teachers and Chinese parents may also result in parents’ dissatisfaction in education. For instance, Chinese immigrant parents in Canada appreciate Canadian education for its openness and nurturing for creativity and originality. However, they are concerned about its limitless freedom and weak

intellectual challenge (Li, 2001 & 2004). Furthermore, because Chinese immigrant parents are used to schools assigning a lot of learning materials and homework for their children, they show concerns about the lack of homework given to their children in the host country (Li, 2001). Hence, it is important for teachers and immigrant parents in New Zealand to communicate their educational expectations and practices, so they can develop mutual goals and work together in providing a consistent and stable learning environment for children.

Communication is important between teachers and immigrant parents. “Teachers can’t assume that every culture and parent holds the same template for what constitutes an ideal child or a good parent” (Okagaki & Diamond, 2000, p.78). Effective communication enables understanding and appreciation of different expectations and practices. It helps to establish positive parent-teacher partnership, mutual goals and consistent practices for children. “If educational programs are to support the child and the family then there must be some basic understanding and acceptance by professionals of different child-rearing practices and of the expectations of parents” (Ebbeck & Glover, 1998, p.15). Hence, this research serves as a communication medium to promote a positive understanding of Chinese culture and immigrant families in New Zealand.

As the fastest growing minority group in New Zealand, the Chinese population has surpassed 350,000 in 2006 (Statistic New Zealand, 2006). However, very few studies have focused on this community, and little is known about recent Chinese immigrant families and their children’s learning in early primary schooling. The majority of the previous studies on Chinese immigrants are generally conducted in America, Canada

and Australia. Thereby research literature provides little information on recent Chinese immigrant families in New Zealand. While most literature also places its focus on the early childhood years or adolescence, there is again little literature available about Chinese immigrant parents' expectations and practices at the level of primary school education. Chinese immigrant families' educational expectations and experience deserve much more research attention, and this study intends to address this gap by specifically focusing on this under researched ethnic group in New Zealand. This research explores Chinese immigrant parents' educational expectations and experience for their children's first year of primary schooling. The purpose of the study is to uncover what Chinese immigrant parents expect their children to learn and develop while living in New Zealand, and also to investigate the problems that Chinese immigrant families may come across during their children's early primary years.

RESEARCH CENTRAL QUESTION

What are Chinese immigrant parents' experience in relation to educational expectations and practices for their children's first year (new entrant class and year one) of primary schooling in New Zealand?

The research was designed to investigate Chinese immigrant parents' perceptions. It aimed to gather data about the educational expectations and practices of this particular group of parents. It also intended to explore Chinese immigrant children and parents' interactions and experience with the primary teachers and schools in New Zealand.

OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

This thesis consists of six chapters. The current chapter introduces the research topic and looks at the research problem from an international perspective. It provides an overview of the research background and points out the need for further studies about recent Chinese immigrant families in New Zealand. This first chapter gathers that there are different educational expectations and practices between Western teachers and Chinese parents, and suggests that this may also happen in New Zealand. The chapter also draws attentions to the possible problems that immigrant families and children may face due to negative acculturation experience.

The second chapter presents a literature review which examines the relevant literature and studies of the research topic. It reviews the literature about the underlying values and beliefs of Chinese immigrant parents' educational expectations and practices. It also explores Chinese immigrant parents and New Zealand primary teachers' educational expectations and practices. Some literature about Westerners' misconceptions of Chinese parents' parenting style is discussed. Studies of potential psychological and psychosocial problems that immigrant children may experience are also reviewed in this chapter.

The third chapter demonstrates the research methodology. It presents the research goals and objectives and also describes the qualitative nature of the research. This methodology chapter gives detail about the process of the research where two data collection tools were used, a questionnaire and a focus group interview. The data collection process and the analysis approach are explained. Finally, the research validity and reliability is also discussed.

The fourth chapter presents the research findings in two sections. The first section displays the findings of the questionnaires which includes respondents' responses to the open-ended questions and the likert-scale questions. The second section of the findings chapter displays the highlights of the focus group interview.

The fifth chapter discusses the main themes of the research findings. It suggests that the Chinese Confucian values continue to remain in Chinese immigrant parents' educational expectations and practices. It displays the main expectations that Chinese immigrant parents have for their children's primary education in New Zealand, as well as the different expectations and practices between the home and the host culture. Furthermore, it illustrates the problems that Chinese immigrant families have experienced during their children's early primary education.

The last chapter shows that this study has drawn conclusions about Chinese immigrant parents' educational expectations, practices and experience. Furthermore, it provides some recommendations of possible strategies that teachers can practice to initiate the communication and interactions with the parents. It also points out the limitation of the research and suggests the areas for future research.

Chapter Two

Literature

All parents hold aspirations for their children; however, these aspirations can be considerably varied. This chapter explores the literature that deals with Chinese immigrant parents' educational expectations of their children. It begins by examining the studies of the fundamental values and beliefs that underpin Chinese immigrant parents' expectations and practices. An exploration of the research concerning Chinese parents' parenting style and practices is gained. Assumptions made about Chinese immigrant parents are also examined. Literature about New Zealand primary education is investigated to aid the understanding of the educational context. Furthermore, the chapter looks at the research that considers the psychological and psychosocial problems that immigrant children may face. This literature review is structured in four sections: educational expectations and underlying values, assumptions made about Chinese parents, different teaching expectations and practices, and problems encountered by Chinese immigrant families.

EDUCATIONAL EXPECTATIONS AND UNDERLYING VALUES

People's behaviour and attitudes reflect their values and beliefs. Contextual factors like the culture, custom, history, and society shape people's values and beliefs (Li, 2001; Okagaki & Diamond, 2000). Chinese immigrant parents' educational expectations and practices are culturally constructed and largely influenced by Chinese cultural factors such as Confucian teachings and collectivism values (Biggs, 1996; Lee, 1996; Li, 2001; Ho, 2001).

Literature shows that Confucian philosophy plays a large part of Chinese immigrant parents' educational values, expectations and practices (Biggs, 1996; Chao, 1994; Fuligni, 2001; Gorman, 1998; Ho, 2001; Lee, 1996; Li, 2001 & 2004; Liu, Ng, Weatherall & Loong, 2000; Watkins & Biggs, 2001). These authors assert that Chinese immigrant parents uphold Confucian-based expectations of their children's education such as high academic achievement, moral development, harmonious interpersonal relationships, a good life and career. Expectations for the disposition development such as a sense of filial piety, family obligation, and interpersonal harmony are linked with Confucian values of politeness (li 禮), humanity and generosity (de 德); moral cultivation, high academic achievement, and a sense of effort represent Confucian values of becoming an exemplary person (junzi 君子) and a sage (shengren 聖人) who attains human perfectibility (*Analect*; Creel, 1953). These scholars show that Confucianism continues to influence most Chinese people's values, expectations and practices, and that it no longer acts only as a philosophy, but rather it becomes the culture of contemporary Chinese-heritage countries. Hence, Creel (1953) concludes that "Confucianism continues deeply to influence every Chinese, whether he likes it or not, for it is an essential ingredient of the culture that has made him what he is" (p. 241-242).

Chinese immigrant parents place much emphasis on children's education (Chao, 1996; Li, 2001). For Chinese parents, education appears to be the only and the right way to attain intelligence, morality, and life success. Li's (2001) research which investigated Chinese Canadian immigrant parents' educational expectations of their adolescents claims that parents expect their children to pursue knowledge and cultivate quality dispositions, moral characters, attitudes, and behaviours through education. She states

that “in a context where everyone respects education, Chinese parents regard achievement as a family honour, and view success as a source of happiness” (Li, 2001, p. 490). Chao (1996) also perceives Chinese parents’ practices such as formal and directive teaching as their support of the belief that a good education brings success in life. This emphasis on the importance of children’s education reflects Chinese parents’ Confucian grounded beliefs in education.

Lee (1996) reminds us that the term ‘learning’ pervades the whole literature of Confucius’s *Analects*. He explains that “the significance of education stands out in the Confucian tradition. Education is perceived as important not only for personal improvement but also for societal development” (p. 26). In Confucianism, great importance is placed on the effort in becoming an educated person in order to serve the society, “the officer, having discharged all his duties should devote his leisure to learning. The student, having completed his learning should apply himself to be [an] officer” (*Analects*, XIX.13). Confucianism’s focus on education explains Chinese immigrant parents’ strong belief in children’s education. Education seems to be perceived by Chinese parents as the medium to extend one’s knowledge, to raise one’s sense of confidence and morality, and to expand one’s skills for harmonious interactions and abilities to contribute and serve the family, community, and country.

Learning to most Chinese immigrant families is a collective function rather than an individual concern (Ebbeck & Glover, 1998; Gorman, 1998; Ho, 2001; Li, 2001; Okagaki & Diamond, 2000). Li (2001) states that “high Chinese parental expectations and children’s strive for excellence are not only individually and psychologically driven, but largely a collective function of their family, community, and society at

large” (p.490). Findings show that Chinese parents feel responsible for preparing their preschool children for their formal schooling from their children’s early childhood years (Gorman, 1998; Okagaki & Diamond, 2000; Parmar, Harkness & Super, 2004). They see their parental roles as teachers who need to discipline children’s behaviours and structure their time for early formal learning. Gorman’s (1998) research which explored the parenting attitudes and practices of immigrant Chinese mothers of adolescents in America indicates that Chinese immigrant parents “generally considered their children’s primary duty was to apply themselves to academics. Similarly, they felt their primary roles as parents were to be protectors and facilitators of successful goal attainment” (p.78). She concludes that “Chinese cultural values of the importance of family, the responsibilities of parenthood, and the duty to raise competent and successful adults seem to underlie these parents’ expectations and childrearing” (Gorman, 1998, p.79). It seems that Chinese parents perceive children’s success in learning as one of their important parental responsibilities.

Confucian collectivist culture places much responsibility for children’s learning and moral development on teachers and schools (*Analects*; Lee, 1996; Ho, 2001). Ebbeck and Glover (1998) who investigated immigrant families’ expectations of early childhood in Australia reveal that Chinese immigrant parents expect early childhood teachers to work on preparing children for the next stage of their education, namely formal schooling. Lee (1996) and Ho (2001) add that teachers are expected to be strongly committed to not just teaching academically but the cultivation of moral or proper behaviour. Teachers should “set themselves as an example...; they must not only teach the students culture and science but also educate them morally” (Jiaoyu, 1981, cited in Ho, 2001, p.101). They are expected to role model students’ behaviour

and conduct themselves with “exemplary virtue” (Yuan, 1984, cited in Ho, 2001, p.101). It appears that Chinese immigrant parents do not relate learning as an individual task. Instead, it is perceived as a collective concern. Parents and teachers all play an important role in educating children both academically and morally. All parties are responsible for what they teach and cater for, and how they behave and role-model to the next generation.

Chinese parents expect their children to develop moral character and authoritative (ren 仁) conduct through education (Ho, 2001; Li, 2004). They not only value children’s school achievement, but also their cultivation of moral character (Li, 2004). The cultivation of characters is considered important for children because it enables the attainment of the ultimate Confucian goal of becoming an exemplary person (junzi 君子) in order to serve the society. Confucius’ *Analects* points out that children should develop dispositions such as filial (xiao 孝), deferential (di 諦), trustworthy (xin 信), politeness (li 禮), appropriate (yi 義), loyalty (zhong 忠), kind (shan 善), and understanding (shu 恕). In real practice, Chinese parents expect their children to attain moral character and authoritative (ren 仁) conduct such as filial piety, family obligation, respect, persistence, diligence, and self-regulation (Chao, 1994 & 2001; Fuligni, 2001; Gorman, 1998; Ho, 2001; Li, 2001 & 2004; Liu et al, 2000; Woodrow & Sham, 2001). Ho (2001) considers that this development of children’s proper conduct is a collective obligation among all members of the society in Confucian culture:

Unlike individualistic Western cultures, where harmonious social relations rest upon the balance between the satisfaction of individual goals or individual rights and a sense of fairness to all, proper behaviour in the Confucian collectivistic culture is defined by social roles, with mutual obligation among members of society and the fulfilment of their duties for each other being

emphasised (Ho, 2001, p.100).

These moral and authoritative (ren 仁) related expectations indicate that children's moral development is just as important as the academic learning to Chinese immigrant parents, and that all members of the society hold the responsibility of educating and modelling children's moral character and authoritative behaviour.

Filial piety (xiao 孝), a Confucian-based value, is recognized as the fundamental conduct of harmonious relationships on which the structure of Chinese society was based (Chao, 1994 & 2001; Gorman, 1998; Li, 2001 & 2004; Liu et al., 2000). Chao (1994 & 2001), Gorman (1998), and Li (2001 & 2004) all agree with the conception that children's sense of filial piety (xiao 孝) goes hand in hand with Chinese parents' practice of discipline (guan 管) which forms a balanced and harmonious relationship between parents and children. Liu et al. (2000) explain that "filial piety (xiao) is an attitude, a value, and a behavioural prescription that evolved as part of a structured set of five relationships (wu lun) central to traditional Chinese society" (p.213). They stress that by proper conduct of the five relationships: father-son, ruler-minister, husband-wife, older-younger siblings, friend-friend, a Confucian social order based on harmonious relationships can be attained. Their research which investigated New Zealand Chinese's filial piety, acculturation, and intergenerational communication indicates that social identification as a New Zealander and as a Chinese are independent and positive predictors of filial piety obligations and expectations. Their findings suggest that "the maintenance of filial piety obligations is related to psychological factors of social identity more than objective demographic factors (e.g., permanency of residency)" (Liu et al., 2000, p.221). Woodrow and Sham (2001) who looked into Chinese pupils and their learning preferences also discovered that British-Chinese pupils remain conditioned by traditional Chinese behavioural rules of

'respect for superiors' and 'loyalty and filial piety' even when they were largely born and educated in English. It seems that filial piety is believed to be the fundamental conduct for the construction of a harmonious society, and being a Chinese descendent, it is important to develop this filial conduct.

Children's sense of family obligation stems from the development of filial piety (xiao 孝) (Chao, 1994 & 2001; Fuligni, 2001; Gorman, 1998; Li, 2001 & 2004; Liu et al., 2000). Confucius (*Analect*, II.8) asserts that a sense of filial piety is the right attitude and conduct for successful interpersonal relationships, which does not merely mean physical contribution, but rather encompasses the willingness from deep within to respect and contribute to the elders. "After all, the form of filial piety is less important than the sincerity behind the actions" (Chang, 1997, cited in Liu et al., 2000, p.214). According to Andrew Fuligni (2001), whose research examined Asian, Latin American, and European adolescents' family obligation and academic motivation in North America, Chinese children who are brought up with a sense of filial conduct develop a strong sense of personal duty, family obligation, and family cohesion. His research findings exhibit that Chinese youths endorse all three aspects of family obligations: current assistance, family respect, and supporting the family in the future more strongly than the European youths. Those Chinese youths believe that "they should assist and spend time with their family, respect their parents' wishes and make sacrifices for their family, and support their family in the further" (Fuligni, 2001, p.64). Gorman (1998) also found similar findings that Chinese parents' expectations appears to be "clearly understood by their children who, seemingly out of a sense of respect for their parents (*jing lao*) and understanding of their social obligations, responded by attempting to fulfil their parents' expectations" (Gorman, 1998, p.78).

Chinese parents seem to strongly value children's development of filial piety because this filial sincerity from deep within is linked with the development of family obligations, such as family assistance, respect, and future support.

Chinese immigrant parents expect their children to attain high academic achievement (Dandy & Nettelbeck, 2002; Li, 2004) and a sense of family obligation acts as an extrinsic motivation for children's academic effort (Chao, 1996; Fuligni, 2001; Li, 2001). Dandy and Nettelbeck (2002) who explored parents' academic standards and educational aspirations for their children confirm that there is a preference for university education among Chinese and Vietnamese parents, while Anglo Celtic Australian parents from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are more likely to prefer their children to complete an apprenticeship. Chao (1996), Fuligni (2001) and Li (2001) all agree that children's sense of filial piety and family obligation functions as Chinese students' extrinsic motivation of academic effort. "Xiao requires that children should unconditionally bring reward and honour to their parents...Chinese children generally study with a sense of duty, a sense of shame and a desire for parental approval" (Li, 2001, p.490). Chao (1996) also supports Li's (2001) statement that in Chinese families, "the child's personal academic achievement is the value and honour of the whole family. If you fail [at] school, you bring embarrassment to the family and lose face. If you do good, you bring honour to the family and do not lose face" (p.412). These findings show that Chinese families place much value on the child to do well academically for the family, and the children see academic achievement and school success as one of their family obligations.

While Chinese parents' high academic expectations seem to enhance Chinese

students' sense of family obligation and their extrinsic motivation for academic achievement, Fuligni (2001) proposes that Chinese students are just as intrinsically motivated as the students with a lower sense of family obligation. He asserts that although an obligation-based utility value of education may not be fully intrinsic, his research demonstrates no evidence that students with a sense of family obligation had lower intrinsic motivation. "Students who believed that they should assist and respect the authority of the family found their academic subjects just as interesting and enjoyable as those with a lower sense of familial duty" (Fuligni, 2001, p.73). Hence, Fuligni (2001) concludes that "given the similar level of intrinsic motivation, the greater belief in the importance and usefulness of education should lead those with a sense of family obligation to go further in school than their peers" (p.73). These findings indicate that Chinese children are just as intrinsically interested and motivated in their school learning, and any extra parental expectations or sense of family obligation become their extrinsic motivation for academic attainment.

Literature shows that perceived disadvantaged minority status and the goal of upward social mobility also account for Chinese immigrant families' high academic expectations (Dandy & Nettelbeck, 2002; Li, 2001 & 2004; Sue & Okazaki, 1990). According to Li (2004), "perceived disadvantaged minority status is another driving force underpinning high parental educational expectations, science-oriented career aspirations, and children's striving for academic achievement" (p.180). Her findings (2001 & 2004) reveal that Chinese immigrant parents in Canada view education as a weapon against racism and regard a science-related career as a means of obtaining upward mobility. Support for Li's (2001 & 2004) findings comes from Sue and Okazaki's (1990) explanation that the ultimate goal for upward social mobility by way

of education justifies the outstanding achievements of Asian-Americans. They claim that education comes to be regarded as the primary means for social mobility when other avenues are blocked, so that for Asian immigrants educational attainment becomes a functional means of achieving social status. Dandy and Nettelbeck's (2002) research findings of Chinese Australian parents' preference also provide indirect support to "the hypothesis that there is a perception among these parents that university education will lead to professional occupations where success and financial reward are less affected by racial discrimination and prejudice" (p.625). These findings clarify Chinese parents' high academic expectations and Chinese students' exceptional academic attainment. It appears that Chinese immigrant families deeply believe in success in education to be the road to respected social positions and a promising future.

A sense of effort, another Confucian-based value, is considered as the most fundamental character in order to attain success in education (Biggs, 1996; Lee, 1996; Sue & Okazaki, 1990; Watkins & Biggs, 2001). Watkins and Biggs (2001) specifically explain how important a sense of effort meant for Chinese people:

Indeed, to many Chinese students, teachers, and parents, intelligence itself is not something innate and relatively fixed but rather something that can be improved by hard work. So to a Chinese, future success is in your own hands. If you believe that effort leads to success, you will achieve more, and be less devastated by failure than if you believe that ability is the key to success" (Watkins & Biggs, 2001, p.6-7).

Sue and Okazaki's (1990) research also highlights that the high academic achievements of Asian-Americans reflect the traditional belief in the importance of academic effort being rewarded with success. These findings show that unlike

Westerners who tend to attribute success to ability and failure to lack of ability, Chinese people appear to attribute success and failure to effort and lack of effort, respectively. Hence, children's development of effort is relatively important for their future success.

In Confucianism, everyone is educable (*Analects*, VII.7). Lee (1996) explains that this belief in the utility of effort rests upon the Confucian presumption of educability and perfectibility for all. Confucius states that "it does not matter whether you are born with knowledge, or you attain knowledge by learning, or you attain knowledge by taking pain to learn, once you attain knowledge, it is all the same" (*The Mean*, XX.10). These findings suggest that differences in intelligence do not inhibit one's educability, but the incentive and attitude to learn does. Hence, Lee (1996) concludes that "there is a strong belief in attainability by all, there is also a strong belief that one's failure is not due to one's internal make-up or ability, but one's effort and willpower" (p.39). This Confucian belief of educability for all seems to deeply motivate Chinese people's effort for education. The parents show a strong belief that children can all achieve well, so that they demonstrate high educational expectations and a strong focus on children's development of effort for learning. Furthermore, Chinese children's high academic achievements also signal that they are highly motivated in pursuing greater achievements.

Another reason for high expectations of Chinese children's development of effort and academic achievements is to achieve the ultimate Confucian goal of sagehood (shengren 聖人) (*Analects*; Lee, 1996). Sagehood (shengren 聖人) in Confucianism represents the concept of the attainability of human perfectibility. The cultivation to

sagehood (shengren 聖人) is described as the ‘learning for self-realisation’ and an intrinsic motivation for children’s academic effort (Lee, 1996). Lee (1996) explains that “reaching the stage of sagehood refers to developing one’s potentiality to the fullest extent, which is manifested in one’s rationality, and is to be achieved through education” (p.31). He reminds us that people are called sages (shengren 聖人) because of their rationality, not their natural ability. They become sages when they reach the stage of being purely rational. This belief of perfectibility for all encourages Chinese students’ intrinsic motivation for education. They believe that perfection is attainable if they aim to do so with a determined mind and continuous effort. “Internally, education is important for personal development, and associated with it is the notion of human perfectibility, which is believed to be achievable by whosoever aims to do so” (Lee, 1996, p.39). Chinese immigrant parents’ seem to uphold high educational expectations because of their Confucian grounded belief in educability and perfectibility for all. Chinese children also appear to be encouraged to strive for education and life success by this Confucian belief

Overall, literature in this section signals that Confucian values remain central in Chinese immigrant parents’ expectations and practices. “Although these families have resided in the new country for several years, they still strongly connect themselves to their motherland and to indigenous Chinese cultural values” (Li, 2004, p.179). Chinese immigrant parents uphold expectations such as high academic achievement, development of filial piety, interdependent and harmonious relationships, and sense of effort and family obligation. They place much emphasis on education because they see education as the way to social mobility and life success. It appears that Chinese parents deeply believe in the ultimate goals of becoming an exemplary person (junzi

君子) and attaining sagehood (shengren 聖人), so that they place high educational expectations for both their children's moral development and academic achievements. To conclude this section, Li's (2004) assertion is used that "ultimately, the parents expect their children to be well educated so as to secure a professional employment and to live a quality life. They view educational achievement, moral character, and cultural integration as essential components in ensuring a promising future" (p.181).

ASSUMPTIONS MADE ABOUT CHINESE PARENTS

People from Chinese-heritage culture have generally been categorized by Westerners as 'authoritarian' who also practice rote-based teaching strategy, whereas people from Western countries including New Zealand have often been classified as having an 'authoritative' teaching approach (Biggs, 1996; Chao, 1996 & 2001; Gorman, 1998; Ho, 2001; Marton, Dall'Alba & Kun, 1996; Watkins & Biggs, 2001; Woodrow & Sham, 2001). This section examines the assumptions made about Chinese immigrant parents' teaching style, expectations and practices. Studies that challenge some of the misconceptions about Chinese parenting are drawn to aid the examination. It also continues to explore the studies that deal with Chinese parents' educational expectations and practices.

Baumrind's (1968) conceptualisation of authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive parenting styles has often been used by Western scholars to study parenting of different ethnic groups in the United States. Baumrind (1968) illustrates that an 'authoritarian' parent:

...attempts to shape, control, and evaluate the behaviour and attitudes of the child in accordance with a set of conduct...she values obedience as a virtue and favours punitive, forceful measures to curb self-will at points where the

child's actions or beliefs conflict with what she thinks is right conduct (Baumrind, 1968, p.261).

In contrast, an authoritative parent "directs the child's activities...in a rational, issue-orientated manner...and encourages verbal give and take," whereas a permissive parent "allows the child to regulate his own activities as much as possible...and does not encourage him to obey externally-defined standards" (Baumrind, 1968, p.261).

Chao (2001) stresses that this conceptualization of parenting style has been so widely accepted and influential that "the authoritative style has become the prototype for appropriate parenting" (p.1832), and has led to the promotion of such style in intervention programs, books, and other literature for parents.

Among Euro-American parents and teachers, authoritative conduct is more likely to result in children's positive learning experience, whereas authoritarian approach is more likely to cause negative impact on children's development and functioning (Biggs & Moore, 1993; Chao, 1994; Gorman, 1998; Steinberg, Lamborn, Darling, Mounts & Dornbusch, 1994). Steinberg et al.'s (1994) research, which investigated the adjustment and competence among adolescents from authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent and neglectful families, claims that authoritative parenting style is associated with positive developmental outcomes in Euro-American samples. In contrast, authoritarian parenting style is linked with poor academic achievements and other child development and functioning, such as psychological health and academic motivation. Biggs and Moore (1993) explain that Euro-American parents and teachers believe that authoritative conduct enhances children's positive learning progress and experience. They encourage children's self-regulation and promote a child-centred curriculum in a well presented meaningful context of a small class and warm learning

atmosphere. It appears that parents and teachers who come from a Western background generally value and practice the authoritative approach and dispute the authoritarian conduct.

While Western parents and teachers have often been classified as authoritative, Chinese parents have generally been characterized as authoritarian by Westerners (Biggs, 1996; Chao, 1994; Gorman, 1998; Parmar et al., 2004). Chao (1994) asserts that much of the literature has often depicted Euro-American parents as authoritative and Chinese parents as restrictive, controlling, or authoritarian where unquestioned obedience to authority is stressed rather than two-way open communication between children and parents. According to Murphy (1987), Chinese Confucian culture places an “emphasis on strictness of discipline and proper behaviour, rather than an expression of opinion, independence, self-mastery, creativity and all-round personal development” (cited in Biggs, 1996, p.47). Parenting strategies such as parental discipline (guan 管) and children’s unquestioned obedience have been identified as authoritarian and linked with Chinese parents (Gorman, 1998; Li, 2004). Okagaki and Diamond’s (2000) research indicates that Asian immigrant parents rated developing obedience and conformity to external standards more important for children’s development than developing independent thinking and problem-solving skills. Parmar et al. (2004) also illustrate Chinese immigrant parents as ‘authoritarian’ parents who direct their children’s learning, shape their personalities, and control their behaviours. It seems that Westerners perceive Chinese parents as authoritarian, and such parenting style has been given much negative connotation by Western parents and teachers.

Literature indicates that there also exists a Western perception that Chinese people adopt the surface approach that they learn without understanding (Biggs, 1996; Marton et al., 1996; Watkins & Biggs, 2001; Woodrow & Sham, 2001). Chinese teachers and parents have been perceived as simply transmitting the knowledge regardless of its relevance and meaningfulness, and expecting the children to memorize the knowledge without understanding it (Watkins & Biggs, 2001). Likewise, Chinese students also have often been perceived as rote-learners who learn by memorization instead of understanding (Biggs, 1996). Marton et al. (1996) explain that “in Western countries it is believed that memorization does not enhance understanding” (p.70). Memorization and rote-learning are seen as the strategies for a quick fix, often for the preparation of examinations. It is believed that students who adopt these rote-based learning strategies do not actually understand the meaning of the knowledge, and cannot apply them in the context. Biggs (1996) affirms that “Westerner observers frequently complain that Asian students are prone to use rote-based, low-level, cognitive strategies, both in their own culture, and overseas” (p.46). Woodrow and Sham’s (2001) research which examined Chinese adolescents’ learning preference in Britain confirms that Chinese students’ favourite learning strategy is memorization. Though, their findings also point out the capacity of Chinese learners to develop deep learning structures by memorization. Overall, Chinese people’s learning and parenting appear to be associated with some negative impressions. Yet, there begins to emerge debates about whether Chinese people should be perceived in such ways.

While authoritarian parenting style and rote-learning are linked with Chinese people and known to lead to poor learning outcomes, studies surprisingly reveal that Chinese

students generally have significantly higher levels of achievements than those of Western students (Biggs, 1996; Dornbusch, Ritter, Leiderman, Roberts & Fraleigh, 1987; Gorman, 1998; Steinberg, Dornbusch & Brown, 1992; Steinberg et al., 1994). Dornbusch et al.'s (1987) research which investigated the relationship between high school students' grade and the parenting style affirms that Asians are the highest on authoritarian parenting style, and they also have the highest grade-point averages. More recent studies continue to validate Dornbusch et al.'s (1987) findings that Chinese students do achieve superior performance academically (Fejgin, 1995; Kao, 1995; Kim & Chun, 1994; Steinberg et al., 1992 & 1994; Stevenson and Stigler, 1992; Sue & Okazaki, 1990). Stevenson and Stigler's (1992) research reports that although United States students have similar means in reading as Chinese, Taiwanese, and Japanese students in grade 5, the variance are much greater. Their findings also highlight that United States students are significantly worse than Chinese students in mathematics since grade 1 through to grade 11. Scholars such as Biggs (1996), Stevenson and Stigler (1992) propose that such academic achievements cannot be achieved simply through rote-learning (learning without understanding), and parenting style and practices are not appropriate predictors of school success for Chinese learners. These results present a paradox of the Chinese parents and learners: how is it possible that students raised by authoritarian parents and directed to rote-learning demonstrate high achievement?

Many scholars propose that the concepts often used to describe Chinese people's parenting and learning styles such as authoritarian, controlling, restrictive, and rote-learners to be the Western misconceptions, and rather ethnocentric and misleading (Biggs, 1996; Chao, 1994; Marton et al., 1996; Stigler and Stevenson,

1991). Stigler and Stevenson (1991) state that “a common Western stereotype is that the Asian teacher is an authoritarian purveyor of information, one who expects students to listen and memorize correct answers and procedures rather than to construct knowledge themselves” (p.43). Chao (1994) explains that although authoritarian, strictness, and controlling are equated with parental hostility, aggression, mistrust, and dominance for Westerners, they may be equated with parental concern, caring, or involvement for Asians. She proposes that using Baumrind’s (1968) parenting styles to explain Chinese school success would not be adequate because Baumrind’s conceptualization is specifically only to Euro-American culture:

Because the developmental psychology framework in the United States represents a more individualistic perspective, this framework would not be useful for formulating conceptualizations that are intended to be applied to other cultures. More culturally viable concepts can be offered from a framework based on an indigenous or native appreciation of Chinese culture that does not involve an individualistic interpretation of childhood socialisation and development (Chao, 1994, p.1118).

Biggs (1996) also claims that “what some Western observers are seeing is not what they think it is” (p.50), and suggests for a more culturally appropriate conceptualisation for Chinese parenting and learning styles.

Studies by Chao (2001) and Dornbusch et al. (1987) compared the effectiveness of authoritative and authoritarian parenting styles to Euro-American and Asian-American children’s performance. They reveal that an authoritative parenting style is not more advantageous for Asian-American youth than it is for Euro-American youth, and parenting style is unrelated to the school performance of Asian-American students. Chao’s (2001) research, which examined the effects of

parenting style on school performance to determine whether authoritative parenting would have beneficial effects for both Euro-Americans and Asian-Americans, points out that there is no positive association between parenting styles and school performance for Chinese families. While authoritative approach links with better school achievements for Euro-American adolescents, Chao's (2001) study highlights that Chinese youth from authoritative families do not perform better in school than those Chinese youth from authoritarian families. She states that "authoritative parenting should not be treated as the prototype for some Asian American groups...this study was able to show that the authoritative style was no better than the authoritarian style for predicting the school performance of Chinese American youth" (Chao, 2001, p.1841). Dornbusch et al.'s (1987) research also demonstrate that although authoritative parenting style is consistently and positively related to the school grades of Euro-American students, it is unrelated to the school grades of Asian-Americans. These findings affirm that neither authoritative nor authoritarian parenting styles are sufficient predictors of Chinese students' school performance, and dispute the idea that authoritative approach enhances better achievement and should be the prototype for all families.

Scholars such as Chao (1994 & 2001), Li (2004), and Gorman (1998) challenge the negative association of Chinese parents' authoritarian approach, and argue that Chinese parents' expectations and practices stemmed from their love and concerns for their children. Chao (1994) explains that researchers' use of authoritarian to describe parenting generally assumes that strict codes of behaviour arise from a desire to subjugate the child and a need for parental control. "The "authoritarian" concept is associated with hostile, rejecting, and somewhat uninvolved parental behaviours

toward the child” (Chao, 2001, p.1113). However, she argues that Chinese parents’ expectations are the manifestations of their deep desires for their children’s successful adjustment, rather than from a need to dominate their children. Gorman’s (1998) study discovers that Chinese mothers do not consider their roles as parents to be characterized by domination and control. Instead, they feel that they are training and guiding their children to make good decisions. She asserts that “Chinese cultural values of the importance of family, the responsibilities of parenthood, and the duty to raise competent and successful adults seem to underlie these parents’ expectations and childrearing” (Gorman, 1998, p.79). Gorman (1998) suggests that “although these mothers’ close watch over their children’s lives is suggestive of authoritarian parenting, the quality of their approach was clearly borne from concern for their children’s well-being” (p.77). Both Chao (1994) and Gorman (1998) find the motivation behind the seemingly strict childrearing practices of Chinese immigrant parents reflect care and concern for their children’s welfare. Thus, it seems inconclusive to depreciate Chinese parenting by a connection on the mere ground of authoritarian. Gorman (1998) concludes that “it may be more accurate to describe these mothers’ parenting practices as being vigilant rather than controlling” (p.77).

Chao (1994) suggests that the notion of ‘training’, which contains the concepts of parental discipline (guan 管) and filial piety (xiao 孝), is more applicable in understanding Chinese parenting style and parent-child relationship than Baumrind’s (1968) conceptualization of parenting styles. She explains that this notion of ‘training’:

centrally emphasizes the importance of parental control in instilling the need to work hard, be self-disciplined, and do well in school. Training also distinguishes a type of parental responsiveness that includes an investment,

involvement, and support of children, rather than just the emotional demonstrativeness (e.g., praising, kissing, hugging) that is assessed in most measures of parental responsiveness (Chao, 2001, p.1834).

Support to Chao's (1994) proposal comes from Li's (2004) research which highlights that the concepts of filial piety (xiao 孝) and parental discipline (guan 管) encompass Chinese parents' care and concern for their children's wellbeing and achievements. Li (2004) clarifies that "*guan* enables the parents to exert an expectation-conforming influence on their children; and *xiao*, on the other hand, motivates the children to perform in accordance with the desire of their parents" (p.180). Chao (2001) argues that this concept of parental discipline (guan 管) has a very positive connotation of 'to care for' or 'to love' as well as 'to govern.' "The notions of *chiao shun* and *guan* also imply for the Chinese a very involved care and concern for the child. But this is not implied in the notion of "authoritarian" (Chao, 2001, p.1113). These results exhibit that Chinese parenting is constructed upon the motivation of care and concern, rather than the domination and restriction illustrated in the Western conception of authoritarian parenting style. It seems that the culturally specific conceptions, such as training or filial piety (xiao 孝) and parental discipline (guan 管), are more suitable to portray Chinese parenting style and practices.

While Western researchers generally assume an interpretation of memorization that is equated with surface or mechanical rote-learning, studies which explored the paradox of Chinese students' memorization learning technique and their academic success found that such learning technique can also be associated with deep learning structures (Biggs, 1996; Marton et al., 1996; Watkins & Biggs, 2001; Woodrow & Sham, 2001). Marton et al. (1996) explain that a surface approach is frequently treated as being characterised by rote-learning, and a deep approach is equated with

understanding:

A deep approach to learning is characterized by a focus on the meaning or message underlying the learning material, on ‘what is signified; by the material. In contrast, a surface approach is characterized by a focus on the learning material itself, that is, on ‘the sign’ (Marton et al., 1996, p.69).

Marton et al. (1996), who used the two identified learning approaches to deconstruct Chinese children’s learning approach, and examined the relationship between memorization and understanding, explain that memorization can be divided into two categories – mechanical memorization and memorization with understanding. Watkins and Biggs (2001) label these two categories as rote-learning and repetitive learning respectively, and state that “many have failed to draw a distinction between *rote* learning, that is memorising “without thought of understanding”... and *repetitive* learning, that is learning in order to enhance future recall alongside understanding” (Watkins & Biggs, 2001, p.6). These scholars all argue that Chinese students who are directed to memorization learning strategy can actually realize and gain understanding that they are more likely to fall into the latter category of memorization with understanding or repetitive learning.

Literature justifies that Chinese students’ memorization learning strategy is usually repetitive learning which leads to memorization with understanding (Biggs, 1996; Lee, 1996; Marton et al., 1996; Watkins & Biggs, 2001). Watkins and Biggs (2001) claim that “many Western teachers mistakenly assume that when Chinese students memorise, they are rote learning at the expense of understanding. In fact, Chinese students frequently learn repetitively, both to ensure retention *and* to enhance understanding” (p.6). Lee (1996) also asserts that the role of memorization in Chinese

students' learning is a necessary step to understanding, rather than an end in itself. Marton et al. (1996) explain that understanding can come either before or after memorization. Students can either memorize what they understood, or understanding can be developed through memorization. Marton et al. (1996) discover that "when a text is memorized, it can be repeated in a way that deepens understanding; different aspects of the text are focused on with each repetition" (p.81). A good example that Marton et al. (1996) use is remembering vocabulary, that students often grasp the new word's meaning and usage in the context of conversation. Biggs (1996) argues that "if the point of learning is to understand (deep), and repetition is seen as way to coming to understand, then repetition becomes a deep strategy" (p. 54). He also found that many Chinese teachers and students "do not see memorising and understanding as separate but rather as interlocking processes, and that high quality learning outcomes usually require both processes, as complementary to each other (Biggs, 1996 cited in Watkins & Biggs, 2001, p.6). These results point out that the traditional Asian practice of repetition or memorization can have different purposes. On one hand, memorization can be associated with mechanical rote learning; on the other hand, memorization can be used to deepen and develop understanding. These scholars suggest that if memorization is understood in the latter way, the paradox of the Chinese learner is solved.

In this section, assumptions made about Chinese parents and students such as an authoritarian parenting style, controlling, restricting, and rote-learning have been examined. Westerners generally perceive Chinese parents as authoritarian who encourage their children to rote-learn (memorization without understanding), and they believe that authoritarian and rote-learning approaches result in negative learning

outcomes (Biggs, 1996; Chao, 1994; Gorman, 1998; Marton et al., 1996; Parmar et al., 2004; Watkins & Biggs, 2001; Woodrow & Sham, 2001). Scholars challenge this negative association of Chinese parenting approach, and suggest for alternative Chinese cultural specific conceptions such as training or filial piety (xiao 孝) and parental discipline (guan 管). They claim that Chinese parents' apparently authoritarian expectations and practices are actually stemmed from love and concern for their children. Ho (2001) summaries that "the Asian focuses on the care, nurture, and benevolence...while the westerner tends to focus on the restriction, limitation, and dependence of the person over which the authority is exercised" (p.106-107). Researchers also disagree with the idea that Chinese students tend to rote-learn. They argue that Chinese students' memorization technique is actually part of repetitive learning (memorization with understanding) instead of rote-learning (memorization without understanding). Thus, Biggs (1996) concludes that "while Westerners may correctly see Asian students indulging in a high degree of repetitive work, they could be quite incorrect in seeing that activity as 'rote' learning and therefore as a surface strategy" (p.54).

DIFFERENT TEACHING EXPECTATIONS AND PRACTICES

Scholars generally distinguish parents and teachers from Chinese and Western cultures, including New Zealand, as having quite different educational approaches, expectations, and practices (Baumrind, 1968; Chao, 1994; Parmar et al., 2004). Literature shows that Western parents and teachers generally value an authoritative teaching style and that they follow a play and child-centred teaching approach (Brown, 2003; Lillemyr, 2000; Moyles, 1997; Parmar et al., 2004; Renwick, 1997; Trussell-Cullen, 1994; Wong, 1999; Wylie & Smith, 1995), whereas Chinese parents

and teachers are usually perceived as authoritarian, who are less keen on the play and child-centred teaching approach (Baumrind, 1968; Chao, 1994; Parmar et al., 2004). In this section, an exploration of New Zealand school and teachers' educational approach, expectations, and practices is gained to enhance a greater knowledge of the educational context. It also continues to look at Chinese parents' educational expectations and practices particularly on the aspects of teaching approach and homework.

Play is identified to be extremely essential for young children's learning from a Westerner's perception because it is considered as an important method to enhance children's physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development (Lillemyr, 2000; Moyles, 1997; Parmar et al., 2004). Lillemyr (2000) acknowledges the importance of play by stating that "play is the most task-oriented and intrinsically motivated activity" (p.380) for all children. He recommends learning through play in the lower grades, as it promotes creativity and increases children's involvement in learning. Moyles (1997) also stresses that children not only play for fun, they also "learn through making physical and mental connections with the world, through sensory explorations, personal effort, social experience and the active seeking of meanings from experience" (p.9) while they play. Parmar et al.'s (2004) study also points out that Euro-American parents see their role as facilitators rather than teachers that they facilitate their children's learning by playing with their young children. These findings show that play from Western parents and teachers' perspective is important for children's development.

New Zealand schools and teachers encourage children to learn through group

activities and play in a child-centred context and curriculum (Brown, 2003; Wylie & Smith, 1995). Wylie and Smith's (1995) research which investigated New Zealand primary teachers' educational beliefs and approaches found that good learning to New Zealand teachers meant meaningfulness, child-centeredness, and children's happiness. Brown (2003) also states in the paper he presented in the Australian and New Zealand Association for Research in Education (AARE/NZARE) Joint Conference that "New Zealand primary school teachers agreed strongly with student-oriented conceptions of nurturing, apprenticeship, and developmental teaching; had only a moderate level of agreement for a social reconstruction perspective, and only gave slight agreement to the teacher-centred transmission perspective" (Brown, 2003, p.12). He explains that child-centred approach to New Zealand primary teachers is now more about the group type and hands on teaching that caters for individual's needs and focuses on a developmental approach than the whole class teaching (Brown, 2003).

Other scholars such as Renwick (1997), Trussell-Cullen (1994), Wong (1999), Wylie and Smith (1995) also agree that New Zealand primary teachers aim to achieve a child-centred approach where the teaching content and context evolve around children's interests and needs. Aspects of happiness, enjoyment, confidence, and security are especially valued such as respecting children's individuality and looking after children's well-being and emotional feelings in New Zealand primary schools. All teachers are expected to acknowledge children's individuality in terms of their knowledge, learning pace, and responsibility for their own learning (Renwick, 1997). These findings illustrate that New Zealand teachers place much emphasis on a child-centred and play teaching approach, where children's well-being, emotional feelings, and social relationships are at the centre of the curriculum.

A child-centred approach has a particular emphasis on explorative and independent learning (Gorman, 1998; Okagaki & Diamond, 2000; Trussell-Cullen, 1994; Wong, 1999). Studies by Gorman (1998) and Okagaki and Diamonds (2000) show that Euro-American and Canadian parents facilitate their children to develop independence, self-confidence, and self-control. Wong (1999) explains that New Zealand education places a strong focus on children's ability to think and analyse independently, as well as to develop creativity and imagination. Trussell-Cullen (1994), the author of *Whatever happened to times tables: every parents' guide to New Zealand education*, also affirms that children in New Zealand are encouraged to problem-solve independently that they learn to ask questions and find their own solutions to problems. Children are expected to develop a self-motivated learning attitude and be responsible for their own learning and behaviours (Trussell-Cullen, 1994). These findings illustrate that teachers and parents from Western countries, including New Zealand, expect children to develop independence related personalities.

Literature from New Zealand presents a common theme that teachers are encouraged to provide positive feedback to enhance children's confidence and self-motivation for learning (Brown, 2003; Renwick, 1997; Trussell-Cullen, 1994; Wong, 1999; Wylie & Smith, 1995). Brown (2003) explains that teachers in New Zealand conceive of their job and agree with nurturing and apprenticeship processes such as encouraging expressions of feeling and emotion, building self-confidence and self-esteem in learners, and linking content with real settings of practice or application. Wylie and Smith's (1995) study which investigated New Zealand children's progress through the first three years of schooling shows that new entrant teachers aim to facilitate

children's experience of success by praising children through positive comments, ticks, stickers, stamps, and one-to-one attention. Renwick (1997), the author of *Your children: our schools: a guide for Korean parents in New Zealand*, states that New Zealand teachers focus on "praise, rewards, and positive means of reinforcement for good work, rather than punishment for poor achievement" (p. 27). It seems that New Zealand primary entrant teachers believe that positive praising approach promotes positive learning outcomes.

The expectations that New Zealand primary schools and teachers have for new entrant students are generally socially related. When children first start primary school, they are expected to acquire some positive and constructive personalities and attitudes for achieving positive social interaction and relationships with others (Ora Limited, 2002; Trussell-Cullen, 1994; Wong, 1999; Wylie & Smith, 1995). Trussell-Cullen (1994) identifies the basic requirement that schools have for children when they start school, which is to be comfortable with other children around. Schools prefer if children are able to listen to other adults and follow simple instructions. It is also a bonus if they can count to ten and recognize some letters and their own name (Trussell-Cullen, 1994). During children's first year of schooling, children are expected to settle in and develop positive social relationships with other children. They need to be able to work alone on projects, as well as work in groups at other times (Trussell-Cullen, 1994). Ora Limited (2002) states that group "activities help children learn to share and work co-operatively" (p. 9). It further explains that children need to develop security and confidence within the environment and relationships with others to enable their active exploration and investigation. Wylie and Smith (1995) and ERO (1998) all believe that a meaningful learning environment not only enables children to learn to think of

others, but also to share, respect, help, and cooperate with one another. The above literature shows that New Zealand education focuses on a more social oriented learning and development for children's first year of schooling.

An exploration of New Zealand literature shows that there are expectations of the primary schools, teachers, and parents to provide an explorative and positive learning environment and experience for children. Schools are expected to provide an explorative and positive learning environment, as well as to maintain good communication with the parents (Ora Limited, 2002; Renwick, 1997; Wong, 1999; Wylie & Smith, 1995). Wong (1999) mentions that schools should provide trips and outdoor learning sessions to extend children's knowledge and enhance positive experience and interactions with the community. She suggests that schools should provide teacher aides and a special curriculum to assist immigrant children with their English and learning in general. Wong (1999) further summaries the activities that New Zealand primary schools generally host, such as Board of Trustee meetings, Parents and Teachers Association meetings, regular parent and teacher interviews, as well as regular learning reports and feedbacks. These are the essential communication mediums between parents and teachers in New Zealand. Renwick (1997) and Wylie and Smith (1995) all affirm that regular parent-teacher interviews are the important opportunities to allow parents to know their children's learning and progresses at school. Ora Limited (2002) suggests in its handbook for immigrants, *Kiwi ora: guide to the New Zealand education system*, that if the parents wish to, they can meet with the teachers to talk about their children's progress and may ask for a meeting at any time. This literature points out that New Zealand schools need to provide the students with the positive and explorative learning experience and the parents with regular

interactions and feedback.

In terms of the parents and teachers in New Zealand, they are expected to create a positive relationship, so they can work together to provide a positive school and home learning environment for the young ones (New Zealand Education Review Office, 1999; Harris, 1996). New Zealand Education Review Office states that “mutual teacher-parent cooperation and a thoughtful programme of experience at home and at school will greatly aid the child’s development” (1997, p. 9). Harris (1996), the author of *New Zealand parents' guide to primary school*, also asserts that parents should provide a quiet and comfortable environment for their children to study. She suggests that parents should accompany their children’s learning process or experience in order to assist the development of good learning habits, such as reading, questioning, and active exploration. Furthermore, if parents wish to, they can participate in school activities by volunteering as a parental help, as well as to actively involve in the school operation and decision making (Harris, 1996). These findings show that New Zealand education aim to establish positive collaborations between the schools, families, and communities to enable the effective learning experience for the children.

While Western teachers and parents generally prefer a play approach for children’s learning literature shows a contrary belief and practice among Chinese immigrant parents that they place much more emphasis on children’s academic learning rather than play (Ebbeck & Glover, 1998; Okagaki & Diamond, 2000; Parmar et al., 2004). Parmar et al.’s (2004) study which investigated parents’ beliefs of play and learning for preschool children aged three to six in North America discovered that Asian parents perceive play with little developmental value. Brown (2003) also points out

the disadvantage of a child-centred approach that “the group type and hands on teaching are associated with a non-assessable, deep, child-centred learning conception. It could be assumed that primary teachers’ own natural methods of teaching will not lend themselves readily to adopting methods that focus more than real life skills that teachers themselves don’t have” (p.12). It seems that Chinese immigrant parents believe more strongly in the importance of an early formal academic training for their children’s cognitive development.

Chinese immigrant parents prepare their children for school by setting up learning tasks, structuring their use of time, and introducing formal learning since their early childhood years (Okagaki & Diamond, 2000; Parmar et al., 2004). Ebbeck and Glover’s (1998) research, which investigated immigrant families’ expectations for early childhood learning in Australia, found that Asian immigrant parents would prefer “a strong link to exist between the early childhood centre and its work to that of preparing children for the next stage of their education, namely formal schooling” (p.19). Okagaki and Diamond (2000) explain that Chinese immigrant parents view cognitive intelligence, which incorporates motivations and some other social skills, as important aspects during children’s early childhood years. They see one of their major roles as parents is to help their children to succeed especially in education through training and teaching since young (Okagaki & Diamond, 2000). Despite the trend of play and child-centredness approach in the Western countries, Chinese immigrant parents seem to maintain a higher value on the academic and cognitive preparations for children’s formal schooling than play during their children’s early years.

One of the concerns that Chinese immigrant parents have for their children’s learning

is the lack of homework (Li, 2001). Unlike the schools in Asian countries, primary schools in Western countries including New Zealand do not often give out heavy academic study load to children. The main role of homework is perceived as “involving parents in their children’s education and in informing parents about what their children are doing at school” (Harris, 1996, p. 122). The purpose of homework to Western teachers and parents is really not about the knowledge learnt, but rather the process of doing it together with their parents. Harris (1996) explains that there is usually no formal homework in New Zealand new entrant classes. The homework given to children could be some “non-compulsory activities...such as interviewing family members, collecting resources for classwork and of course reading the book...” (Harris, 1996, p. 124). The participated teachers in Wylie and Smith’s (1995) study recognized “the hallmarks of the “academic” curriculum in the first year of primary schools were mainly learning to read and to write” (p. 17). It looks like New Zealand teachers on one hand see the purpose of homework as to involve the parents in children’s learning process and develop children’s good habits and interests in learning. However, Chinese parents on the other hand see homework as a study tool to prepare children to pursue greater academic achievement. Li (2001) states that Chinese parents “appreciated Western openness, yet were concerned about its limitless freedom and weak intellectual challenge” (p.491). Chinese immigrant parents see homework as the preparation, revision, and extension of children’s knowledge.

The literature displays a potential educational expectation gap between Chinese immigrant parents and New Zealand teachers. New Zealand teachers and parents seems to place much more emphasis on play-oriented and child-centred learning,

while Chinese immigrant parents rather focus on children's academic related learning.

PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY CHINESE IMMIGRANT FAMILIES

Literature shows that different educational expectations exist between Western teachers and Chinese immigrant parents (Ebbeck & Glover, 1998; Okagaki & Diamond, 2000; Parmar et al., 2004). Many scholars claim that these differences or even contradictories may potentially result in psychological or psychosocial problems among immigrant children, such as cultural identity split, poor social adjustment, intergenerational and familial conflicts, negative self-image, low cultural identity, low self-esteem, dissonant (subtractive) acculturation, loneliness, language barriers and cultural shock (Florsheim, 1997; Gibson, 2001; Igoa, 1995; James, 1997; Leung, 2001; Lin & Liu, 1999; Prewitt-Diaz et al., 1990).

Ebbeck and Glover (1998), Okagaki and Diamond (2000), and Parmar et al.'s (2004) research findings show that parents and teachers have different perceptions of what teachers and parents' roles and practices should be. Ebbeck and Glover's (1998) research points out that Australian early childhood teachers rank aspects such as 'prepare the child for school' and 'to help the child adjust to school' less important than Chinese immigrant parents. These teachers see their teaching work as fostering children's development rather than preparing them for school. However, Chinese immigrant parents on the other hand see the extension of knowledge and the preparation for school more important for their children (Ebbeck & Glover, 1998). Okagaki and Diamond (2000) also showed similar findings, "early childhood programs that emphasize play and a constructivist approach might be viewed with suspicion if the parents do not see a clear academic focus in the curriculum" (p.76).

Different from the Western play and child-centred approach, Chinese parents facilitate their children's learning by serving as teachers at home. They see academic learning as the way for children's cognitive development (Parmar et al., 2004).

While parental involvement in New Zealand schools is strongly encouraged and believed as the important communication medium between the teachers and parents, such activity is perceived differently by Chinese immigrant parents. Lee (1996) explains that Chinese parents see a professional teacher as the knowledgeable one. In Confucian-heritage culture, parents should leave the children in their teacher's capable hands, instead of interrupting the teaching process (Lee, 1996). There seems to be a lot of different expectations and practices that children experience from their immigrant parents and Western teachers.

Literature shows that differences or contradictories about educational expectations and practices that immigrant children encounter between the home and host cultures may potentially result in negative impacts and effects in children (Florsheim, 1997; Gibson, 2001; Igoa, 1995; James, 1997; Leung, 2001; Lin & Liu, 1999; Prewitt-Diaz et al., 1990). Psychosocial problems such as family conflicts and poor social adjustments are some of the immigration related effects on Chinese immigrant children (Florsheim, 1997; Lin & Liu, 1999). Florsheim's (1997) research highlights that Chinese immigrant adolescents who "preferred to use English reported more individual psychosocial adjustment problems than those who preferred to use Chinese" (Florsheim, 1997, p.1). Furthermore, Chinese immigrant students who preferred to speak English related less to their Chinese identity and were less collectivistic. They also exhibited lower levels of psychosocial functioning due to

their loss of cultural identity, values and language (Florsheim, 1997).

Lin and Liu (1999) stress that the acculturative gap does exist between the two generations of Chinese immigrant families, which can create parent-child conflicts and disagreements which may affect children's school performance and mental health.

Li (2004) also states that:

The tension of the children have experienced mainly comes from the dual process of enculturation of Chinese culture and acculturation of Western culture...Since the children's exposure to Canadian culture [is] adding new components to their ongoing identity construction, their thinking and behaviour may conflict with what is deemed appropriate to their parents. The tension between parents and children would, to some extent, influence family harmony and parent-child relationships (p.181-181).

These problems seem to form a loop where the loss of cultural identity results in potential family conflicts and poor social adjustments. Poor social adjustments then also impact on children's sense of identity.

Psychological problems such as loneliness, intergenerational conflicts, low self-esteem and dissonant acculturation have also been identified in relation to immigrant children (Gibson, 2001; Leung, 2001; Prewitt-Diaz et al., 1990). Gibson (2001) clarifies that although additive acculturation is identified as the ideal experience for immigrants, immigrant children more often encounter forces for subtractive acculturation, termed 'dissonant acculturation'. Additive acculturation represents embracing new cultural values as well as maintain own cultural values, whereas subtractive acculturation means the experience of scarifying and giving up own cultural values for host country values. Gibson (2001) asserts that "dissonant

acculturation occurs when acculturation among second generation youth is neither guided nor accompanied by changes in the first generations” (p.22). These situations often lead to intergenerational conflicts and separation between Chinese immigrant children and parents. Leung (2001) also identifies the construct of loneliness as one of the potential psychological problem to overseas students and immigrant children, due to being away from their countries of origin and their social ties at home. Prewitt-Diaz et al. (1990) states that in United States “migrant children suffer from the trauma of moving, which lowers their self-esteem, due to their treatment by teachers, other students and some school officials” (p. 26). These findings demonstrate that a positive acculturation is important for immigrant children, or else they suffer from problems such as loneliness and low self-esteem.

Immigrant children living with two cultures may face even worse problems such as a cultural-split and split identity (Igoa, 1995). According to Igoa (1995), children and adolescents often feel pressured in giving up their traditional values and assimilating to the mainstream culture by their peers or other members in their social life. They try to blend in and be like their peers at school but they end up developing two sets of behaviour norms for home and school contexts. This kind of situation is referred as ‘cultural split’ by Igoa (1995). Further psychological problems can develop as the result of ‘cultural split’ such as “challenges of silence, isolation, resistance to change, vulnerability, helplessness, exhaustion, feelings of hopelessness, feelings of difference, fear of ridicule, inner repression of his native culture” (Igoa, 1995, p.104). James (1997) explains that if there is a lack of intervention to help Chinese immigrant children throughout the acculturation process, they often feel hopeless and being shut off from the past, which will seriously damage the self-identity. Although James

expresses the importance of children constructing a strong sense of ethnic identity, she also acknowledges the complexity of it. “Immigrant [adolescents]...often experience an intergenerational clash of values with parents and relatives, because of a fundamental difference between what the adolescents may want for themselves and what their parents want for them” (James, 1997, p. 99). These findings stress the importance of the development of healthy and secure cultural identities in children, especially for immigrant children.

This literature review explores different educational expectations and practices among Western teachers and Chinese immigrant parents. Chinese parents continue to uphold their Chinese Confucian cultural values and pursue academic learning for their children, while Western parents and teachers tend to follow a play and child-centred approach. The findings show that different or even contradictory expectations and practices exist between Chinese immigrant parents and Western including New Zealand teachers which can cause negative acculturation, learning difficulties, or other problems for Chinese immigrant children. Although the majority of these studies deal with immigrant adolescents, it is also likely that younger children may experience the trauma of cultural split. Rosenthal et al. (1983, cited in Florsheim, 1997) suggest that a strong and stable sense of ethnic identity can facilitate the development of a positive self-image and help immigrant children to cope with developmental and acculturative problems. Hence, it is important for teachers and parents to get to know each other’s expectations, communicate, and work together to reduce the challenges and enable a positive learning environment and curriculum for children.

A great deal of literature on the current research topic comes from America, Canada, or Australia. However, there is a lack of focuses on the recent Chinese immigrant families particularly in New Zealand. It is important to investigate Chinese immigrant parents' educational expectations, experience and practices in New Zealand in order to contribute contextually relevant understandings to the knowledge base. While much literature places a focus on the early childhood or adolescence years, there is a lack of literature available about Chinese immigrant parents' expectations and practices at the primary school level. This research is important and valuable because it is not only based in New Zealand and also targeted Chinese parents from the primary education level. It aimed to explore Chinese immigrant parents' educational expectations and practices for their primary school children's education in New Zealand, with a particular focus on new entrant children, which is their first year of primary school education (Year 0 and Year 1). Based on the previous research findings, it was predicted that Chinese immigrant parents in New Zealand may uphold Chinese Confucian based educational expectations and practices. The current study also anticipated that Chinese immigrant families in New Zealand may experience some challenges or clashes due to different educational expectations and practices between the home and the host culture.

Chapter Three

Methodology

This chapter concerns the design and methodology of the current research. The research objectives and its theoretical underpinnings are described. The two data collection methods, a questionnaire and a focus group interview, are also explained and justified. Furthermore, this chapter presents the research sampling methods, data collection process, and analysis procedure. It also discusses the validity, reliability, and limitations of the research. This methodology chapter is organised in the following five sections: research question and objectives, the theoretical underpinnings, sampling, data collection and analysis, and research validity and reliability.

RESEARCH QUESTION AND OBJECTIVES

The choice of focus dictates the theoretical underpinnings and methodology framework of the research. The central focus of the current research was constructed upon the following research question:

What are Chinese immigrant parents' experience in relation to educational expectations and practices for their children's first year (new entrant class and year one) of primary schooling in New Zealand?

The above question formed a blueprint for the design of the current research. This research was conducted in New Zealand. It was set to target Chinese immigrant parents whose children have attended the first year (New Entrant Class and Year 1) of

primary school education in New Zealand in the past five years. The research focused on investigating these parents' personal experience, educational expectations and practices in regard to their children's primary schooling in New Zealand.

Upon this central question, the following research objectives were developed:

- To examine the literature base to establish the values and beliefs that might shape Chinese immigrant parents' educational expectations and practices.
- To examine the literature base to establish the educational expectations and practices that Chinese immigrant parents have in relation to children's education.
- To examine the literature base to establish the educational expectations and practices that New Zealand primary schools and teachers have in relation to children's primary education.
- To investigate a sample of Chinese immigrant parents to gain an understanding and construct a knowledge base about their educational expectations, practices and experience in relation to the first year (New Entrant Class and Year 1) of primary school education in New Zealand.
- To elicit the views that Chinese immigrant parents hold of the conflicts or challenging experience of their children in relation to the first year (New Entrant Class and Year 1) of primary school education in New Zealand.
- To draw out the experience of conflicts and tensions between the 'home' and 'host' educational expectations and practices in relation to the first year (New Entrant Class and Year 1) of primary school education in New Zealand.

The research placed the emphasises on both Chinese immigrant parents' educational 'expectations' and 'experience' in regard to their children's first year primary

schooling in New Zealand. Various expectations that immigrant parents have make them to experience and react in different ways. In return, experience contribute to the adaptations of immigrant parents' values and expectations for aspects such as children's learning and development, school curriculum, teachers' teaching practices, childrearing practices, and lifestyle in New Zealand. Therefore, in order to gain a complete picture of what parents expect of their children's education and the reasons for such expectations, both Chinese immigrant parents' educational expectations and experience in regard to their children's new entrant primary schooling were the important aspects to be investigated.

The research involved examining Chinese immigrant parents' experience and educational expectations of many parties: their children, the schools, the teachers, and parents themselves. Chinese immigrant parents' expectations of their children's personalities, abilities, behaviours and learning were surveyed. Their expectations of the schools' environment and resources were also investigated. Furthermore, the expectations of the teachers' personalities, knowledge, skills, and interactions with the children and the parents were explored. Lastly, Chinese immigrant parents' expectations of their own parenting approaches and practices were also researched.

THE THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

To investigate Chinese immigrant parents' expectations and experience in regard to their children's education, something other than the positivist paradigm and quantitative methodology was needed. The positivist paradigm sees reality as singular, tangible, fragmental and value-free (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), which reduces a complex whole to the particles of which it is composed. It considers science as the

only way to investigate and explain the nature of the matters (Davidson & Tolich, 2003). However, this research had a different theoretical philosophy from the positivist paradigm. This study attempted to discover the values, thoughts, and perceptions of the participants. The research was looking for the valued-based, complex, personal and subjective accounts from the participants. For that reason, a methodology that allows personal interpretation of such accounts was needed. Such methodology exists in the form of an interpretive paradigm where qualitative research is employed.

This research is qualitative. The focus of investigating the participants' personal expectations and experience in the current research pinpointed the essence of 'subjectivity' in the interpretive paradigm and qualitative methodology (Snape & Spencer, 2003). An interpretive paradigm focuses on exploring the meanings that people made of the society and enquiring based upon "a profound concern with understanding what other human beings are doing or saying" (Schwandt, 2000, p.200). Likewise, this research followed an interpretive approach to "explore perspectives and shared meanings to develop insights into situations" (Wellington, 2000, p.16). As parents from diverse backgrounds uphold different cultural values and interpret education in various ways, they seek education for different purposes, have various educational expectations and practices for their children, and experience in different ways. The principal concern of this interpretive research was to gain an understanding of the way in which Chinese immigrant parents creates, modifies and interprets the experience particularly in regard to children's primary schooling in New Zealand. The central endeavour was to understand the subjective world of Chinese immigrant parents' values, beliefs and meanings of their everyday educational expectations and

practices. Furthermore, the real interest of this research was to examine what Chinese immigrant parents made sense of and gave meanings to their experience about New Zealand's primary schooling. According to Bogdan and Biklen (1992), reality means a social construction of the meanings that humankind create for "subjects, people, situations and events in an attempt to understand the nature of their world" (p.36). Similarly, the current research aimed to explore the reality for Chinese immigrant families in New Zealand. As a result, such subjective investigation drove this research to follow a qualitative methodology.

Furthermore, this subjective investigation supported the interpretive philosophy of 'no universal truth' and that no problems can be understood or solved in isolation from its greater environment (Davidson & Tolich, 2003). In contrast to the positivist paradigm where one universal truth is believed to exist and only scientific experimentations are the way to get at truth (Trochim, 2001), this research highlighted for the primacy of relationships over particles (Davidson & Tolich, 2003). The research believed that there is not a single universal set of educational expectations or childrearing practices by Chinese immigrant parents. In addition, it agreed that all parents will never experience in the same way in regard to New Zealand's primary education. According to Cohen, Manion, Morrison (2000), and Wellington (2000), to retain the integrity of the phenomena investigated, efforts must be made to get to the inside, to understand from within, and to develop insights into situation. Similarly, the research argued that no expectations and experience can be interpreted or understood without examining the context and Chinese immigrant parents' cultural values, beliefs, and their relationships with their children, schools and teachers. It followed an interpretive and qualitative methodology to pursuit subjective accounts and investigated Chinese

immigrant parents' personal beliefs and experience in order to develop an insight of their educational expectations and practices for children's education.

In summary, this research showed its ontological belief that there is no single universal set of values, expectations, or practices for educating children. It valued the idea that every parent upholds different expectations and practices for children's primary education in New Zealand. Epistemologically, it assumed that human knowledge is vague, changeable, and created out of numerous values and experience. It respected every single participant's contribution and sharing of their personal feelings, attitudes, and stories. This research held the position that reality cannot be simply observed, instead it needs to be interpreted (Corbetta, 2003). Unlike all the other quantitative and scientific research, this social research had no such detachment between the researcher and the participants. The knowledge was obtained through interaction with the parents and comprehension of the personal accounts shared by the participants. These fundamental differences inevitably made this research qualitative and implied the qualitative-based data collection techniques and analysis procedures.

SAMPLING, DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

A two-phase data collection procedure was designed for this research to gather information about Chinese immigrant parents' educational expectations, practices and experience. In the first phase of data collection, a questionnaire with open-ended questions and likert-scale questions was established. The analysis of the questionnaires then framed the procedure of the second phase of data collection, a focus group interview (see Figure 1: Research Design).

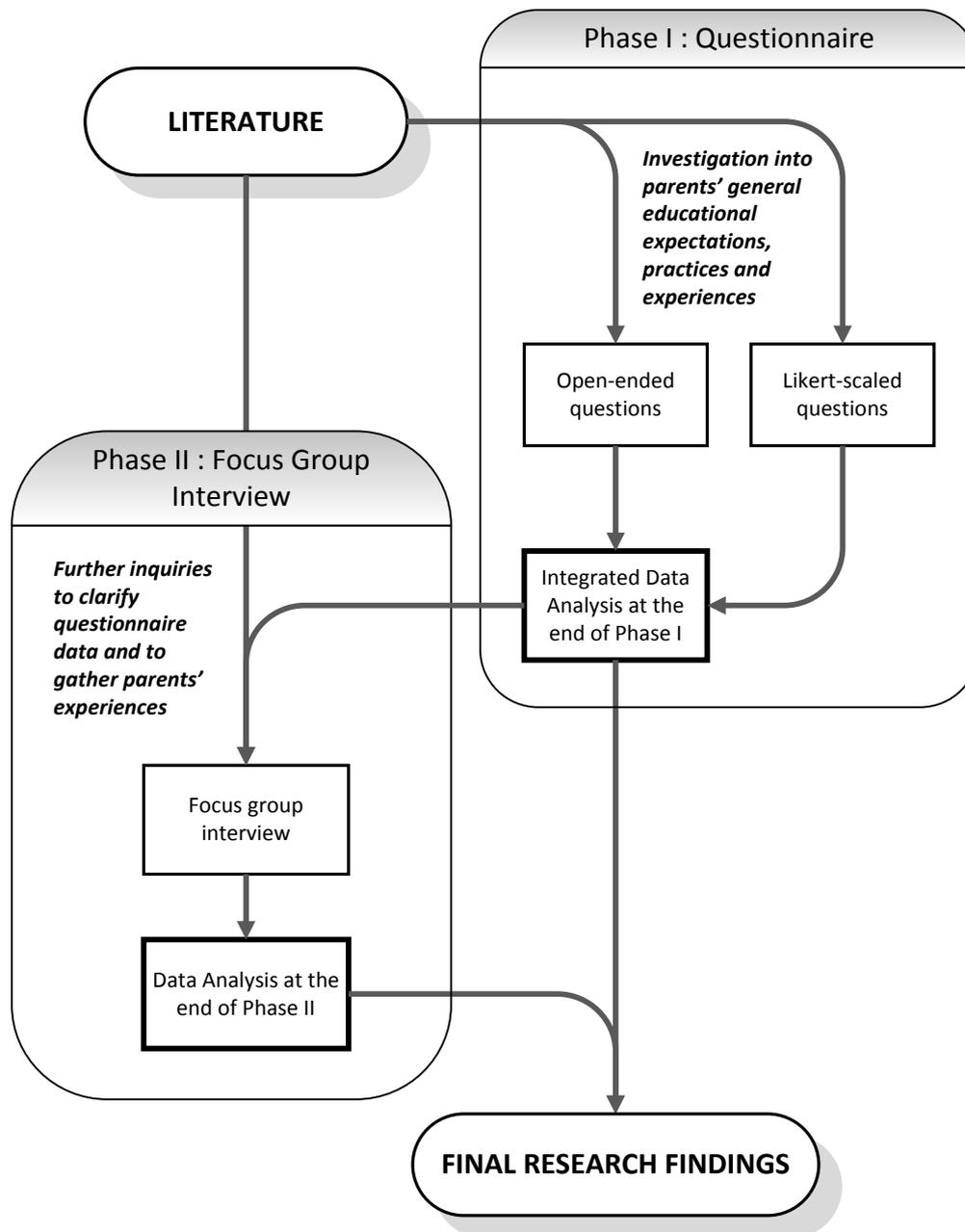


Figure 1: Research Design

Phase I – The Questionnaire

The first phase of data collection was a questionnaire which consisted of two major sections, open-ended questions and likert-scale questions (see Appendix Three and Four for Questionnaire). The questionnaire aimed to obtain detailed narratives from Chinese immigrant parents about their educational expectations, practices and

experience in regard to their children's new entrant primary schooling in New Zealand.

A self-completion postal questionnaire which the respondents could take away and post back once completed was selected for this research. A postal questionnaire has many advantages such as anonymity and time-efficiency. "There is a greater anonymity on sensitive topics...they are less complex they are easier to analyse and there is no risk of interviewer or environmental bias" (Williams, 2003, p.94). Other advantages of a postal questionnaire have also been identified, for example, low cost of both time and money; quicker inflow of data from a larger sample; private time and place for better articulation (Anderson, 1998; Cohen et al., 2000; Davidson & Tolich, 1999; Gray, 2004; Walliman, 2001; Williams, 2003). On the other side, the researcher of the current study was also aware of the weaknesses of a postal questionnaire, such as the higher risk of inaccurate data and a lower response rate (Robson, 1993). A self-completion questionnaire is unable to detect the respondent's misunderstanding of the questions, or their level of competence and literacy for filling out the questionnaire (Williams, 2003). In addition, many people may become rather irritated by questionnaires and refuse to fill them out after they take them away (Wisker, 2001).

A postal questionnaire was chosen as a data collection method because of "a need to collect routine data from a large number of respondents who may be in one or several locations" (Anderson, 1998, p.170). As the targeted population were Chinese immigrant parents from the two major cities in New Zealand, Auckland and Christchurch, a postal questionnaire stood out as an "useful instrument for collecting

survey information, providing structured, often numerical data, being able to be administered without the presence of the researcher” (Wilson and McLean, 1994 cited in Cohen et al., 2000, p. 245). It enabled the researcher “to organize the questions and receive replies without actually having to talk to every respondent” (Walliman, 2001, p. 236). As a result, a postal questionnaire saved the researcher a lot of time, and made the research more time and financial efficient. It made the data collection from a larger sample based in two different cities possible for this research.

The self-completion postal questionnaire in this research allowed the respondents to think, process, and respond within their private space and time (Wellington, 2000). According to Corbetta (2003) and Walliman (2001), a postal questionnaire can be filled in at leisure, at different time, and there is no bias or pressure due to the presence of the interviewer. It grants the respondents the freedom over where and when they wish to share and encourages their confidence in doing so. “The potential of a suitably designed questionnaire for allowing free, honest and articulate expression shall not be underestimated” (Wellington, 2000, p. 107). As there were about ten open-ended questions in the questionnaire seeking for respondents’ subjective information, the researcher believed that the parents needed some time to think and respond. The research assumed that some respondents may be more articulate in writing than speaking and feel more comfortable about sharing these personal values in private. Wellington (2000) also asserts that data collected “by a postal questionnaire may even be richer, perhaps more truthful, than data collected in a face-to-face interview. The respondent may be more articulate in writing or perhaps more willing to divulge views” (p.106). As a result, a postal questionnaire was chosen because of its benefits of allowing the respondents the time and freedom and

encouraging their honest feedback.

In this research, the questionnaire was formatted into two sections. The first section of the questionnaire was a set of open-ended questions for exploring Chinese immigrant parents' expectations, practices and experience. As Foddy (1993) explains, open-ended questions allow respondents to include more information about their feelings, attitudes and understanding of the subject. They have "the potential for richness of responses, some of which may not have been anticipated by the researchers...may lead to interesting or unexpected responses" (Gray, 2004, p.194-195). Likewise, this questionnaire placed the open-ended questions in the first section because it wanted to reduce the likelihood of feeding the respondents with the expectations and practices described in the likert-scale questions. The questionnaire hoped to free respondents' thinking and gather diverse responses in their own expressions. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000), an open-ended question encourages response that "might contain the 'gem' of information that otherwise might not have been caught in the questionnaire. Furthermore, it puts the responsibility for and ownership of the data much more firmly into the respondents' hands" (p.255). The open-ended questions in the questionnaire asked for respondents' expectations of their children's learning and development, the teachers' characteristics and teachings, the school's environment and resources, and of their own facilitation and childrearing practices. They also enquired about respondents' experience of dealing with the teachers and perceptions of their children's learning experience at primary schools. By allowing plenty of time and personal space, the research hoped that these open-ended questions could reach their full potential and "catch the authenticity, richness, depth of response, honesty and candour" (Cohen et al., 2000, p.

255).

In the second section of the questionnaire, likert-scale questions were included to examine respondents' perceptions of the level of importance for many aspects of their children's education. A likert-scale question is a type of rating scale and "provides a range of responses to a given question or statement" (Cohen, et al., 2000, p.253). According to Anderson (1998) and Grey (2004), a likert-scale question is an excellent mean of gathering opinions and attitudes. Similarly, likert-scale questions were appropriate for this qualitative research because they sought the respondents' subjective perceptions and attitudes. They were used to increase and strengthen the depth and richness, as well as to triangulate the accuracy of the data gathered from the open-ended questions. The rating-scale questions "build in a degree of sensitivity and differentiation of response whilst still generating numbers" (Cohen et al., 2000, p.253). Nevertheless, Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) argue that rating-scale questions are "limited in their usefulness by their fixity of response to researchers caused by the need to select from a given choice" (p.255). In this research, the respondents were asked to rate from a five-point scale to indicate how strongly they agree or disagree with the importance of each expectation or practice for children's primary education. These questions were able to produce findings which communicate the respondents' values and beliefs. At the same time, they also allowed the research to gather some data in the format of numbers, frequencies and percentages.

The Questionnaire – Sampling Methods

The target population for the questionnaire was immigrant parents with a Chinese background who were residing in the Auckland or Christchurch region. The

respondents could be from different Chinese countries, for example, Taiwan, Mainland China, Hong Kong, Malaysia, or Singapore. Secondly, the respondents needed to have children who were attending or have attended the first year (new entrant class and year one) of primary school in New Zealand in the past five years. Although the research was aiming to recruit 100 respondents, there were only a total of 75 respondents who took part in this questionnaire.

Two sampling methods were used to recruit questionnaire respondents, convenience sampling (sampling of volunteers) and snowball sampling method. Convenience sampling “involves choosing the nearest individuals to serve as respondents and continuing that process until the required sample size has been obtained” (Cohen et al., 2000, p. 102). It is also referred as ‘sampling of volunteers’ where “a non-probability sample selection method in which respondents are selected by asking for volunteers” (Statistics New Zealand, 1995, p.84). There were two reasons for adopting convenience sampling for this questionnaire. First, instead of waiting passively for respondents, the researcher decided to reach out to the community to seek participation from Chinese immigrant parents who fitted the sample requirements and were willing to take part. Secondly, the convenience sampling was able to recruit respondents in a short timeframe. As many Chinese immigrant families go overseas to visit their home country during the summer holiday, there was only limited time for conducting the questionnaire. The research needed to have a quick questionnaire distribution and collection before the school holiday began. Therefore, the convenience sampling method was most appropriate for this research.

Snowball sampling method was also used to recruit questionnaire respondents. As

Statistics New Zealand (1995) states, snowball sampling is “a non-probability sample selection method in which respondents are asked to suggest additional respondents for the survey” (p.84). When the researcher handed the questionnaire out to the interested crowd, some respondents were very helpful and asked their Chinese immigrant friends or colleagues to take part in this research. As this research had no intention to limit the sample size, any further respondents were all welcomed. Hence, the snowball sampling method was acceptable and appropriate for this research.

The Questionnaire – Data Collection Process

Several actions were taken prior to the commencement of the questionnaire data collection. Initially, a pilot questionnaire was given to four Chinese immigrant parents to check its usefulness and reliability. According to Statistic New Zealand (1995), a pilot questionnaire is “a trial run which should be a full test of the entire process, including collection, and processing, but using a small sample selected from the target population” (p.65). The reason to pilot the questionnaire was “principally to increase the reliability, validity, and practicability of the questionnaire” (Cohen et al., 2000, p. 260). By analysing the responses to the pilot questionnaire, the researcher was able to see the defects of the questionnaire that needed further improvement before the distribution. The respondents who completed the pilot questionnaire also offered many valuable recommendations towards the final alteration of the questionnaire. They pointed out that some questions were unclear or repetitive and there was also a lack of categorisation for the likert-scale questions. Aspects such as the clarity of the questions, the organisation of the layout, the wording of the statements, and the punctuality of the translation were improved to form the final questionnaire.

Meanwhile, respondent recruitment posters and flyers were distributed to many Chinese community centres in the Auckland region, such as Chinese religious centres, Chinese settler centres, Chinese after-school learning centres, Chinese language schools, local libraries, and local community and recreation centres. Notices for recruiting questionnaire respondents were also advertised in several Chinese newspapers, such as *Mandarin Pages*, *Chinese Herald*s, and *Chinese Express*. As a result, there were a small number of Chinese immigrant parents who responded to these recruitment media and took part in the research.

Once the questionnaire was finalised, it was distributed to members of different Chinese community centres and other respondents with a cover letter and a stamped return envelope (see Appendix One and Two for Questionnaire Covering Letter). The cover letter explained the research topic, context, and its central question. It also clearly reminded the parents about the response deadline and reassured them the confidentiality of the information they shared. Many Chinese community centres in the Auckland and Christchurch regions were helping to distribute the questionnaire to their Chinese immigrant members. The researcher also visited many other Chinese community centres to explain the research topic and distribute the questionnaire to the interested crowd.

After the distribution phase, follow ups via telephone, letter or face-to-face verbal reminders were made to minimise the non-response. Corbetta (2003) suggests that “reminders should be given at least once and preferably twice” (p.147) to enable a higher return rate. SPSS Inc (1996) also states that “no follow up is likely to obtain a response rate of no more than 20%” (p.39). As a result, oral reminders of the

questionnaire deadline were made upon the occasional meetings with some respondents. At this point, many parents who forgot to complete or lost the questionnaire then requested another copy of questionnaire. However, the researcher was unable to reach the respondents who had been given the questionnaire by Chinese community centres. Phone calls were only made to these centres to check if further questionnaire was needed. According to Statistics New Zealand (1995) “excluding groups within the scope of the survey or including groups outside the scope of the survey will cause non-sampling errors” (p.64). As non-sampling errors affect the response rate, the researcher contacted Chinese community centres to check for any non-sampling errors, for example, whether more than one copies of questionnaire was given to the same parents, or if the questionnaire did not reach the target population. These follow ups enabled the detection of any non-sampling errors and the calculation of a more accurate response rate.

Despite the efforts made to follow up and reduce the non-response, the questionnaire overall had a relatively low response rate of 32.19%. There were a total of 75 questionnaires received out of 233 distributed in both the Auckland and Christchurch regions. The Auckland region alone had a slightly higher return rate of 33.13%, where 54 questionnaires were received out of 163 distributed. As for the Christchurch region, there was a 30% return rate, where 70 questionnaires were distributed and 21 were returned. SPSS Inc (1996) suggests that if the response rate falls below 50%, there is a potential problem as there are more non-respondents than respondents. If the non-respondents have different opinions from the respondents, the survey results then become biased and unable to make generalisation (SPSS Inc, 1996). Corbetta (2003) informs that a postal questionnaire generally has the disadvantage of “low percentage

of returns (often well below 50%), partly because there is no interviewer present to urge compliance” (p.147). As the questionnaire only had a response rate of 32.19%, it was inappropriate to make generalisations about Chinese immigrant families in New Zealand based upon the questionnaire findings of the current research. Further investigation is needed to confirm whether the same findings apply to the rest of the Chinese immigrant population in New Zealand. The findings of this questionnaire could only be presented and used to inform further research.

The Questionnaire – Data Analysis Methods

The research took a descriptive approach to analyse the data gathered from the questionnaire and focus group interview. According to Wellington (2000), the main purpose of a descriptive theory is to explain what is happening. Likewise, the purpose of a descriptive analysis approach in this research was to understand what Chinese immigrant parents’ educational expectations, practices and experience are. Content analysis method was applied to analysis the data gathered from the questionnaire. Content analysis has been defined as “a multipurpose research method developed specifically for investigating a broad spectrum of problems in which the content of communication serves as a basis of inference, from word counts to categorisation” (Cohen, et al., 2000, p.164). Similarly, this research aimed to identify appropriate coding system, categories and themes to reflect the nature and reality of Chinese immigrant parents’ understanding of New Zealand’s primary.

Several actions were taken prior to the questionnaire data analysis. The first action taken was coding. As Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) state, “the primary task of data reduction is *coding*, that is, assigning a code number to each answer to a survey

question” (p.265). The researcher was able to code the demographic questions in the questionnaire, for example, male 1 and female 2. After the reception of the questionnaire, categories or coding system was then developed for analysing the content. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) suggest that the analysis of the questionnaire is “best done by taking a random sample of the questionnaires and generating a frequency tally of the range of responses as a preliminary to coding classification” (p.265). Spencer, Ritchie and O’Connor (2003a) also reassure that “a common procedure in the analysis of qualitative data is the identification of key themes, concepts, or categories” (p.202). Similarly, the researcher skimmed through all of the responses and devised a coding system for the open-ended questions. The data from the questionnaire was processed within the data analysis software, SPSS. Responses from the open-ended questions and likert-scale questions were entered into SPSS. Data was examined and graphs and tables were generated to demonstrate Chinese immigrant parents’ perceptions about the importance of particular expectations and experience. Wilkinson (2000) affirms that presenting the data as a figure or chart is often used to present the descriptive analyses. For example, the responses for Chinese immigrant parents’ expectation of school resources in this research were initially sorted into different categories, and tables of frequencies were then generated to show Chinese parents’ perception of the level of importance for these categories of school resources.

In addition to analysis in numeric form, the study also included parents’ stories in their own words to illustrate parents’ educational values, perceptions and experience. The research believed that it is through the participants’ own expressions that we can reach an insight of their feelings, thoughts, and values. This was supported by Cohen,

Manion and Morrison's (2000) argument that "not all answer to survey questions can be reduced to code numbers" (p.265), and direct statements by the participants can be used to add to the trueness and richness of a qualitative research. Spencer, Ritchie and O'Connor (2003b) also supports such argument that they state "while there is no doubt that recurrence and numerical counts of recurrence should not be ignored, they should not be presented as primary findings in themselves since they will have no statistical value" (p.244). Hence, the research included both the findings in the numerical form, and also in parents' own voices. By comparing and integrating the two forms of analysis, the research was then able to examine and increase the validity and accuracy of the data collected.

Phase II – The Focus Group Interview

The second phase of the data collection was a focus group interview. The analysis of the questionnaire which summarised the respondents' central educational expectations, practices, and experience were used to frame the procedure of interview. The focus group interview was to inquire about the aspects that needed further clarification in the questionnaire findings. It was also for gathering further detailed personal stories and experience about Chinese immigrant parents' interactions with teachers.

The purpose of a focus group interview in the current research was to add to the depth and richness of the findings gathered from the questionnaire. The current research specifically wanted to investigate more in-depth about Chinese immigrant parents' experience in interacting with primary school teachers. It was chosen for this research because it was useful for gathering feedback from previous studies or data collected (Cohen, et al., 2000) and also provided an access to participants' opinions, viewpoints,

attitudes, and experience and to compare systematically of one's experience with those of the others (Greenbaum, 1998; Litoselliti, 2003; Madriz, 2000; Waldegrave, 2003). By holding a focus group interview in this research, it enabled the data gathering of detailed personal opinions and real life stories from the participants. The focus group interview gave the participants the opportunity to discuss and respond to the questionnaire results. It was set up for the participants to share their thoughts and add to the expectations, practices and experience demonstrated in the questionnaire results.

Secondly, the reliance on the interaction and small group discussion within the focus group interview fostered an interactive and lively interview atmosphere and encouraged the participants to share their thoughts (Wadegrave, 1999). As Litoselliti (2003) states, "small groups are more appropriate if the aim is to explore complex, controversial, emotional topics or to encourage detailed accounts" (p.3). Wadegrave (1999) further asserts that the strengths of a focus group interview "lie in the relative freedom that the group situation provides participants to discuss issues and reflect on problems" (p.231). The research understood that the society people live and interact within shapes their values, practices, and experience. As a result, a focus group was adopted because it enabled the pursuit of the reality by installing a most real environment for the parents' to share comments in. It embraced the cultural and social characteristics of the participants and also encouraged the interactions between the participants. A focus group interview validates the idea that "an individual's attitudes and beliefs do not form in a vacuum: people often need to listen to others' opinions and understandings in order to form their own" (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p.114). It allowed "the researcher to witness one of the most important processes for the social

sciences – social interaction” (Berg, 1998, cited in Madriz, 2000, p. 841). By having many Chinese immigrant participants and carrying the focus group interview out in participants’ shared language, Mandarin, it empowered the contribution to the research agendas of the difficulties, dissatisfaction or conflicts experienced by the participants. It also fostered a more comfortable and empowering environment to share ideas, beliefs, and attitudes in their home language.

Furthermore, a focus group interview was chosen because the research valued the participants’ responses about their feelings, beliefs and experience in their own voices. It was an appropriate research method for this research because it ensured the “precedence [was] given to the participants’ hierarchies of importance, their own words and language, and the frameworks they [used] to describe their own experience” (Kitzinger, 1994, cited in Madriz, 2000, p. 840). These responses increased the likelihood of discovering unanticipated issues, and a focus group interview “allows the facilitator the flexibility to explore unanticipated issues as they arise in the discussion” (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p.115). Moreover, the study believed that Chinese immigrant parents should be the drivers of the data contribution and discussion, whereas the researcher should only be the facilitator of the discussion. Conforming to this belief, a focus group interview was adopted because its small group discussions could “reduce the influence of the interviewer on the research subjects by tilting the balance of power toward the group” (Madriz, 2000, p. 838). “The job of determining the precise content of the discussion within the boundaries of the topic as a whole is deliberately left to the participants” (Hinds, 2000, p. 50) so that “the views of the participants can emerge – the participant’ rather than the researcher’s agenda can predominate” (Cohen, et al., 2000, p.288). The researcher’s

role was to create a supportive environment, ask questions, and encourage discussion and expression of different views. When the participants were granted control over their discussions, the data collection process became interactive and the data collected were detailed, rich, and of a wide range.

The Focus Group Interview – Sampling Method and Data Collection Process

One focus group interview was held in Auckland. It had the same sampling criteria as the questionnaire that it also required participants of Chinese immigrant parents whose children were attending or have attended the first year (new entrant class and year one) of primary school education in New Zealand in the past five years.

Convenience sampling method was used to recruit focus group interview participants. The purpose of choosing the convenience sampling method was to further involve the questionnaire respondents in a small group setting to discuss about their educational expectations, practices and in particular their experience in a more detailed and interactive manner. As stated earlier, convenience sampling method is referred as ‘sampling of volunteers’ (Statistics New Zealand, 1995, p.84). Similarly, the focus group interview volunteers in this research were “selected purely on the basis that they are conveniently available” (Grey, 2004, p.88). The questionnaire respondents from the Auckland region were asked at the end of the questionnaire whether they were willing to further participate in the focus group interview. On the other side, the researcher was also aware of the downside of the convenience sampling method. As Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) assert, “the parameters of generalisability in this type of sample are negligible” because it “does not represent any group apart from itself, it does not seek to generalise about the wider population; for a convenience

sample that is an irrelevance” (p.103).

The research aimed to have a group of at least four Chinese immigrant parents for the focus group interview. As previous researchers state, focus groups are generally composed of four to twelve people per group (Litoselliti, 2003; Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Morgan, 1988). Furthermore, Morgan (1988) recommends over-recruiting by as much as 20 percent to allow for people not turning up on the day. Out of the 54 Auckland questionnaire respondents, five wished to be further contacted for taking part in the focus group interview. Soon after receiving their questionnaires, two follow up letters were sent out to confirm the reception of their express of interest, and to inform them the scheduled date and venue for the focus group interview. However, there were only two out of these five Auckland questionnaire respondents who were able to attend the focus group interview scheduled. As the number was less than expected, further invitations were sent to 19 Auckland questionnaire respondents whom the researcher had contacts for. As a result, two more respondents were willing to participate in the focus group interview. At the same time, there was also one extra Chinese immigrant parent who heard about the research and wanted to take part in the focus group interview. These made up a group of five participants ready for the focus group interview.

In spite of the verbal and written reminders that were given via telephone and letter, there were only three Chinese immigrant parents who showed up at the interview. One parent rang to inform that he was unable to attend on the day of interview, and another parent did not give notification for her absence. The three focus group participants consisted one male parent from China, one female parent from Singapore, and another

female parent from Taiwan.

In the focus group interview, the participants were first given a set of questionnaire results (see Appendix Five and Six for Preliminary Questionnaire Results). They were asked to share their perceptions about the important educational expectations, practices and experience in the questionnaire results. They were also asked to share their personal values and stories about their interactions with the teachers in relation to educational expectations and practices (see Appendix Seven for Focus Group Interview Questions). The two-hour discussion was interactive where participants were agreeing and disagreeing with each other's perceptions and educational beliefs. They also offered strategies that they found useful in assisting their children's learning and dealing with the teachers. The participants' engagement in sharing their opinions and experience, and even debating with each other were clearly observed in the focus group interview.

The Focus Group Interview – Data Analysis Methods

As discussed earlier in the chapter, the research has adopted a descriptive analysis approach for the analysing the data collected from both the questionnaire and the focus group interview. The stories and experience that Chinese immigrant parents shared in the focus group interview were transcribed and then organised into different themes. The research believed that the inclusion of parents' own voices and descriptions of their educational values, practices and experience could most depict the reality for Chinese families' educational experience in New Zealand. The findings of the focus group interview provided "an access to what is 'inside a person's head', [it] makes it possible to measure what a person knows (knowledge or information),

what a person likes or dislikes (values and preferences), and what a person thinks (attitudes and beliefs)” (Cohen, et al., 2000, p.268). Silverman (2005) also states that “the most popular approach is to treat respondents’ answers as describing some external reality (e.g. facts, events) or internal experience (e.g. feelings, meanings)” (p.154). Hence, this research followed the descriptive approach that it presented the parents’ values, beliefs, feelings, thoughts and experience in their most original descriptions.

VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

“In qualitative data validity might be addressed through the honesty, depth, richness, and scope of the data achieved, the participants approached, the extent of triangulation and the disinterestedness or objectivity of the researcher” (Cohen, et al., 2000, p.105). Similarly, this research designed several devices for reassuring the validity and reliability of the data gathered. First, the research aimed to increase the honesty of the data by reassuring the participants about the research confidentiality and anonymity prior to commencement of the data collection. As Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) assert that the advantages of the questionnaire are that it tends to be more reliable, because it is anonymous and it encourages greater honesty. Furthermore, the research wanted to ensure the data validity by making sure the respondents understood the questions properly. The questionnaire and the focus group interview was conducted in the participants’ home language, Mandarin, hoping to reduce the respondents’ misinterpretations of the questions. Moreover, other than the participants and the interviewer, one assistant was hired to observe and record the interview. By having a post-interview meeting where the interviewer discussed the findings with the assistant, the research tried to decrease the risks of

misinterpretations of the data. There was only one instead of many researchers examining the questionnaires, so that data were interpreted by the same interpreter with the same set of codes and values to increase the consistency of the analysis.

As Silverman (2005) states, “it is appropriate to build into the research design various devices to ensure the accuracy of your interpretation, so you can check the accuracy of what your respondents tell you by other observations” (p.154). The data collection methods in this research, the questionnaire and the focus group, were designed to triangulate at different levels. “Triangulation is a powerful way of demonstrating concurrent validity, particularly in qualitative research” (Cohen, et al., 2000, p.112). The research aimed to achieve combined levels of triangulation (Cohen, et al., 2000) by comparing the responses to the open-ended questions and likert-scale questions. The research was also deliberately designed to gain triangulated findings by examining the written information from a larger sample (the questionnaire) and verbal information from a smaller sample (the focus group interview). By studying Chinese immigrant parents’ educational expectations, practices and experience from more than one standpoint and by making use of both numerical and narrative data, the research attempted to increase the accuracy, richness, and complexity of the findings and to understand the topic more fully.

Overall, this qualitative research was designed to gather subjective data from Chinese immigrant parents living in Auckland and Christchurch via the questionnaire and the focus group interview. Although there were many areas of the research design and data collection yet to improved, such as low response rate and inability for generalisation, the research tried very hard to obtain a detailed insight of Chinese

immigrant parents' personal feelings, values, beliefs, thoughts and experience in regard to their educational expectations and practices for their children's primary education in New Zealand. The researcher hoped to increase the data validity and present the readers with a most accurate and complete picture of the matter researched.

Chapter Four

Findings

This chapter presents the findings of two data collection methods administered in this study. A questionnaire was used to collect data from seventy-five Chinese immigrant parents about their educational expectations and experience during their children's early primary education. A focus group interview was also used to collect data from three Chinese immigrant parents about their personal thoughts, expectations, and experience in relation to the first year of their children's primary education in New Zealand. In this chapter, the findings from the questionnaires are presented in section one and the focus group interview findings are in section two.

SECTION ONE: QUESTIONNAIRE FINDINGS

Question 1: Background Information

The research questionnaires had two versions, one in Chinese and one in English (see Appendix Three and Four for Questionnaire). The respondents could choose either version to complete. In the first question, respondents were asked to provide their name, gender, occupation, family population, country of origin, date of immigration, home language, and whether they came to New Zealand for their children's education or not. Respondents were also asked to provide their children's gender, age, and the year they attended new entrant (Y0) or year one (Y1) class in New Zealand's primary schools. The information was used to check the respondents' eligibility for participating in this research. It was to ensure that the data collected were from the targeted group whose children have attended new entrant or year one class in New

Zealand in the past five years.

A total of 75 Chinese immigrant parents from the two major cities in New Zealand, Auckland and Christchurch, responded to the questionnaires. Of all 75 respondents, 55 were female (73.3%) and 20 were male (26.7%). There were 23 parents (30.7%) whom had families of three or less and 51 parents (68%) whom had four or more in their families. The majority of parents were from China (42.7%), Taiwan (33.3%) and Malaysia (10.7%). The remainder of the respondents included parents from Singapore, Hong Kong, Vietnam, and Indonesia (see Table 1.1 – Country of Origin).

Table 1.1

Country of Origin

		Frequency	Percentage
Valid	China	32	42.7
	Taiwan	25	33.3
	Malaysia	8	10.7
	Singapore	3	4.0
	Hong Kong	2	2.7
	NZ Chinese	2	2.7
	Indonesia	1	1.3
	Vietnam	1	1.3
Missing		1	1.3
Total		75	100.0

Among all the respondents, the most common home language was Mandarin. There were 48 families that spoke Mandarin only, two spoke both Mandarin and Cantonese, 12 spoke Mandarin and English, and one spoke Mandarin and Indonesian. These made a total of 63 respondents (a total of 84%) who spoke Mandarin as their home language. English language was the second common home language among all the

families. There were three families that spoke only English at home, 12 spoke both English and Mandarin, three spoke English and Cantonese, and one spoke English and Japanese. These made a total of 19 respondents (a total of 25.3%) who spoke English as their home language. The third common home language was Cantonese, with four that spoke only Cantonese at home, two spoke both Cantonese and Mandarin, and three spoke Cantonese and English. These made a total of nine respondents (a total of 12%) who spoke Cantonese at home (see Table 1.2 – Home Language).

Table 1.2

Home Language

	Frequency	Percentage
Mandarin	48	64.0
English/Mandarin	12	16.0
Cantonese	4	5.3
English	3	4.0
English/Cantonese	3	4.0
Mandarin/Cantonese	2	2.7
English/Japanese	1	1.3
Mandarin/Indonesian	1	1.3
Malay	1	1.3
Total	75	100.0

Nearly half of the respondents (42.7%) had been in New Zealand for about 5-10 years. There were 25 respondents (33.3%) who had lived in New Zealand for 10-15 years. Only 10 respondents (13.3%) were new arrivals to New Zealand for less than five years, and there were also six respondents (8%) who had been living in New Zealand for over 15 years.

Lastly, respondents were asked whether they came to New Zealand for their children's

education. The majority of parents (72%) answered no and only 18 respondents (24%) stated yes.

In general, the background information about the respondents showed that nearly three quarters of the respondents were female and the rest were male. The majority of respondents came from China, Taiwan, and Malaysia, and had been in New Zealand for more than five years. About three quarters of respondents had families of four or more people and the rest only had three or less. The most common home language was Mandarin, English was the second, and Cantonese was the third. Finally, almost a quarter of respondents came to New Zealand solely for the purpose of their children's education.

Question 2: Open-Ended Questions

Question 2 in the questionnaire contained several open-ended questions seeking respondents' personal feedback. These questions sought information from Chinese immigrant parents about their educational expectations of their children, the schools, the teachers, and themselves as parents. Respondents were asked to answer the questions by writing down their thoughts in their own words.

With Question 2.1, parents were asked to comment on the personalities and characteristics that they wanted their children to develop, as well as the knowledge, abilities, and behaviours that they wished their children to learn. In relation to children's personalities and characteristics, the responses were grouped into the following categories: effort, moral, honest, confident, lively, friendly, and sharing. Effort (19.9%) was the most emphasised category. It included developing children's

sense of effort, determination, and motivation to learn. A sense of filial piety and good manners (17%) was the second important personality and characteristic in children. The respondents believed that a sense of honesty (16%) and confidence (16%) were also important for children to develop during their early years (see Table 2.11 – Children’s Personalities and Characteristics).

Table 2.11

Children’s Personalities and Characteristics

	Frequency	Percentage
<u>Effort</u> , motivated to learn, determined, hardworking	41	19.9
<u>Sense of filial piety and good manners</u> , respect, tolerant, polite, moral	35	17.0
<u>Honest</u> , justice	33	16.0
<u>Confident</u> , independent, brave	33	16.0
<u>Lively</u> , healthy, happy, optimistic, easy-going	26	12.6
<u>Friendly</u> , caring, loving, compassionate, gentle, kind	25	12.1
<u>Sharing</u> , understanding	13	6.3
Total	206	100.0

There were two particular parents who referred to ‘Chinese cultural characteristics’. One parent said children should develop ‘Chinese cultural personalities and characteristics’ such as respect others, honesty, hardworking, friendly, good manners, easy going, happy and independent” (Q2.11: P33). Another parent mentioned that “while children integrate with New Zealand’s culture, they also need to maintain some Chinese attitudes like hardworking, making an effort for their learning, and having the courage to speak up in front of others and take on the challenges” (Q2.11: P74).

There were many types of knowledge that the respondents wanted their children to learn. The responses fell into the following categories: English, general daily knowledge, mathematics, other academic subjects, social science, art, physical education, Chinese, and learning methods. English (20.7%) was recognised as the most important knowledge for children’s learning during early primary education. This category covered children’s English vocabulary, their English writing, reading and speaking abilities. Followed by English, the parents saw general daily knowledge (18.4%) as the second important learning area for their new entrant and year one children. This category included life skills like hand washing, toileting, eating and drinking. Mathematics (17.3%) was the third important knowledge for children’s learning (see Table 2.12 – Children’s Knowledge).

Table 2.12

Children’s Knowledge

	Frequency	Percentage
<u>English</u> : speaking, vocabulary, writing, reading, literacy	37	20.7
<u>General daily knowledge</u>	33	18.4
<u>Mathematics</u> : numeracy, addition, subtraction	31	17.3
<u>Other academic subjects</u> : geography, technology, science	17	9.5
<u>Social science</u> , moral & cultural	15	8.4
<u>Art</u> , Music	14	7.8
<u>Physical education</u> (PE)	13	7.3
<u>Chinese</u>	10	5.6
<u>Learning methods</u> , approaches of learning	9	5.0
Total	179	100.0

In relation to the abilities and behaviours that children should develop in their early

primary years, the responses formed the following categories: responsible and disciplined, social skills, communication skills, self-protection, problem-solving skills, learning ability, self-help skills, and creativity. Of all the responses, being responsible and disciplined (28.1%) was the most important behaviour to learn during children’s early years. It included controlling their own behaviours, managing their time and tasks, following instructions and rules, and being responsible for their own learning. Over a quarter of the responses emphasized on children’s social skills (25.6%), and a further 10.7% was about developing children’s communication skills (see Table 2.13 – Children’s Abilities and Behaviours).

Table 2.13

Children’s Abilities and Behaviours

	Frequency	Percentage
<u>Responsible and disciplined</u> , self-control, self-management, follow the rules	34	28.1
<u>Social skills</u> , cooperative	31	25.6
<u>Communication skills</u>	13	10.7
<u>Self-protection</u> , safety	12	9.9
<u>Problem-solving skills</u> , coping with difficulty, take on challenge	9	7.4
<u>Learning ability</u> , thinking and understanding ability	9	7.4
<u>Self-help skills</u> and help others	8	6.6
<u>Creativity</u>	5	4.1
Total	121	100.0

Many respondents wanted their children to communicate and socialize well with other children. One parent said it is important to “have the language ability to communicate with people and solve problems” (Q2.13: P12). Another believed children should develop “the abilities to communicate with other children, to make friends, and to

distinguish the right from the wrong” (Q2.13: P43). Children should develop “the ability to socialise with their peers, to communicate effectively, and to sit and listen to their teachers” (Q2.13: P52).

In Question 2.1, the findings showed the respondents’ expectations of their children. Personalities and characteristics such as a sense of effort, moral and honesty were highly valued by the respondents. The parents associated these characteristics with their ethnicity and they referred to them as the “Chinese cultural personalities and characteristics”. Learning to be responsible and disciplined was the most important ability and behaviour for children to develop during their early primary years. Communication and socialization were the next important abilities and behaviours. Lastly, the respondents regarded English to be the most important knowledge for children’s early learning.

In Question 2.2, parents were asked to share their expectations of the learning environment and resources that the schools should provide. In respect of the school environment, the responses formed six categories: friendly, safe, inspiring, explorative, justice, and class size. The respondents regarded a sense of friendliness (35.3%) as the most important feature of a school environment. A sense of being friendly, open, warm, happy and comfort were perceived to be the most important components of a positive learning environment. A safe and secure (26.5%) environment was also considered as a quality component for a school. Thirdly, the respondents believed that a quality school environment needed to inspire (13.2%) children’s curiosity, motivation, and desire to learn (see Table 2.21 – Schools’ Environment).

Table 2.21***Schools' Environment***

	Frequency	Percentage
<u>Friendly</u> , open, warm, happy, comfortable	24	35.3
<u>Safe</u> , secure	18	26.5
<u>Inspiring</u> learning, curiosity, motivation, and desire to learn	9	13.2
<u>Explorative</u> , lively, interesting	8	11.8
<u>Justice</u> , equal, fair, no discrimination	7	10.3
<u>Class size</u> : <=20	2	2.9
Total	68	100.0

In terms of the learning resources, the respondents considered that there should always be plenty of multidimensional resources (34.2%) to fulfil children's learning needs and to enhance their learning experience. The parents also regarded library books (15.1%) and quality teachers (13.7%) to be the important resources for children's learning (see Table 2.22 – Schools' Resources).

Table 2.22***Schools' Resources***

	Frequency	Percentage
<u>Multidimensional</u> , plenty of materials to meet children's needs	25	34.2
<u>Library</u> , books	11	15.1
<u>Quality teachers</u>	10	13.7
<u>Computers</u> , software	8	11.0
<u>Spacious</u> , bright	6	8.2
<u>Playground</u> , PE	4	5.5
<u>Funding and management</u>	4	5.5
<u>Hygiene</u> , clean, healthy	3	4.1
<u>Textbooks</u>	2	2.7
Total	73	100.0

A few parents explained their perceptions of a quality school environment. The school's environment and its resources should "inspire children's desire to learn and their motivation to know" (Q2.2: P1). Schools should be "safe (no bullying on the campus) and provide children with equal access to resources" (Q2.2: P16). Schools should be "friendly, clean, and bright with the multidimensional and creative resources" (Q2.2: P20). The school environment should be "comfortable, secure and the educational resources should be appropriate for children's learning needs" (Q2.2: P23).

Two parents particularly commented on the resources that schools should provide: "plenty of computer resources, textbooks to help children's learning at home, and a specific focus on developing Asian children's English ability" (Q2.2: P40). Schools should provide "quality human (teacher) and information resources, e.g., computers, library, and textbooks" (Q2.2: P72).

On the whole, the majority of respondents considered that a safe, secure, happy and friendly environment with the multidimensional resources, library books, and quality teachers should be provided by the schools.

With Question 2.3, respondents were asked to share their expectations of the school teachers. This covered their expectations of teachers' personalities and characteristics, their knowledge, teaching abilities, and their teaching style, content and strategies. In relation to teachers' personalities and characteristics, the responses formed seven categories: friendly, patient, justice, effort, sense of morality, responsibility, and honesty. Nearly half of the responses were about the friendliness of teachers (42.3%).

This category showed that the parents wanted teachers to be friendly, compassionate, loving, caring, lively and open to everybody. Secondly, being patient (25.6%) was another quality personality in teachers. Thirdly, the respondents believed that teachers should have a strong sense of justice (10.3%), fairness, and should not discriminate against any child (see Table 2.31 – Teachers’ Personalities and Characteristics).

Table 2.31

Teachers’ Personalities and Characteristics

	Frequency	Percentage
<u>Friendly</u> , compassionate, loving, caring, open, lively	66	42.3
<u>Patient</u>	40	25.6
<u>Justice</u> , fair, no discrimination	16	10.3
<u>Effort</u> to teaching, passionate	13	8.3
<u>Sense of morality</u> , manners	13	8.3
<u>Responsible</u> , reliable	5	3.2
<u>Honest</u>	3	1.9
Total	156	100.0

In relation to teachers’ knowledge and ability, over a third of the responses showed that teachers should have knowledge about children and education (34.5%). The respondents also stated that teachers should not only be qualified (12.6%), but also be knowledgeable about child psychology (14.9%) (see Table 2.32 – Teachers’ Knowledge and Teaching Ability).

A particular parent had a detailed explanation of his/her expectation of the school teachers. “Children’s first teacher will always have a deeper influence to them. Teachers should teach the knowledge, as well as get to know the children, their background, and their learning progress, so they can design different curriculum

accordingly” (Q2.31: P74). “It is important to have all types of knowledge. If teachers can also emphasize on social interactions throughout the curriculum, it will help immigrant children’s integration into New Zealand’s society. It will foster the harmony in immigrant families, and also decrease the contradictions or clashes that have resulted from different expectations between the parents and the teachers” (Q2.32: P74).

Table 2.32

Teachers’ Knowledge and Teaching Ability

	Frequency	Percentage
<u>Knowledge of children and education</u>	30	34.5
<u>Children’s psychology</u>	13	14.9
<u>Qualified teacher</u>	11	12.6
<u>Curriculum designing</u>	11	12.6
<u>Teaching ability and skills</u>	7	8.0
<u>Experienced</u>	5	5.7
<u>Communication</u>	5	5.7
<u>Interaction with children</u>	5	5.7
Total	87	100.0

When respondents shared their expectations of teachers’ teaching content and strategies, English (20%) surfaced as the most important teaching area. Art (11.4%) and social studies (8.6%) were also regarded as important areas in children’s early learning (see Table 2.33 – Teachers’ Teaching Content and Strategies).

Table 2.33***Teachers' Teaching Content and Strategies***

	Frequency	Percentage
<u>English</u>	7	20.0
<u>Art, music</u>	4	11.4
<u>Social studies, moral, culture</u>	3	8.6
<u>PE, coordination</u>	3	8.6
<u>Mathematics</u>	3	8.6
<u>Other academic subjects: science, computer</u>	3	8.6
<u>Comply with ministry of education (MOE)</u>	3	8.6
<u>Giving homework</u>	3	8.6
<u>Game</u>	2	5.7
<u>Trips</u>	2	5.7
<u>Story-telling, books</u>	2	5.7
Total	35	100.0

The responses to teachers' teaching style formed three categories: play, firmness, and one to one teaching style. Play (a total of 36.2% of all the responses) was the most preferred teaching style. This included 18.9% who supported play as the only teaching style, 6.3% who supported a combination of all three: play, firmness and one to one teaching methods, 5.5% who supported a combination of play and firm methods of teaching, and 5.5% who supported a combination of play and one to one teaching style. Of all the responses, 17.3 % commented that different teaching styles should be used according to different situations and children's learning interests, needs or wants. The firm teaching style (a total of 19.7% of all the responses) came to be the second preferred teaching style. This included 7.9% who said firm, formal and structured teaching style and curriculum should be the only way, 6.3% who supported a combination of all three teaching methods, and 5.5% who supported a combination of firm and play methods. Respondents stated that teaching practices should be lively,

happy, flexible and interesting (15.7%), and they should also inspire children’s learning (13.4%) (see Table 2.34 – Teachers’ Teaching Style and Practices).

The firm and formal teaching style was highly valued by some respondents. “Teachers should adopt both a firm teaching style and the praise/reward strategy to teach children. It is good to use the play methods too, but the one to one teaching is impossible” (Q2.33: P14). “I hope there is some sort of teaching guidelines, to enable all children to reach to the same level. There should be more formal teaching, but play method is ok too” (Q2.33: P2).

Table 2.34

Teachers’ Teaching Style and Practices

	Frequency	Percentage
<u>Play</u>	24	18.9
<u>Situation</u> , based on children's interests or needs, child-centred	22	17.3
<u>Firm</u> : formal, structured	10	7.9
<u>All three</u> : firm, play, one to one	8	6.3
<u>Play and firm</u>	7	5.5
<u>Play and one to one</u>	7	5.5
<u>One to one</u>	1	0.8
<u>Lively</u> , happy, flexible, interesting	20	15.7
<u>Inspiring</u> children's learning	17	13.4
<u>Reward</u> , praise	6	4.7
<u>Explorative</u>	5	3.9
Total	127	100.0

On the other hand, other parents placed more emphasis on the play and child-centred teaching style. “Learning through play is the most natural way, and is the best for children’s learning” (Q2.33: P59). “Learning through play is the best approach.

Learning through social groups is the most efficient method. Through interactions, children can feel encouraged to develop a balanced inner and outer growth” (Q2.33: P39). “Play and one-to-one are the useful teaching approaches. Firm teaching approach will only make children feel tired of learning, which cannot develop their personality fully” (Q2.33: P43).

Some respondents agreed to a combination of approaches. “All three: firmness, play, and one to one teaching approaches are essential. Teachers can use different methods according to the situations” (Q2.33: P4). “There should be rules and instructions during the formal classes. However, children should also be allowed to play happily and lively in small group experience. As for new immigrant children who have limited English ability, one to one teaching style should be applied” (Q2.33: P26).

With Question 2.3, the findings showed the respondents’ expectations of the school teachers. The respondents looked for teachers who were friendly, fair, and patient to all children. They wanted qualified teachers who had knowledge about children, education and child psychology to teach their children. Over a third of the responses regarding teaching style supported the play approach, and about one fifth supported the firm teaching approach. In general, although the respondents favoured different teaching styles, their demands for the inspiring and lively teaching practices were consistent.

With Question 2.4, respondents were asked to share their expectations of themselves as a parent. The responses covered the parents’ parenting style, and teaching content and strategies to assist their children’s learning. Over half of the responses were

related with developing children’s English, reading and writing skills (53.8%). The parents had cooperated with the schools (13.8%) by following the schools’ instructions and reinforcing the learning at home. Another 10% of the responses mentioned that they set up some sort of after-school tuitions or help their children with their homework (see Table 2.4 – Parent’s Own Style, Content and Strategies).

Table 2.4

Parents’ Own Style, Content and Strategies

	Frequency	Percentage
<u>English, reading and writing</u> : assist children’s English ability	43	53.8
<u>Cooperate</u> with school	11	13.8
<u>Tuition and homework</u> : to assist children with their learning	8	10.0
<u>Mathematics</u> : assist children’s mathematics ability	5	6.3
<u>Interests</u> : develop children’s interests	5	6.3
<u>Art</u> , music: assist children’s art and music abilities	4	5.0
<u>Questioning</u> : question and challenge children’s thinking	4	5.0
Total	80	100.0

With Question 2.5, respondents were asked to share the strategies that they used to assist their children’s to settle at school when they first started. A third of the responses were about providing children with the emotional support (33.3%). This meant giving children positive encouragement, praise, and reward to build up their confidence. Over a fifth (20.3%) of the responses were about encouraging their children to interact and socialise with the other children. Lastly, the parents found discussing the school matters with their children (11.1%) and communicating with the

teachers and other parents (11.1%) to be the effective ways in assisting their children’s settling at school (see Table 2.5 – Parents’ Ways to Assist Children’s Settling at School).

Table 2.5

Parents’ Ways to Assist Children’s Settling at School

	Frequency	Percentage
<u>Emotional support</u> , confidence building, encouragement, praise, reward	51	35.7
Encourage to <u>socialise with other children</u>	31	21.7
<u>Discussion with children</u>	17	11.9
<u>Communicate with the teacher and other parents</u>	17	11.9
<u>Involve in the school’s activities</u> : both parents and children	12	8.4
<u>Familiarize with the school routine</u> , environment, people	10	7.0
<u>Send children to preschool</u>	5	3.5
Total	143	100.0

Chinese immigrant parents generally wanted their children to settle well and make friends in the new environment. One parent said “I encouraged my child to meet new classmates. I read with her everyday and discussed the school happenings with her. I showed a high level of interest in her school life” (Q2.4: P12). “I invited his friends/classmates to our place to get to know them. I tried to encourage my child to get closer to his friends and to get used to the new school environment” (Q2.5: P18).

Chinese immigrant parents were also concerned about their children’s English ability and they focused on raising their children’s English and reading ability at home. “Students in Chinese families usually have less foundation in English. Parents should

find out the problems and assist their children’s vocabulary, spelling and writing skills” (Q2.4: P72). “I talked to the teachers before or after classes, or in the parent-teacher meeting to get to know the areas that my child needed to work on. I also read the newsletters to know the activities that were happening at school. I talked with my child about her friends and their play, and we read the library books regularly” (Q2.4: P20). “I patiently answered all of my child’s questions. We worked together on the tasks given by the teacher. We went to the library to borrow reading books or videos” (Q2.5: P68).

With Question 2.6, respondents were asked to share the problems that their children had encountered during their early primary education. The most common problem was the language problem (30.6%). Over a quarter (27.1%) of the responses said their children had experienced no difficulties at all as their children were born here. On the other hand, 21.2% of the responses said it was difficult for children to settle due to a lack of familiarity of the environment, the routine, and the people (see Table 2.6 – Difficulties Encountered by Children).

Table 2.6

Difficulties Encountered by Children

	Frequency	Percentage
<u>Language</u> : Communication Barrier	26	30.6
<u>No problem</u> : children were born here	23	27.1
<u>Lack of familiarity</u> : environment, routine, people, insecurity, shy, scared	18	21.2
<u>Social relationships</u>	11	12.9
<u>Cultural differences</u>	5	5.9
<u>Bullying</u>	2	2.4
Total	85	100.0

Some respondents gave a detailed explanation of the problems that their children had experienced during their early school life. One parent mentioned that it was difficult for his/her child to settle in because he/she was not familiar with the environment and the people. This particular parent believed that “if teachers give lots of encouragement and let the children play with the others, then they will be fine very soon” (Q2.6: P1). There were two parents who both listed English as a barrier for their new entrant children. “Language was the barrier for a long time. My child did not know what the teacher was talking about. She just guessed by the teacher’s body movements, and followed what the other children were doing. Therefore, my child was always very quiet and did not raise her hand to ask questions. She was afraid of talking in front of everybody, and her voice was very quiet. It was not good for her development” (Q2.6: P26). “Language was one of the problems, which made making friends hard. There were also problems due to the different cultural backgrounds. Bullying behaviours were also happening at school” (Q2.6: P33).

With Question 2.7, respondents were asked to identify the communication methods between the teachers and themselves. They were also asked to share the types of matters that were frequently discussed. The responses formed the following six categories: verbal communication, interviews, parent help, written communication, report, and participation in school activities. The findings showed that the verbal communication (47.4%) was the most popular teacher-parent communication method. Teacher-parent interviews (28.9%) were the second popular communication method. However, the frequency of the interviews varied from once a term to once a year in different schools (see Table 2.7 – Teacher-Parent Communication Methods).

Table 2.7***Teacher-Parent Communication Methods***

	Frequency	Percentage
<u>Verbal</u> communication	46	47.4
<u>Interview</u> : conference, meeting	28	28.9
<u>Parent help</u>	9	9.3
<u>Written</u> communication: notes, newsletters	8	8.2
<u>Report</u>	4	4.1
<u>Participation in school activities</u>	2	2.1
Total	97	100.0

A particular parent shared a thorough explanation of the methods that he/she used to communicate with the teachers. My child and I “always went to school a few minutes earlier and shared my child’s work with the teacher. I asked the teachers about their teaching aims and goals while talking to him/her, so we could facilitate the learning at home. I attended the parent-teacher meetings to get to know my child’s progress and development. I also got involved in school activities, e.g., be a parent helper” (Q2.7: P20). Another parent recommended “to communicate via the parent interview, or to be a parent-helper to understand the teacher’s teachings, or to participate in the school’s activities” (Q2.7: P44). Written communication was also a popular communication method. “I had regular face to face communication with the teacher and I listened to the teacher’s feedback. If there was no time for conversations, I would write a note to the teacher. The teacher would also write back to me” (Q2.7: P2).

In terms of the content of the teacher-parent communication, 50% were about children’s learning progress at school, 19.4% were about the problems or children’s learning needs that the parents or the teachers were worried about, 16.7% were about exchanging the parents’ or the teachers’ teaching goals, expectations, teaching content

and method, and 13.9% were about the discussions about the happenings at home and school.

Overall the findings from Question 2.7 showed that the parents placed a high emphasis on having a regular verbal communication with the teachers, as well as attending the parent-teacher interviews. These communication opportunities were treated important mainly for exchanging children’s learning progress, and discussing other matters like children’s learning problems, needs, goals, and expectations.

With Question 2.8, respondents were asked to share the methods that they used to overcome the communication barrier between the teachers and themselves. Of all the responses, 23.1% said they would talk to the other parents to seek their advice, and another 23.1% said they would try to extend and clarify by written communication (see Table 2.8 – Parent’s Ways to Overcome Communication Barriers).

Table 2.8

Parent’s Ways to Overcome Communication Barriers

	Frequency	Percentage
<u>Talk to other parents</u> : seek their advices	6	23.1
Further <u>written communication</u>	6	23.1
<u>Translator</u> : other parents, friends	4	15.4
<u>Talk to principal</u>	4	15.4
Further <u>verbal communication</u>	4	15.4
<u>Change of teacher</u>	2	7.7
Total	26	100.0

Some respondents shared their experience of the communication barriers between the teachers and themselves. “I sometimes couldn’t agree with the way that the teacher

taught or the teaching content due to the cultural differences. However, it is better not to let the children know. We should encourage the children to follow the teacher's instructions at school and ours at home. For example, when children do not feel like working on the tasks, the New Zealand teachers will let them be, when Chinese families will make them do it" (Q2.8: P72). Surprisingly, two particular respondents said they would wait and change class for their children if the problem remained unresolved. When there was a problem, I would "talk to the principal. If there was no better way to resolve it, then I could only wait for the change of teacher in following academic year" (Q2.8: P12 & P13).

With Question 2.9, parents were asked to provide recommendations on the areas which needed improvement in the early primary education. The responses formed the following categories: quality of teachers or their teaching content, communication, low number of teachers, standardized materials and curriculum, firm discipline, homework, clarity in reports, funding. The most emphasised area for improvement was the lack of quality in teachers and their teaching content (24.6%). Some parents stated that the teaching content was too simple, and the teachers were not firm enough. Some parents commented on the lack of clear communication (23.0%) concerning the teaching content, goals, expectations, and their children's learning progress. A few parents commented on a high staff turnover or the low number of teachers (13.1%) available. Some also considered that there was a lack of standardized teaching material, textbooks, curriculum and learning guidelines (13.1%) (see Table 2.9 – Areas for Improvement).

Table 2.9*Areas for Improvement*

	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of <u>Quality Teachers or their Teaching Content</u>	15	24.6
Lack of <u>Communication</u> : about the teaching content, goals, expectations, progress	14	23.0
<u>Low Number of Teachers</u> : high class number, high staff turnover	8	13.1
Lack of <u>Standardized Material and Curriculum</u> : material, textbooks, curriculum and learning guidelines	8	13.1
Lack of <u>Firm Discipline</u>	6	9.8
Lack of <u>Homework</u>	5	8.2
Lack of <u>Clarity in Reports</u>	3	4.9
Lack of <u>Funding</u>	2	3.3
Total	61	100.0

There were a few parents who commented on the need to improve the communication between the parents and the teachers. Two respondents found it difficult to assist their children’s learning at home due to a lack of clear communication about the teaching content at school. “Only if the teacher was able to tell us clearly about the teaching content for the recent months, we would be able to assist the learning at home as well” (Q2.9: P4). “There was a lack of homework for children, as well as a lack of communication books between the teacher and the parents. We did not know what had been taught, which made it hard to review or prepare our children for the learning” (Q2.9: P60).

Some parents said the information given by the teachers or the school did not communicate their children’s learning progress clearly. One parent pointed out that

“the ‘learning outline’ was a bit loose. As a parent, I was not sure what had been taught, especially with so many relievers this year” (Q2.9: P66). Another parent stated that the school reports needed improvement. “The school reports didn’t show my children’s real ability and progress. All comments in the reports were extremely good” (Q2.9: P6). There was also one parent who hoped to know the teacher’s teaching approach. “There should be textbooks. I could not know where my child was at, and how the subjects were taught at school. The teachers seemed not able to tell me the areas that my child needed to work on” (Q2.9: P40).

There were quite a few parents who suggested that one set of standardized teaching curriculum and resources should be installed. “There was no textbook for students. It was a problem of the educational system. It was hard to know our children’s learning level and progress” (Q2.9: P24). “There should be a set of standardized teaching materials for all schools. This would enable the parents to understand their children’s learning progress clearly, and to assist them at home. It would also enable the continuity if the child had to change schools” (Q2.9: P38). “The teaching content did not seem to follow a system, and sometimes there were repetitions of the same topics” (Q2.9: P70).

Some hoped the teachers would be firmer with their children’s learning and some hoped there would be more homework assigned. “New Zealand’s teaching had a lack of firmness” (Q2.9: P31). One parent believed that “teachers should improve on the homework given. They should give children some pressure to learn” (Q2.9: P45). “Teaching content should be more standardized and firmer” (Q2.9: P22) and another parent agreed that teachers “should be firmer on children” (Q2.9: P72).

Overall, the findings of the open-ended questions showed the educational expectations and experience of the respondents. These parents wanted their children to learn to be responsible, disciplined, moral and making effort for good learning outcome. The parents had a strong attention in developing their children's English, social and communication skills, and expected the teachers to assist these developments too. They also expected the teachers to be fair to all children, friendly, patient, and knowledgeable about children, education and child psychology. The respondents expected the schools to provide a friendly, safe, and inspiring environment with the multidimensional resources and a pool of high quality teachers. The parents provided their children with the emotional support and encouragement to socialise with the other children, as well as overcoming their settling in and learning problems. The findings showed that the teachers and the parents communicated mostly about children's learning progress or problems through verbal communication or interviews. When there were communication problems, the parents talked to the other parents to seek their advice or to try to communicate with the teachers further by written notes. Finally, the parents found the quality of teachers and their teaching content, as well as the communication between the teachers and the parents to be improved.

Question 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8: Likert-Scale Questions

Question 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 were the likert-scale questions that sought the rated data from the respondents. These questions aimed to gather Chinese immigrant parents' perceptions of New Zealand's education and their expectations of the different parties – schools, teachers, themselves, and their child.

This section of the likert-scale questions was designed to gather data to support the findings of the open-ended questions. Respondents needed to tick from the five-scales to express their perceptions of the level of difficulty, freedom, and importance for each learning area or expectation. With both the feedback from the open-ended and likert-scale questions, the research aimed to gain a more complete picture of Chinese immigrant parents' perceptions and expectations of New Zealand's new entrant education.

Respondents were asked to share their perceptions of how difficult and how free New Zealand's teaching was. Of the 75 respondents, 37 considered that the teaching content was easy (49.3%), 13 said it was too easy (17.3%), and 25 had a neutral position (33.3%) (see Table 2.10 – Level of Difficulty of New Zealand's Teaching Content). Not one parent considered that New Zealand's teaching content was either difficult or too difficult. With regard to the level of freedom in New Zealand's teaching, 46 parents stated that there was freedom (61.3%), 10 commented that there was too much freedom (13.3%), 19 had a neutral position (25.3%), and none mentioned New Zealand's teaching was quite structured or too structured.

With Question 3, parents were asked to share their perceptions of New Zealand's curriculum, its essential learning areas, skills, and the values and attitudes in its curriculum. The majority of respondents stated that English (very important: 66.7%) was a very important curriculum area. Followed by English, mathematics (very important: 49.3%), health and physical well-being (very important: 44.0%) both had their highest scores in the very important scale. Most parents rated science (important: 51.4%), the art (important: 47.3%), and technology (important: 42.7%) as the

important learning areas to new entrant and year one children (see Table 3.11 – New Zealand Curriculum – Essential Areas).

Table 3.11

New Zealand Curriculum – Essential Areas

The importance of the essential learning areas to Entrant & Y1 children...%	Very Important	Important	Neutral	Not so Important	Not at all Important
1. Language & Languages (English & Others)	<u>66.7</u>	26.7	4.0	2.7	-
2. Mathematics	<u>49.3</u>	34.7	10.7	5.3	-
3. Science	18.7	<u>46.7</u>	25.3	9.3	-
4. Technology	12.0	<u>42.7</u>	28.0	16.0	1.3
5. Social Science	21.6	<u>51.4</u>	20.3	6.8	-
6. The Arts	13.5	<u>47.3</u>	32.4	6.8	-
7. Health & Physical Well-being	<u>44.0</u>	42.7	12.0	1.3	-

Table 3.12

New Zealand Curriculum – Essential Skills

The importance of the essential skills to Entrant & Y1 children... %	Very Important	Important	Neutral	Not so Important	Not at all Important
8. Communication skills	<u>64.0</u>	34.7	1.3	-	-
9. Numeracy skills	33.3	<u>48.0</u>	12.0	6.7	-
10. Information skills	24.0	<u>38.7</u>	26.7	10.7	-
11. Problem-solving skills	<u>43.2</u>	41.9	10.8	4.1	-
12. Self-management and competitive skills	<u>45.9</u>	31.1	18.9	4.1	-
13. Social and cooperative skills	44.0	<u>46.7</u>	9.3	-	-
14. Physical skills	14.9	<u>50.0</u>	29.7	5.4	-
15. Work and study skills	20.3	<u>51.4</u>	18.9	8.1	1.4

In terms of the essential skills that New Zealand’s curriculum, communication skills (very important: 64.0%) had its highest score in the very important scale. Self-management and competitive skills (very important: 45.9%) and problem-solving skills (very important: 43.2%) were also rated as the very important skills by most

parents. Work and study skills (important: 51.4%), physical skills (important: 50.0%), and numeracy skills (important: 48.0%) had their highest scores in the important scale (see Table 3.12 – New Zealand Curriculum – Essential Skills).

In regard to the values and attitudes within New Zealand’s curriculum, the findings showed that most parents marked every value and attitude as very important. Of all these values and attitudes, 82.7% of the parents mentioned honesty was a very important value and attitude for new entrant children to learn. Followed by honesty, respect for others (very important: 68.0%), reliability (very important: 66.7%), and caring or compassion (very important: 66.7%) also had their highest scores in the very important scale (see Table 3.13 – New Zealand Curriculum – Values and Attitudes).

Table 3.13

New Zealand Curriculum – Values and Attitudes

The importance of the values and attitudes to Entrant & Y1 children... %	Very Important	Important	Neutral	Not so Important	Not at all Important
16. Honesty	<u>82.7</u>	17.3	-	-	-
17. Reliability	<u>66.7</u>	29.3	4.0	-	-
18. Respect for others	<u>68.0</u>	29.3	2.7	-	-
19. Respect for the law	<u>59.5</u>	31.1	9.5	-	-
20. Tolerance	<u>45.3</u>	34.7	16.0	4.0	-
21. Fairness	<u>52.7</u>	36.5	8.1	2.7	-
22. Caring or compassion	<u>66.7</u>	29.3	4.0	-	-
23. Non-sexism and non-racism	<u>58.7</u>	32.0	8.0	1.3	-

With Question 4, respondents were asked to share the level of importance for their children to develop the listed personalities and characteristics, as well as the behaviours and abilities during their new entrant years. Question 4 also asked the parents to show their perceptions of the importance for the listed learning goals for

children. The findings showed that these listed personalities and characteristics generally had been rated as very important. There were 74.7% of the respondents who stated that being happy and active was very important for new entrant and year one children. The parents also wanted their children to be confident (very important: 66.7%) and self-motivated in learning (very important: 65.3%) (see Table 4.1 – Children’s Characteristics and Personalities).

Table 4.1

Children’s Characteristics and Personalities

What personalities and characteristics should Entrant & Y1 children develop?... %	Very Important	Important	Neutral	Not so Important	Not at all Important
● Good manners	<u>60.0</u>	38.7	1.3	-	-
● Determination	<u>46.7</u>	41.3	10.7	1.3	-
● Self-esteem	30.7	<u>49.3</u>	14.7	4.0	1.3
● Confidence	<u>66.7</u>	32.0	1.3	-	-
● Sense of shame	29.3	<u>41.3</u>	25.3	4.0	-
● Responsibility	<u>54.7</u>	34.7	8.0	2.7	-
● Self-motivated learning attitude	<u>65.3</u>	24.0	8.0	2.7	-
● Independence	<u>57.3</u>	38.7	4.0	-	-
● Happy and active personality	<u>74.7</u>	22.7	2.7	-	-

The findings in relation to parents’ expectations of children’s behaviours and abilities showed that the ability to communicate and express had the highest score in the very important scale among all the listed behaviours and abilities (very important: 58.7%). Next was the behaviour of self-control and discipline (very important: 46.7%). The majority of parents commented that filial piety (very important: 45.3%) was also a very important behaviour for children to learn. Secondly, looking after self and taking care of others (important: 54.7%), sharing resources and cooperating in groups (important: 52.0%), ability to understand and follow the concepts (important: 45.3%),

and obey teachers (important: 45.3%) were rated as the important behaviours and abilities for children by most respondents (see Table 4.2 – Children’s Behaviours and Abilities).

Table 4.2

Children’s Behaviours and Abilities

What behaviours and abilities should Entrant & Y1 children develop?...	Very Important	Important	Neutral	Not so Important	Not at all Important
● Ability to understand and follow the concepts	44.0	<u>45.3</u>	10.7	-	-
● Ability to think and analyse	<u>43.2</u>	41.9	14.9	-	-
● Ability to communicate and express	<u>58.7</u>	37.3	4.0	-	-
● Self-control and discipline	<u>46.7</u>	42.7	10.7	-	-
● Creativity	32.0	<u>45.3</u>	18.7	4.0	-
● Look after self and take care of others	34.7	<u>54.7</u>	9.3	1.3	-
● Share resources and cooperate in groups	37.3	<u>52.0</u>	10.7	-	-
● Filial piety / Fulfil family obligation: look after family members and siblings	<u>45.3</u>	40.0	13.3	1.3	-
● Obey teachers	37.3	<u>45.3</u>	13.3	2.7	1.3

In terms of the learning goals for children, the findings showed that most parents wanted their children to be healthy in body and mind (very important: 85.3%). Maintaining high academic achievement had its highest score in the important scale (important: 64.0%), and scored 6.7% in the very important scale. Other goals like maintaining professional knowledge, contributing to the society (important: 57.3%), integrating to the local society and learning New Zealand’s culture (important: 52.0%) were also rated to be important by most parents (see Table 4.3 – Goals for Children).

Table 4.3***Goals for Children***

What goals do you want your children to establish since young?... %	Very Important	Important	Neutral	Not so Important	Not at all Important
● Maintain high academic achievement and achieve university qualification in the future	6.7	<u>64.0</u>	26.7	2.7	-
● Healthy body and mind	<u>85.3</u>	14.7	-	-	-
● Maintain professional knowledge and contribute to the society	29.3	<u>57.3</u>	12.0	1.3	-
● Integrate to the local society and learn the culture	26.7	<u>52.0</u>	18.7	2.7	-
● Goal of good career and lift the family's social position	4.0	<u>46.7</u>	38.7	8.0	2.7
● Maintain and be proud of Chinese heritage	25.3	<u>45.3</u>	22.7	5.3	1.3

Table 5***Schools' Learning Environment and Resources***

Primary schools should provide for Entrant & Y1 children ... %	Very Important	Important	Neutral	Not so Important	Not at all Important
● Adequate learning resources	<u>56.0</u>	40.0	4.0	-	-
● Comfortable learning environment	<u>68.0</u>	28.0	4.0	-	-
● School trips / Outdoor learning sessions	27.0	<u>54.1</u>	16.2	2.7	-
● Teacher aides to assist students of Non English Speaking Backgrounds	25.0	<u>45.8</u>	22.2	5.6	1.4
● Extra special curriculum to assist students to learning English	25.7	<u>44.6</u>	23.0	6.8	-
● Regular learning reports	27.0	<u>48.6</u>	21.6	2.7	-
● Regular teacher-parent meeting	35.1	<u>52.7</u>	9.5	2.7	-

With Question 5, respondents were asked to rate the importance for the types of the school environment and resources that were provided to the children. A comfortable learning environment (very important: 68.0%) and adequate learning resources (very important: 56.0%) were rated as very important components of a quality learning

environment by most parents. School trips, outdoor learning sessions (important: 54.1%) and regular teacher-parent meetings (important: 52.7%) organised by the schools also had their highest scores in the important scale (see Table 5 – Schools’ Learning Environment and Resources).

With Question 6, respondents were asked to rate the listed teachers’ teaching attitudes, and content and practices. In terms of the teaching attitudes, 74.7% of the parents said teachers should provide positive praise and motivation, 69.3% commented that it was very important for teachers to have a gentle and loving approach, 52.0% stated that it was very important to respect children’s individuality. There were 53.3% of the parents who commented that assistance for peer relationship was important. Of all the respondents, 40.5% held a neutral position for teachers to practice strict correction and punishment, 37.8% stated that it was important, 14.9% commented that it was very important, and only 6.8% said it was not so important to have strict punishment (see Table 6.1 – Teachers’ Teaching Attitudes).

Table 6.1

Teachers’ Teaching Attitudes

Entrant & Y1 teachers should possess the teaching attitudes of ... %	Very	Important	Neutral	Not so	Not at all
	Important			Important	Important
● Strict correction and punishment	14.9	37.8	<u>40.5</u>	6.8	-
● Positive praise and motivation	<u>74.7</u>	25.3	-	-	-
● Gentle and loving approach	<u>69.3</u>	28.0	2.7	-	-
● Assistance for peer relationships	42.7	<u>53.3</u>	2.7	1.3	-
● Respect individuality	<u>52.0</u>	41.3	6.7	-	-

When respondents were asked to rate the listed teachers’ teaching content and practices, child-centred pedagogy and curriculum (very important: 60.0%) was found

to be very important. Adequate homework (important: 57.3%) and learning instructions and assistance for learning problems (important: 53.3%) were also rated to be important by the majority of parents (see Table 6.2 – Teachers’ Teaching Content and Practices).

Table 6.2

Teachers’ Teaching Content and Practices

The teaching content and practices in Entrant & Y1 should be... %	Very Important	Important	Neutral	Not so Important	Not at all Important
● Child-Centred pedagogy/curriculum	<u>60.0</u>	37.3	1.3	1.3	-
● Interesting and fun learning activities	<u>48.0</u>	45.3	6.7	-	-
● Adequate homework	37.3	<u>57.3</u>	2.7	1.3	1.3
● Learning instructions and assistance for any problems or learning difficulties	41.3	<u>53.3</u>	5.3	-	-
● Teachings of Maori language, culture, customs, values and history	4.0	17.3	<u>52.0</u>	17.3	9.3

With Question 7, parents were asked to rate the importance for each listed parental attitude, and parenting content and strategies towards educating their children. In terms of parental attitudes, the majority of parents commented that positive praise and motivation (very important: 72.0%), gentle and loving approach (very important: 66.7%), and holistic learning and development (very important: 61.3%) were all very important. In terms of carrying out strict correction and punishment, 47.3% of the parents stated that it was important, 25.7% commented that it was very important, 23.0% held a neutral position, while only 4.1% believed it was not so important (see Table 7.1 – Parents’ Own Attitudes).

Table 7.1***Parents' Own Attitudes***

During Entrant & Y1 education, parents should possess the teaching attitudes of... %	Very Important	Important	Neutral	Not so Important	Not at all Important
● Strict correction and punishment	25.7	<u>47.3</u>	23.0	4.1	-
● Positive praise and motivation	<u>72.0</u>	28.0	-	-	-
● Gentle and loving approach	<u>66.7</u>	30.7	2.7	-	-
● Holistic learning and development	<u>61.3</u>	30.7	6.7	1.3	-

Table 7.2***Parents' Content and Strategies***

The parental teaching content and practices in Entrant & Y1 education should be... %	Very Important	Important	Neutral	Not so Important	Not at all Important
● Stable learning environment	<u>49.3</u>	48.0	2.7	-	-
● Constant cooperation and communication with teachers	33.3	<u>53.3</u>	13.3	-	-
● Involvement and volunteering at school	20.0	<u>56.0</u>	22.7	1.3	-
● Arrange after-school private tuitions	13.5	<u>40.5</u>	29.7	14.9	1.4
● Arrange other after-school learning activities: sports, music, etc	25.3	<u>48.0</u>	22.7	4.0	-
● Teach/encourage the use of Chinese language to think, listen, speak, write and read	<u>34.7</u>	<u>34.7</u>	22.7	5.3	2.7
● Maintain the Chinese heritage in children	36.0	<u>41.3</u>	17.3	4.0	1.3

Respondents also shared their perceptions for the importance of the listed strategies of dealing with children's learning at home. The majority of parents commented that providing a stable learning environment (very important: 49.3%) for their children was very important. Teaching and encouraging the use of Chinese language to think, listen, speak, write and read (very important: 34.7% and important: 34.7%) was also rated as a very important practice at home. Involving and volunteering at school (important: 56.0%) and constant cooperation and communication with teachers

(important: 53.3%) also had their highest scores in the important scale (see Table 7.2 – Parents’ Content and Strategies).

With Question 8, respondents were asked to rate the importance for each ethnicity of the friends that their children socialized with. Parents were also asked to write down the language their children were encouraged to speak at home, and the after-school tuition and activities that they organised for their children. The results showed that most respondents commented that socializing with European children (important 52.7%), with children from other ethnicities (important: 47.9%), and with Chinese children (important: 42.5%) were all important. Socializing with European children had the highest scores in both the very important and important scales among the three.

In terms of after-school tuition, 16 respondents organised no after-school tuition for their children. Of the remainder (59 respondents), 42 parents had organised after-school tuition for their children to learn Chinese. There were 19 families who had private tuition for their children’s mathematics and 14 who had English private tuition.

In regard to the after-school activities, 30 of the immigrant families had organised swimming for their children. There were a total of 44 children who learnt music and in particular 26 children were learning piano. There were 22 who played sport, 16 who learnt art, and 11 who learnt dancing.

With regard to the language encouraged to speak at home, Chinese was the language

that most parents encouraged at home. There were a total of 67 parents who encouraged their children to speak Chinese at home, and a total of 12 parents who encouraged their children to speak English at home.

Like the findings of the open-ended questions, the findings of the likert-scale questions also showed the respondents' educational expectations of New Zealand's early primary education. Overall, the findings of the likert-scale questions showed that there was no parent who commented that New Zealand's curriculum was either structured or difficult. The majority of respondents stated that New Zealand's curriculum was easy for their children which also gave children a lot of freedom. The findings also showed that the parents rated English and Mathematics as the top two very important curriculum areas. Some parents organised private tuition to assist children's learning in these two areas, as well as Chinese. Communication, self-management, and problem-solving skills were the top three very important learning skills, and honesty, and respect for others were the top two very important values and attitudes in the New Zealand curriculum.

The findings also showed the respondents' expectations of the children, schools, teachers, and themselves. Abilities and behaviours such as communication and expressing, self-control and discipline, and being filial piety were very important for children's early development. The majority of respondents noted common goals for their children as being healthy in body and mind and achieving high academic achievement. The findings showed that most parents expected the schools to provide a comfortable learning environment and adequate learning resources for their children's learning. The parents expected both the teachers and themselves to provide positive

praise and motivation for their children, as well as carrying out strict correction and punishment whenever needed. They expected teachers to respect children's individuality, assist their peer relationships, and provide an adequate amount of homework to children. After all, the majority of parents wanted their children to be happy and active, confident, and self-motivated in their early primary education.

SECTION TWO: FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW FINDINGS

Background Information

A focus group interview was held after the questionnaires were analysed. The purpose of the focus group interview was to clarify and have further discussion about some of the questionnaire findings. It also aimed to include parents' voices to the study findings. The interview was one and half hours long. It was carried out in a classroom of a community centre. The focus group was conducted in Mandarin, which was the shared language by all three participants and the researcher. The following is the background information of the three participants:

- Parent A: Singaporean, female, immigrated to New Zealand in 2002, family of four (two children, both female).
- Parent B: Chinese (Taiwan), female, immigrated to New Zealand in 1997, family of four (two children, male and female).
- Parent C: Chinese (Mainland China), male, immigrated to New Zealand in 1996, family of five (two children, both female).

Focus Group Findings

A simple version of the questionnaire results was given to the participants to gather their thoughts and comments about the findings. The results from the questionnaire

included the respondents' expectations of the children, schools, teachers, and themselves. It also covered the problems that the parents and their children had experienced, and their comments for the areas that needed improvement. The main findings that the participants shared in the focus group are as follows:

The experience of the different cultures and educational expectations

Some loved the New Zealand education system; others had difficulties with the different cultures, education systems, and expectations. Parent A had difficulty adjusting to New Zealand's culture at first. "I was not used to New Zealand's environment. I was not used to New Zealand's children, especially their everyday behaviours, for example, they were often on their bare feet. This was the first thing that I couldn't accept. Secondly, I saw that children were not very respectful to their teachers....I was also not comfortable about no textbooks, and only playing everyday" (FG: Parent A, p.1).

Parent B appreciated New Zealand's culture and education style. "Taiwan's education is very harsh. So when I first came across the openness of New Zealand's education, it was very new to me. If parents get more involved, they will notice the richness in many areas of New Zealand's education" (FG: Parent B, p.1). "Unlike Taiwan's education where all children need to follow teachers' instructions and do the same thing the same way, New Zealand's education emphasizes children's individual development, which I was surprised about. Certainly, New Zealand's education is not as rich as what we learnt in Taiwan. Taiwan focuses more on the accumulation of knowledge, but in terms of general life and social skills, New Zealand's curriculum is more balanced" (FG: Parent B, p.2).

Parent C realized that the Chinese way of teaching and child-rearing was not working for them in the New Zealand's context. "The way that Chinese parents raise their children in China does not work in the New Zealand context. My parents raised me this way, and I used the same way for my children, which caused many clashes in the family. At school, my children were relaxed, but at home it was very harsh. So my children did not like being at home; they liked going to school...The school focused on the holistic development. At home we focused on their mathematics and piano which were more on their intelligence and physical abilities rather than the social integration and self-management aspects" (FG: Parent C, p.2). "The traditional Chinese way of teaching was surely a pressure for my children and also included lots of bias" (FG: Parent C, p.3).

The expectations and practices for their children's education

Parent C believed that both a university qualification and the social integration are important for children. "These aspects [social integration and self-management] are important...because children need to integrate to New Zealand's society...to experience the society, and to gain social ability" (FG: Parent C, p.2). "We expect children to go through university. I am certain that there is not a single Chinese parent who would expect their children to start working without gaining a university qualification first. Chinese parents emphasize more the learning via books and reports...English is the second language, so the goal is to improve children's English ability" (FG: Parent C, p.2). "I organised tutoring and activities for my children, piano and swimming, and they used to do dancing as well" (FG: Parent C, p.2). Parent C also commented that rules and discipline are also important for children. "Rules and disciplines shape the way. Children learn what is right and what is wrong at the

beginning when they start to involve in the society” (FG: Parent C, p.3).

On the other hand, Parent B stated that having real skills and passion is more important than gaining a university qualification. “Chinese parents expect children to go to university. But we come across many kiwis, and we can see that they don’t have this kind of expectation...if you really have some skills, and you enjoy your job, the most important thing is that you have passion...which means no blind following but coming from within” (FG: Parent B, p.11).

Parent C shared his perceptions of the play methods and how children should be taught. “Some Asian ways of discipline are still needed, but not too harsh like the traditional way which might cause some psychological problems for children” (FG: Parent C, p.11). “While children are young, we should input more knowledge to them. It will benefit them more than letting them play too much. Learning while playing is okay, but it should not be too much. Children’s confidence and intelligence development start from early childhood. The brain cells at that time are also at their most active level. The knowledge we teach them at this stage will be remembered forever” (FG: Parent C, p.11).

Perceptions and experience of New Zealand’s education

Parent A shared how New Zealand’s education emphasised praise, encouragement and independency more than education in Chinese culture. Parent A once had an issue with her daughter when she did not eat the lunch she had prepared from home. “The school organised the social worker to come to my home. The social worker taught us to give her some allowance every now and then to let her place a lunch order by

herself...The teacher told me that I needed to be more confident in my child, and give her the responsibility to solve her own problems...They did not believe in touch [physical] punishment. They believed that it would make children's self-esteem very low and have no confidence in everything" (FG: Parent A, p.4). Parent A felt positive about her children's confidence building in New Zealand's education. "I used the Singaporean way. When I said yes, my child could not say no. Our government was the same and that impacted on us. Therefore, I found when she was out from home, she talked very quietly. The teacher said she had no confidence. So from there on, I told my daughter that if I were wrong, I would also admit it. Now she talks louder because she is more confident in herself" (FG: Parent A, p.4).

Parent B liked the idea of a thinking chair as the punishment for children at school. "I asked my son how teachers punish children if they have done something wrong. He said they went to sit on the thinking chair. I think the idea of a thinking chair is quite good. There is no corporal punishment" (FG: Parent B, p.5).

In terms of social development, Parent A appreciated the opportunities her daughters had at school to make friends with children of different ages. "This is something I like about New Zealand's education if the child is in Year 3, he can have a friend from Year 1, and also another friend from Year 6. He can get to know children that are not necessarily the same age as him. In Singapore you only play with your classmates. Here they do not worry about the age difference, they just play together. Some older kiwi children also look after the younger ones. Social interactions are important, it gives children confidence" (FG: Parent A, p.10). Parent C agreed with Parent A's comment on social relationships. "The school focuses quite a lot on children's social

relationships with others. When my younger daughter was in Year 1 and Year 2, she often played with the older children from Year 4 and Year 5” (FG: Parent C, p.11).

Parent C shared his perceptions of the play approach in New Zealand’s education. “[Play] is appropriate for Year 1 and Year 2 children. But if above Year 3, the teaching surely would be different. It should not be the play pedagogy, but rather there should be more routine and logical teaching” (FG: Parent C, p.7).

Participants gave positive feedback when they were asked to comment on the communication between the teachers and them. “Generally it was all good, the teachers could understand well in most cases” (FG: Parent C, p.20). “If my child had any little problem, the teacher would tell me straightaway instead of waiting until the end of the year. The teacher told me that his/her door was always open...Teachers communicate with parents because they believe in positive partnerships with us, rather than just positive relationships with our children...They have to have good relationships with the parents in order to help our children” (FG: Parent A, p.20).

However, Parent A and C also believed some teaching lessons for parents would have huge benefit on assisting children’s learning. They would like to know how different subjects were taught to their children at school and how to facilitate their children’s learning at home. “I went to participate in four night lessons that were organised by the school. In the lessons, they explained to us how they teach mathematics at school...We don’t have to have a textbook, but the method we use must be the same as our children’s, we should not have a different one...to confuse our children” (FG: Parent A, p.17). Parent C agreed with Parent A, “this is very good, it should be noted

down” (FG: Parent C, p.17).

Ways to facilitate their children’s learning

Participants were asked about what they did to facilitate their children’s learning and how they interacted with their children. “I feel our mother tongue is very important, so I speak Mandarin with my children” (FG: Parent A, p.1). Parent A and B both organised after-school activities for their children. “In terms of music performance and achievement, they are mostly by Asian children” (FG: Parent B, p.16). “When we went to swimming lessons, 80% were Asian...The reason I wanted my children to learn to swim was because they needed some exercise. The weather was too hot, and it was not good for their skin to exercise under the sun, like tennis. When we went to enrol at the music school, 70% were Asian” (FG: Parent A, p.16)

Parent A, B and C shared how they dealt with their children’s homework. “We did not have after-school tutoring for our children’s English. My English was also not too good, so I just let my daughter read by herself or I would find some local newspapers and books for her to read” (FG: Parent C, p.12). “When my daughter told me that her teacher said the homework given should only take them less than 40 minutes I said yes, then television should also be less than 40 minutes and the rest could be her free time. But free time could not be watching TV then she went back to do her homework. That’s her own time management” (FG: Parent A, p.13). “We tried to teach my daughter to write and lots of other things at home, but it was very difficult for both my children and me. So in the end I gave up” (FG: Parent A, p.1). Parent B commented that “parents in New Zealand are not being pressured to facilitate or prepare their children with lots of studies. The children can generally complete the work by

themselves” (FG: Parent B, p.19).

The difficulties experienced by the families and their children

Parent C believed that the traditional Chinese way of teaching he used at home was making his daughter lack of confidence. “My child did not have the confidence to talk in class. The family teaching style was harsh, so she didn’t dare to talk aloud or express her own opinions. She had no independency then I realized that my way was not working. Most of her results were above average but only when the whole class sat together and the teacher asked some questions, she became very shy. I then asked her to attend the drama classes to learn to talk louder and build up her confidence” (FG: Parent C, p.5).

Parent B felt being good at sport protected her son from being rejected or bullied by other children. “My experience is that the peer group tends to pay attention on others’ sport performance rather than their mathematics or English abilities. Being good at sports is a good protection so I would recommend Chinese parents to develop their children’s sport ability” (FG: Parent B, p.8). Parent C mentioned the bullying situation happening at her daughter’s school. “When younger children were playing at the playground during the break, the older children would come to take over the place by kicking or hurting them to make them go away” (FG: Parent C, p.10). Parent A’s daughter had been bullied by other children. “My daughter was the target. She had been bullied by another immigrant child. I was angry but I didn’t want to interfere. I wanted her to learn to solve her own problem. My little daughter’s personality was too quiet...and the other classmate just kept on taking her belongings away” (FG: Parent A, p.9).

Parent A liked how her daughter's teacher dealt with bullying problems. "The teacher told this child that she/he could not hurt other people's feelings and she also called this child's mother and explained to her about the behaviour" (FG: Parent A, p.9). Parent A's daughter also had another social issue, "the teacher told this child that she could not talk to her friend [my daughter] like this...although she did not physically bully another person [my daughter], it was still a verbal bully. I believed that bullying in New Zealand must be a very strong case, so the school was very careful about these cases" (FG: Parent A, p.9).

Parents were asked whether their children experienced any difficulties in making friends. Parent C answered "it was okay, but I feel Asian children still like to play with Asian children more" (FG: Parent C, p.10).

Areas for further improvements in New Zealand's education

The participants were asked to comment on the questionnaire findings about the lack of teacher (high teacher-student ratio). Both Parent A and C did not feel the teacher-student ratio in New Zealand's classes was a concern to them. "If 28 children are called too many students for a class, we have 40 students to one teacher in Singapore" (FG: Parent A, p.6). "In China, there are 60 students in a class...unless the class is smaller, the teacher would not be able to make the teaching lively and open in China" (FG: Parent C, p.7).

However, there were still a few areas that the participants would like the schools to improve on for better communication. "I hope there could be something like a general

index of the content that children learn this term. The newsletter mainly told us the activities for our children, but for subjects like mathematics and English were very unclear. In the end I found the ways that I used to facilitate my children's mathematics and English were all different from the school's" (FG: Parent C, p.17). "There is one teacher-parent meeting in each term. However, in general the teacher just reads the report to us again. I am worried about my children's communication and team work ability" (FG: Parent C, p.19). "I still don't know my child's progress and the teaching content at school. This is why I bought the exercise books for my children to do" (FG: Parent C, p.18). "We do not communicate very often. Seems like we only meet once every half year in the teacher-parent interview" (FG: Parent B, p.20).

Parent C also mentioned that his daughter's teacher did not respond to his and the child's learning needs. "I told the teacher a few times that I would like a copy of the Smart Word. I wanted to improve my daughter's English ability by practicing with her at home. The teacher told me that she would prepare it for me every time, but I never got it. It seems to me that different schools expect differently, and also educate differently" (FG: Parent C, p.13).

On the whole, the findings of the focus group covered the respondents' perceptions, expectations, experience, as well as their suggestions for the areas for further improvement in New Zealand's early primary education. In general, the participants perceived New Zealand's education as balanced and holistic, whereas the education in Chinese countries as more of an accumulation of knowledge. They found continuing the parenting style that they used back in their home countries was inappropriate in the New Zealand context. The participants appreciated New Zealand's education

because of its emphasis on giving children lots of positive praise to develop their independence and confidence, and their problem-solving and social skills. They understood that New Zealand's education does not allow corporal punishment. They were also grateful that teachers had a strong focus on preventing and resolving bullying. However, on the other hand, the participants sometimes found New Zealand's teaching had too much play and lacked firm rules and discipline. They commented that the communication between the teachers and the parents needed to be improved, and that there should be a greater focus on organizing strategies for parents to facilitate their children's learning at home.

In the next chapter, the findings of the questionnaire and the focus group will be drawn together to discuss the main findings further in detail.

Chapter Five

Discussion

This chapter discusses the important findings of the questionnaire and the focus group interview by using previous literature and research findings as a backdrop. The discussion includes both the expected and unexpected findings of Chinese immigrant parents' educational expectations and experience. It reveals aspects of New Zealand primary education that Chinese immigrant parents were satisfied with and the areas for further improvement. The discussion chapter is organised in the following three sections: Chinese immigrant parents' educational expectations, responses to the different expectations and practices, and challenges experienced by Chinese immigrant families.

CHINESE IMMIGRANT PARENTS' EDUCATIONAL EXPECTATIONS

Chinese values have been rooted in Confucian philosophy and embodied in Chinese culture for several thousand years. In spite of the recent attitude changes such as the political developments, modernisation, industrialisation, and increasing contacts with the West, values still distinguish individuals from Chinese and Western cultures (Feldman, Mont-Reynaud and Rosenthal 1992). The current study affirms that Chinese Confucian values continue to remain central in most educational expectations and child-rearing practices of Chinese immigrant parents in New Zealand. This section discusses the research findings of Chinese immigrant parents' educational expectations of their children, schools, teachers, as well as themselves.

Family relationships continue to be important in the contemporary Chinese families in New Zealand where the Confucian values of filial piety, familial responsibilities and interdependence of family members are still stressed. According to Ho's (1996) argument, no other culture has a concept such as filial piety, which is rooted in the father-son relationship in the Confucian tradition. Conforming to the previous literature (Biggs, 1996; Chao, 1994; Fuligni, 2001; Gorman, 1998; Ho, 2001; Li, 2001 & 2004; Liu et al., 2000; Sue & Okazaki, 1990; Watkins & Biggs, 2001), the current research findings affirm the existence of the value of filial piety in Chinese immigrant parents' educational expectations and practices. Developing a sense of filial piety and fulfilling family obligations surfaced as the important goals for Chinese immigrant children in New Zealand. There were 45.3% and 40% of all questionnaire respondents who rated 'filial piety/fulfil family obligation' as 'very important' and 'important' respectively (see Table 4.2 – Children's Behaviours and Abilities). Chinese immigrant parents also value the expectations that are related to fulfilling family obligations. The children are expected to take on the familial duties such as looking after themselves, taking care of the others, having a good career and lifting the family's social position (see Table 4.2 – Children's Behaviours and Abilities and Table 4.3 – Goals for Children). Corresponding with Liu et al.'s (2000) conclusion, Chinese parents in this study expect their children to accept such Chinese Confucian based expectations and maintain a strong sense of filial piety, family obligation, and positive interpersonal relationships within the family. As Rao, McHale and Pearson (2003) assert, "whereas western students want to do well mainly to meet individual goals, Asian students want to do well to please their families, as well as themselves" (p.477). They claim that the concept of filial piety is likely to permit parental support for children's assertion of collective sentiment. While Chinese immigrant children's level of acceptance to such

concepts are yet to be investigated, the findings demonstrate that Chinese immigrant parents in New Zealand do have such expectation on children's sense of filial piety and familial responsibilities.

Coherent with Li's (2001 & 2004) findings, Chinese immigrant parents in New Zealand perceive teaching and facilitating their children's learning as one of their parental responsibilities. Children's learning is treated as a collective matter for the whole family. Chinese parents provide emotional and financial support, prepare their children for formal learning, seek good schools and teachers, and facilitate their development and academic attainments. They like to facilitate their children's learning, especially their English and Chinese language learning, and organise after-school tuition and activities for their children (see Table 2.4 – Parents' Own Style, Content and Strategies). According to Gorman's (1998) study, Chinese immigrant parents consider themselves responsible for both their children's academic and non-academic learning. Wu (1996) also explains that the environment is considered the most important influence on child development in Confucianism; hence the parents are responsible in providing the best possible environment for raising children. The findings of the current research indicate that English, Chinese and mathematics lessons are the most popular after-school tuition that Chinese parents organise for their children. They like to schedule children's time and arrange both the academic, such as English and Mathematics, and non-academic after-school activities, such as sports, music, art classes, for their children (see Table 7.2 – Parents' Content and Strategies). Okagaki and Diamond (2000) stress that:

Chinese immigrant mothers placed a strong emphasis on training and teaching children. The Chinese immigrant mothers endorsed the belief that the primary way in which mothers express their love to their child is by helping the child

to succeed, especially in school (Okagaki & Diamond, 2000, p.76).

Chinese immigrant parents see their roles as teachers and caretakers instead of their children's playmates. They generally feel that their children's primary duty is to learn and develop well. Similarly, they consider their primary roles as parents are to be the facilitators of successful goal attainment.

Aligning with the Confucian values, education continues to be respected by Chinese parents as the most essential element in one's life. As Chao (1994 & 1996) reinforces the Confucian belief that education is the most valuable part of one's life and a 'good' education will lead to success in life, it is also regarded as the medium to the academic attainment, professional knowledge, and life and career success by Chinese immigrant parents in New Zealand. They expect their immigrant children to attain high academic achievements, a university qualification, a good career and life. This strong emphasis on children's education consequently results in Chinese immigrant parents' high expectations on children's sense of academic effort and their academic achievement. Children's abilities to understand, follow the concept, think and analyse are highly valued by Chinese immigrant parents (see Table 4.2 – Children's Behaviours and Abilities). Similar to Sue and Okazaki's (1991) research findings where Asian parents in Australia generally desire a university qualification for their children, the majority of respondents in the current research rated the item 'maintaining high academic achievement and achieving a university qualification' as the 'important' educational goal for their immigrant children in New Zealand. Over half of the respondents also regard the related expectations such as maintaining professional knowledge and contributing to the society important (see Table 4.3 – Goals for Children). One participant explained during the focus group interview that

“we [Chinese immigrant parents] expect children to go through university. I am certain that there is not a single Chinese parent who would expect their children to start working without gaining a university qualification first.” This research shows that Chinese immigrant parents in New Zealand have high standards for children’s academic achievement at school in order to pursue other lifelong goals such as attaining a university qualification, maintaining professional knowledge and contributing to the society.

Chinese immigrant parents value a sense of effort and determination as the most fundamental personalities for achieving any goals. According to Dandy, Nettelbeck (2002), Sue and Okazaki (1990), Asian immigrant parents believe that effort will be rewarded with success. Hence, “one’s failure is not due to one’s internal make-up or ability, but one’s effort and willpower” (Lee, 1996, p.39). Rao et al. (2003) also state that Confucianism has a strong belief in attainability by all and “all children, regardless of their innate ability, can do well with effort” (p.477). Correspondently, this study confirms that developing a sense of effort is one of Chinese immigrant parents’ top expectations for children’s learning and development. Of all the responses, 19.9% were about children’s development of a sense of effort. Other effort related characteristics such as ‘determination’ and ‘self-motivated learning attitude’ also had high scores in the ‘very important’ scale (see Table 4.1 – Children’s Characteristics and Personalities). Dandy and Nettelbeck (2002) assert that Chinese immigrant parents have a strong focus on academic effort because they believe that a university qualification leads their children to professional occupations, social mobility, life and financial success. Likewise, this research reveals that developing a sense of effort is at the centre of Chinese immigrant parents’ educational expectations of their children.

While Chinese immigrant parents host a supportive and collective environment to facilitate children's learning, they also train their children to become independent and responsible of their own learning and behaviours. The parents commented that on one hand they assert a certain degree of control over children's behaviours and learning, such as scheduling children's tuition or time spent on TV, and require full cooperation and obedience from their children. On the other hand, they still allow to a certain extent some input from their children, such as children's choices of TV programs to encourage children's time-management, decision-making, discipline and determination. The parents want their children to not only feel obligated to achieve well, but also become intrinsically motivated by their own decisions. As Fuligni (2001) states, "given the similar level of intrinsic motivation, the greater belief in the importance and usefulness of education should lead those with a sense of family obligation to go further in school than their peers" (p.73). Lee (1996) also mentions that the belief of perfectibility for all encourages Chinese students' intrinsic motivation for education. Although Chinese immigrant children's level of intrinsic motivation to learning and their academic achievements are yet to be investigated, their parents' belief on the importance of education and their emphasis on children's effort and determination to learning are clearly highlighted in this research.

Conforming to Li's (2004) findings, Chinese immigrant parents in the current study expect their children to cultivate a sense of morality and manners. A sense of effort, honesty and good manners are the top three personalities and characteristics that Chinese immigrant parents wish their children to develop (see Table 2.11 – Children's Personalities and Characteristics). Moreover, the findings also point out that there are many more manners and morality related personalities that Chinese immigrant parents

desire their new entrant class children to develop. Characteristics such as honesty, reliability, respect for others, fairness, caring and compassion, non-sexism or racism, good manners and responsible are highly valued (see Table 3.13 – New Zealand Curriculum – Values and Attitudes and Table 4.1 – Children’s Characteristics and Personalities). These expectations reflect the Confucian emphasis on the cultivation of moral characters, where dispositions such as filial (xiao 孝), deferential (di 諦), trustworthy (xin 信), politeness (li 禮), appropriate (yi 義), loyalty (zhong 忠), kind (shan 善), and understanding (shu 恕) are strongly valued. As Ho (2001) suggests, the morality cultivation is important because it enables the attainment of the ultimate Confucian goal of becoming an exemplary person (junzi 君子). To Chinese immigrant parents in New Zealand, a sense of effort is important as it not only motivates children to cultivate these moral characters and authoritative (ren 仁) conduct, but also their academic learning.

Unsurprisingly, the study discovered that Chinese parents in New Zealand consider English as the most important learning area for their children (see Table 2.12 – Children’s Knowledge). According to Dandy and Nettelbeck (2002), Li (2001 & 2004), Sue and Okazaki (1990), education is believed as the medium to obtain success, respected social positions and upward social mobility by Chinese parents. Therefore, English become an important skill to enable children’s learning in New Zealand’s context. The parents emphasise children’s English ability and see it as the most essential skill required for understanding the teaching, communicating and socialising with others. While children are placed accountable for their own learning, Chinese parents also take on great responsibility for preparing and facilitating children’s English learning. They treat tasks such as developing children’s English, reading and

writing skills as their top priority for helping their children's learning (see Table 2.4 – Parent's Own Style, Content and Strategies).

Moreover, Chinese immigrant parents commented that English should also be teachers' top priority for their class curriculum (see Table 2.33 – Teachers' Teaching Content and Strategies). Affirming Wong's (1999) suggestion, Chinese parents in the current study value extra assistance for their children's learning such as teacher aides for non-English speaking students or special curriculum to assist students to learn English (see Table 5 – Schools' Learning Environment and Resources). One particular respondent explained in the questionnaire that such strong emphasis on children's English learning is because that "students in Chinese families usually have less foundation in English." The parents have many different strategies to assist their children's English learning, for example, "find out the problems and assist their children's vocabulary, spelling and writing skills." One parent also stated that "we work on the tasks given by the teacher together. I take my child to the library to borrow reading books or videos." The parents organise English tuition and read English story books with their children. The strong emphasis on children's English ability leads to parents' high expectation of the assistance that schools and teachers provide for children's English learning. To Chinese immigrant parents, assisting children's English learning is categorised as the most important parental task and they like the teachers to treat it as equally important as they do.

One of the future goals that parents have for their children is a good integration to New Zealand's culture and society (see Table 4.3 – Goals for Children). They commented that having 'good' English ability, communication skills and positive

social relationships will enable a better cultural integration among immigrant children. They not only want their children to integrate well to New Zealand's culture, but also hope that their children can lift the family's social position by having a good career in the future. The respondents value goals such as having a good career and lift the family's social position (see Table 4.3 – Goals for Children). These findings affirm Chao (1995), Dandy, Nettelbeck (2002), Li (2001 & 2004), Sue and Okazaki's (1990) research where Chinese parents treat Education as the important medium for a good career, upward social mobility and protection against racism. Chinese immigrant parents value children's education because it provides an access where children can interact and learn New Zealand's culture and customs.

On the other hand, Chinese immigrant parents not only want their children to pick up good English and integrate well to New Zealand's culture, they also hope that their children can maintain Chinese identity, culture and the mother tongue. They see developing children's 'Chinese characteristics' such as making good effort, taking on challenges, respecting others, being honest, hardworking and good manners as the important learning outcomes for Chinese immigrant children. The majority of Chinese immigrant parents perceive 'teaching the use of Chinese language', 'maintaining the Chinese heritage in children' and 'being proud of Chinese culture' as either 'very important' or 'important' (see Table 4.3 – Goals for Children and Table 7.2 – Parents' Content and Strategies). As a result, Chinese language surfaced as the most popular after-school tuition that Chinese immigrant parents organise for their children. These findings clearly highlight parents' strong belief and effort in preserving their children's Chinese identity.

Overall, this section discussed the findings of Chinese immigrant parents' educational expectations. The current research discovered that Chinese immigrants expect their children to develop values such as filial piety, effort, determination, honesty, and good manners. They expect their children to attain high academic achievement such as a university qualification in order to uplift the family's social position and also to pursue a good career and quality lifestyle. On the other hand, they also like their children to preserve their Chinese Confucian cultural identity. They want their children to maintain their mother tongue, Chinese language, as well as other cultural values.

RESPONSES TO DIFFERENT EXPECTATIONS AND PRACTICES

All parents have some goals and expectations for their children. Differences in parental goals and expectations arise in part because parents have children for different reasons and because societies have different expectations for the citizens of their communities (Okagaki & Diamond, 2000). Literature confirms that Western teachers and Chinese immigrant parents have different aspirations for children (Ebbeck & Glover, 1998; Okagaki & Diamond, 2000; Parmar et al., 2004). These differences may lead to either rejections and clashes or acceptance and adaptations of the educational expectations and practices by teachers or immigrant parents. The current study also found that Chinese immigrant parents in New Zealand have some different expectations and practices than New Zealand teachers. This section discusses the findings of Chinese immigrant parents' reactions and perceptions of New Zealand primary teachers' educational expectations and practices.

As predicted, the current study found that many Chinese immigrant parents in New

Zealand consider formal academic learning more important than playing, and some parents show dissatisfaction to the play approach in New Zealand's early primary schooling. According to Parmar et al. (2004), Chinese parents have a different cultural belief in the importance of play than the westerners who view play with educational and cognitive benefits. Chinese parents believe that a good education leads to success in life, whereas play activities are only for amusement and passing time. Hence, Chinese immigrant parents emphasise on early preparation for children's formal learning rather than playing. Similarly, the findings of the current study reveals that many Chinese immigrant parents prefer a more directive, structured and firmer teaching approach. When the respondents were asked to comment on New Zealand's teaching approach, some commented that "there should be more formal teaching" and the "teaching content should be more systematic and firmer." Some parents were unhappy with the length of time that their children spent on playing at school. They mentioned that "learning while playing is okay, but it should not be too much." Another stated that it "[play] is appropriate for year 1 and year 2 children. But for year 3 children and above, the teaching would surely be different. It should not be the play pedagogy, but rather there should be more routine and logical teaching." These findings correspond with Okagaki and Diamond's (2000) comment that "programs that emphasise play and a constructivist approach might be viewed with suspicion if the parent does not see a clear academic focus in the curriculum" (p.76). They also show affirmation to the previous studies that Chinese immigrant parents do continue to uphold high academic aspirations for their children and they prefer formal learning than learning through play.

Surprisingly, this study revealed that there are also some Chinese immigrant parents

who are willing to adapt some of their own educational expectations to New Zealand schools and teachers'. While the study reveals that many Chinese immigrant parents value children's academic learning over playing, the findings show that there are also some parents who demonstrate an appreciation and acceptance for the play approach in New Zealand's primary schools. Of all the questionnaire responses, 36.2% commented that play was an appropriate medium to enhance children's learning. Both 'child-centred pedagogy' and 'interesting and fun learning activities' were rated as the 'very important' teaching curriculum (see Table 6.2 – Teachers' Teaching Content and Practices). These parents value play because they believe that "learning through play is the most natural way, and is the best for children's learning." Some parents suggest that different approaches or a combination of the teaching methods should be used for different situations, e.g., play, firmness, and one to one approaches (see Table 2.34 – Teachers' Teaching Style and Practices). One particular respondent explained that:

There should be rules and instructions during the formal classes. However, children should also be allowed to play happily and lively in small group experience. As for new immigrant children who have limited English ability, one to one teaching style should be applied.

These findings show that Chinese parents start to appreciate and adapt to New Zealand teachers' educational expectations and practices.

Some Chinese immigrant parents in the current study not only embraced New Zealand's play and child-centred approach, but even discarded practices such as discipline or firm teaching that characterise the Chinese teaching. There were 18.9% who considered that play should be the only approach encouraged for new entrant children's learning. The parents commented that "play and one-to-one are useful

teaching approaches. Firm teaching approaches will only make children feel tired of learning, which cannot develop their personalities fully.” “The traditional Chinese way of teaching was surely a pressure for my children and also included lots of bias.” These comments show that some Chinese parents see some disadvantages of Chinese traditional child-rearing practices and choose to adapt their expectations to a more play and child-centred oriented approach for their children’s learning in New Zealand’s context. They also like the gentle and loving teaching approach at school where teachers provide a lot of praise and encouragement throughout children’s learning and development. Chinese parents desire for a happy and lively learning experience via playing at school for their children.

Unexpectedly, the findings show that some immigrant parents in this study agree with a gentle and loving approach. This new finding is different from the previous research where Chinese immigrant parents are linked with an authoritarian approach and childrearing strategies, such as discipline and unquestioned obedience (Gorman, 1998; Li, 2004). Chinese parents in the current study commented that both teachers and parents should be gentle, loving, and provide a lot of praise and encouragement throughout children’s learning and development. Both ‘positive praise and motivation’ and ‘gentle and loving approach’ were rated as the ‘very important’ teaching approaches for teachers and parents (see Table 6.1 – Teachers’ Teaching Attitudes and Table 7.1 – Parents’ Own Attitudes). These parents like New Zealand’s gentle and loving teaching approach because it encourages children’s confidence building. They compliment the idea of a thinking chair rather than corporal punishment. The findings illustrate that many Chinese immigrant parents in New Zealand are able to understand New Zealand teachers’ expectations, approaches and practices and are starting to shift

their expectations and practices to the host values.

According to Trussell-Cullen (1994), New Zealand teachers expect new entrant children to be able to settle in and develop positive social relationships with others. Likewise, the current study also found that Chinese immigrant parents in New Zealand have the same expectation that they want their children to develop good communication and social skills. They encourage and accompany their children to learn English, socialise and make more friends (see Table 2.5 – Parents’ Ways to Assist Children’s Settling at School). Chinese immigrant parents in this study also expect the teachers to assist their children in making friends and gaining confidence in social relationships (see Table 6.1 – Teachers’ Teaching Attitudes). Moreover, the findings show that Chinese parents value children’s communication skills as the most important among all the essential skills in New Zealand’s curriculum (see Table 3.22 – New Zealand Curriculum – Essential Skills). Social skills are also perceived as an important ability for children’s development (see Table 2.13 – Children’s Abilities and Behaviours). Furthermore, other social related aspects such as ‘self-esteem’ and ‘confidence’ also had high scores in either the ‘very important’ or ‘important’ categories (see Table 4.1 – Children’s Characteristics and Personalities). These findings reveal that Chinese immigrant parents not only emphasise children’s academic learning, but also their social wellbeing with other children.

Although many Chinese immigrant parents in this study show acceptance to New Zealand’s play and nurturing approaches, some parents still prefer their children to be well disciplined at school and home. Respondents in this study value children’s obedience to the teachers (see Table 4.2 – Children’s Behaviours and Abilities).

Furthermore, 19.7% of respondents agreed that a firm approach is the way to educate children (see Table 2.34 – Teachers’ Teaching Style and Practices). As Li (2004) explains, “Confucianism stresses the importance of parental guidance in children’s becoming, therefore, *guan* or parental discipline in children’s early years is deemed necessary to help them develop and adopt socially and culturally desirable behaviours” (Li, 2004, p.179). Chao (1994 & 2001) also emphasises parents’ demand of discipline and obedience from the children as a way of training children to betterment. Correspondently, the participants in this study like to schedule children’s time at home by organising tuition or other learning tasks. They set academic goals for their children and also like to limit children’s use of the leisure resources such as games or TV. They perceive keeping children on track to achieve a good qualification, professional knowledge, career and life as their important parental tasks.

Although these immigrant parents’ close watch over their children’s lives is suggestive of Baumrind’s (1968) conception of authoritarian parenting style and assumed to stem from a desire to subjugate the child and a need for parental control, the quality of the approach is more in compliance with Chao’s (1994 & 2001) notion of training and Li’s (2000) concept of filial piety (*xiao* 孝) and discipline (*guan* 管). Their seemingly strict educational expectations and childrearing practices are based upon Chinese immigrant parents’ love and concern for their children’s welfare. Expectations for their children are the manifestations of these parents’ desires for their successful adjustment rather than from a need to dominate their children. Chinese parents want their children to listen and follow teacher’s instructions, understand what’s been taught, and achieve well at school. They want them to spend more time on learning tasks rather than TV or other games. Their preference of using a firm

teaching approach and restricting children's behaviours is because they care for their children's future becoming and desire a better achievement from their children. These findings reflect Chinese immigrant parents' love and concern for their children when they shape, control, and direct children's behaviours and demand discipline and obedience from their children.

While the research found that Chinese immigrant parents like their children to be well disciplined both at home and school, it points out that Chinese immigrant parents have slightly higher expectation of themselves when disciplining their children than of the teachers. The majority of the parents rated disciplining children as a very important parental task (see Table 7.1 – Parents' Own Attitudes). On the other hand, the majority of Chinese immigrant parents had slightly lower expectation of the teachers to practice 'strict correction and punishment' on their children that they generally held a neutral (40.5%) position (see Table 6.1 – Teachers' Teaching Attitudes). The reason that Chinese parents place more responsibility of disciplining their children on themselves may be because they are aware of New Zealand primary school's child-centred, gentle and loving teaching approach which focuses less on children's obedience and discipline. However, the link between the two is unclear and this assumption is yet to be confirmed.

Although the findings show that Chinese parents generally place more responsibility of disciplining children's behaviours on themselves instead of the teachers, some still demonstrate dissatisfaction about the level of discipline and behaviour control that primary school teachers exercise over children. Some parents complain that there is a lack of firm discipline at school. One particular parent asserted that "I was not used to

New Zealand's children, especially their everyday behaviours...I saw they weren't very respectful to their teachers." This dissatisfaction may be due to several possible negative experience such as a lack of communication for the educational expectations between teachers and parents, or a lack of understanding of the cultural norms of the host culture. However, further investigation is needed to find out the reasons that caused Chinese immigrant parents' dissatisfaction.

Similar to Li's (2004) research, this study found that Chinese immigrant parents in New Zealand are able to evaluate the pros and cons of both home and host education systems and adapt their expectations and practices accordingly. The focus group interview participants commented that "New Zealand's education is not as rich as what we learnt in Taiwan. I think Taiwan focuses more on the accumulation of the knowledge, but I feel in terms of the general life skills and social ability, New Zealand's development is more balanced." Chinese immigrant parents in New Zealand are also able to notice and evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of the different approaches and practices before they made the adaptation. "The school focused on the holistic development, but at home we focused on their mathematics and piano which were more on their intelligence or physical abilities but rather their social integration and self-management aspects." In this research, Chinese immigrant parents in New Zealand show that while they strongly value children's academic achievement and disciplined behaviours, they also evaluate the advantages of the expectations and practices of the host culture. They demonstrate a willingness to understand and adapt to New Zealand teachers and schools' educational expectations and practices accordingly.

CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY CHINESE IMMIGRANT FAMILIES

Different educational expectations exist between New Zealand teachers and Chinese immigrant parents. There are different perceptions of what teachers and parents' roles and practices should be. However, when there is a lack of congruence between parents' and teachers' expectations and practices, it is likely to result in children's additional burden of determining the implicit rules and expectations (Okagaki & Diamond, 2000). This study found that many Chinese immigrant children have language barriers and social problems when they first start primary school. The parents commented that their children experienced difficulties in communicating and building up an interactive relationship with the teachers. This section discusses the problems that many Chinese immigrant families may encounter while their children attend the primary school in New Zealand.

Similar to previous studies (Florsheim, 1997; Gibson, 2001; Igoa, 1995; James, 1997; Leung, 2001; Prewitt-Diaz et al., 1990), Chinese immigrant children in New Zealand generally experience some language and social difficulties when they first attend primary school in New Zealand. The parents disclosed that the top three problems that their immigrant children encountered were 'language' (30.6%), 'lack of familiarity' (21.2%), and 'social relationships' (12.9%) (see Table 2.6 – Difficulties Encountered by Children). Chinese immigrant parents perceive these two difficulties, a lack of English and socialisation ability, in relation with each other. A lack of English language capability results in immigrant children's little social interactions with other children and adults. Consequently, immigrant children continue to remain incapable in English. One participant stated the connection between the two problems that "my child did not know what the teacher was talking about. She just guessed by the

teachers' body movement, and followed what other children were doing. Therefore, my child is always very quiet and does not raise her hand to ask questions. She is afraid of talking in front of everybody, and her voice is very quiet." This example also clearly expresses that a lack of English ability affects children's confidence in communicating with others and expressing their own ideas.

Living with two different cultures makes childrearing difficult for Chinese immigrant parents in New Zealand. Many in the study commented that they find it hard to decide which educational expectations and practices they should adapt and change, and which to maintain. According to Feldman et al. (1992), while immigrant parents continue to uphold values and beliefs of the home culture, their children gradually take on the values of the larger society in which they live in because of their increasing contacts with the society through interactions with diverse teachers, nonfamily adults, peers and exposure to mass media. However, Lin and Liu (1999) remind us that the acculturative gap which exists between the two generations can create parent-child conflicts and disagreements. Therefore, immigrant parents often come across the situations where they need to adapt or maintain their educational expectations and practices in order to encourage a positive acculturation while the family harmony and children's Chinese identity is also preserved. As Li (2004) suggests, efforts need to be made by both the parents and the children to achieve mutual understanding. The parents should modify their expectations while the children are trying to understand their parents' positions and perspectives. For example, a parent in the current study identified the need to adapt his childrearing approach because he feels that a harsh childrearing approach does not function well in New Zealand's context. He commented that his child "didn't have the confidence to

talk in the class. The family teaching style was harsh, so she didn't dare to talk loud or express her own opinions." On the other hand, Chinese parents also considered the maintenance of some Chinese values and practices to be important. One parent stated that "some Asian ways of discipline are still needed, but not too harsh like the traditional way which would cause psychological problems for children." The findings show that immigrant parents realise that some of their cultural values and practices need to be adapted while others need to be maintained. They make adaptations to different values, expectations and practices according to their acculturative experience and their family circumstances. As a result, every Chinese family will sustain different level of Chinese essence and take on different New Zealand values.

This study highlights several aspects that Chinese immigrant parents consider as challenges for their families. A 'lack of communication' (23%) between the parents and teachers was a concern by many Chinese immigrant parents in this research (see Table 2.9 – Areas for Improvement). According to Renwick (1997), Wylie and Smith (1995), New Zealand teachers generally provide feedback on children's progress and development at. However, the responses from Chinese immigrant parents suggest that there is a need to improve the communication between the parents and teachers. The findings show that the common communication methods between the parents and teachers are verbal communication and parent-teacher interviews. The discussions that the teachers and the parents have are generally about children's learning progress, problems or needs. Nevertheless, many parents in the study still mentioned that the teachers did not communicate clearly about the curriculum that their children were learning. They commented that their children's learning reports should clearly inform

the parents about the areas that their children have achieved well in and the areas that need further improvement. One particular parent stated that “the school reports didn’t show my children’s real ability and progress. All comments...are extremely good.” Moreover, some parents found assisting children’s learning at home hard due to a lack of clear communication between the parents and teachers. “If the teacher is able to tell us clearly about the teaching content of the recent months, we will then be able to assist the progress at home as well.” These findings show that there exists dissatisfaction among the immigrant parents with the communication in relation to children’s learning progress. Chinese immigrant parents want to know what their children’s learning strengths, interests, needs are, as well as how to further assist their learning at home.

Other than a lack of communication, Chinese immigrant parents in the current study are also concerned about the quality of teachers and their teaching curriculum at New Zealand primary schools. The findings show that Chinese parents in New Zealand view quality teachers as one of the important school resources (see Table 2.22 – Schools’ Resources). They have several expectations of the quality of teachers. First, teachers should be patient, fair, responsible and honest. Secondly, teachers should be qualified, knowledgeable about children’s psychology, education and development. Furthermore, Chinese parents expect the teachers to be friendly, caring, loving, open and lively (see Table 2.31 – Teachers’ Personalities and Characteristics and Table 2.32 – Teachers’ Knowledge and Teaching Ability). However, the findings also highlight that the quality of teachers and their teachings was rated as the top desired area for improvement by Chinese immigrant parents (see Table 2.9 – Areas for Improvement). Their dissatisfaction over the quality of teachers and their teaching are linked to

several reasons. The parents believe that a lack of communication and standardised teaching curriculum and resources have limited their knowledge about their children's learning strengths and needs, and discouraged their facilitation for their children's learning. Some also disagree with teachers' practices of the little discipline and homework given by the teachers. A combination of these disagreement and negative experience results in Chinese immigrant parents' dissatisfaction in the quality of teachers and their teaching curriculum. It becomes the area that the parents most wanted New Zealand primary schools to improve on.

Many Chinese immigrant parents suggest for some standardised teaching curriculum, resources and textbooks. They want to be able to follow up children's learning easily, so they can assist their children's learning at home. The findings show that immigrant parents consider the lack of standardised materials, textbooks, curriculum and learning guidelines designs in New Zealand's primary school curriculum as a problem (see Table 2.9 – Areas for Improvement). One parent commented that "there are no textbooks for every student, a problem of the education system, so it is hard to know a child's learning level and progress." Another parent explained that some standardised curriculum would enhance better preparation and revision for children's learning that "a set of standardised teaching materials for all schools. This would enable the parents to understand children's learning progress clearly, and able to assist children's learning at home. It would also enable the continuity if the child changes schools." Chinese immigrant parents value standardised teaching curriculum, resources, and textbooks so that they can be informed and able to facilitate children's learning with ease.

Similar to Li's (2001) research findings where Chinese immigrant parents are concerned about the limitless freedom, weak intellectual challenge and a lack of homework, the majority of parents in the current study commented that New Zealand's curriculum in primary schools is easy which also provides children with a lot of freedom. The parents consider New Zealand's curriculum as 'easy' (49.3%) or 'too easy' (17.3) which provides children with a lot of 'freedom' (61.3%) or 'too much freedom' (13.3%). While the purpose of homework is for involving and informing parents in their children's learning progress to New Zealand primary teachers (Harris, 1996), Chinese parents consider homework important because it enables and reinforces children's learning. However, the study highlights much dissatisfaction among Chinese immigrant parents in regard to the little amount of homework given to their children (see Table 2.9 – Areas for Improvement). They stated that "there is a lack of homework... We could not know what has been taught each week, which makes it hard to review or prepare for children's learning" and "teachers should improve on the homework given, to give children more pressure to learn." It is clear that Chinese immigrant parents in this study perceive homework as the communication medium to get to know what the teachers are teaching at school. Immigrant parents also treat homework important because it refreshes and extends children's study and learning. Homework to Chinese families does not necessarily represent the opportunity for parent involvement, but rather it means giving children extra exercises to learn, revise and extend their learning.

This chapter discussed the educational expectations that Chinese immigrant parents have for their children, schools, teachers and themselves. Overall, the current study affirms that Chinese Confucian values continue to play a large part in Chinese

immigrant parents' educational expectations and practices, such as children's development of a sense of filial piety, familial responsibilities, discipline, academic effort, morality, good manners, and many more. Chinese Confucian values of the importance of family, the responsibility of parenthood, and the duty to raise competent and successful adults seem to underlie these parents' expectations and childrearing. On the other hand, while the cultural values still persist in Chinese parents' expectations and practices, they also show some degree of understanding of the acculturation process and that they and their children have to integrate and adapt to the new society's values. Some Chinese immigrant parents respond to the play, gentle, loving and praising approaches in New Zealand primary schools with dissatisfactions, others show acceptance. In general, Chinese immigrant parents tend to evaluate the benefits and disadvantages of both their own expectations and practices and New Zealand teachers' teaching approaches. As a result, they have loosened their ties to some traditional values and start to accept and appreciate some of New Zealand teachers' teaching strategies and approaches. While they continue to emphasise children's academic achievement and Chinese heritage and characteristics, they now also recognise the importance of play and praise for children's learning. Furthermore, these parents suggest that there is a lack of parent-teacher communication and homework for children. They recommend that there should be some sort of standardised curriculum and resources, and the teachers should be firmer. After all, Chinese immigrant parents in New Zealand want their children to achieve well academically and socially, and they hope their children will have a good integration, life and career.

Chapter Six

Conclusions

The current research investigated Chinese immigrant parents' educational expectations, practices and experience in regard to their children's new entrant years in New Zealand's primary schools. The summaries of Chinese immigrant parents' central educational expectations, their responses to New Zealand's educational expectations and practices, and the challenges that Chinese immigrant families encountered are presented in this final chapter. The limitation of the research, the recommendations for the primary education sector, and the areas for further research are also discussed. The conclusions are organised in the following five sections: educational expectations and underlying values, different teaching expectations and practices, problems encountered by Chinese immigrant families, recommendations, and limitation and future research.

EDUCATIONAL EXPECTATIONS AND UNDERLYING VALUES

Chinese values have been rooted in Confucian philosophy and embodied in Chinese culture for several thousand years. In spite of the recent attitude changes such as the political developments, modernisation, industrialisation, and increasing contacts with the West, values still distinguish individuals from Chinese and Western cultures (Feldman et al., 1992). The current study affirms that Chinese Confucian values continue to remain central in most educational expectations and child-rearing practices of Chinese immigrant parents in New Zealand.

Aligning with the Confucian values, education continues to be respected by Chinese parents as the most essential element in one's life. As Chao (1994 & 1996) reinforces the Confucian belief that education is the most valuable part of one's life and a 'good' education will lead to success in life, it is also regarded as the medium to the academic attainment, professional knowledge, and life and career success by Chinese immigrant parents in New Zealand. They expect their immigrant children to attain high academic achievements, a university qualification, a good career and life. This strong emphasis on children's primary education consequently results in Chinese immigrant parents' high expectations on children's sense of academic effort and their academic achievement. Rao, McHale and Pearson (2003) state that Confucianism has a strong belief in attainability by all and "all children, regardless of their innate ability, can do well with effort" (p.477). Chinese immigrant parents in New Zealand uphold the expectations which also reflect this Confucian belief that effort leads to success.

Family relationships continue to be important in the contemporary Chinese families in New Zealand where the Confucian values of filial piety, familial responsibilities and interdependence of family members are still stressed. Corresponding with Liu et al.'s (2000) conclusion, Chinese parents in this study expect their children to accept such Chinese Confucian based expectations and maintain a strong sense of filial piety, family obligation, and positive interpersonal relationships within the family. Similar to Rao, McHale and Pearson's (2003) claim that the concept of filial piety is likely to permit parental support for children's assertion of collective sentiment. Chinese immigrant parents in this research see their role as to create a collective environment in order to support their children's learning and development. They provide emotional and financial support, prepare their children for formal learning, seek good schools

and teachers, and facilitate their development and academic attainments. Chinese immigrant parents see their roles as teachers and caretakers instead of their children's playmates. They generally feel that their children's primary duty is to learn and develop well. Similarly, they consider their primary roles as parents are to be the facilitators of successful goal attainment.

Chinese children on the other hand are responsible for familial duties such as looking after their siblings, helping with household duties and achieving well at school. As Rao et al. (2003) assert, "whereas western students want to do well mainly to meet individual goals, Asian students want to do well to please their families, as well as themselves" (p.477). Matching with Lee (1996), Fuligni (2001), and Rao et al.'s (2003) argument that a sense of family obligation acts as children's extrinsic motivation to strive well academically, this study uncovered Chinese immigrant parents' strong focus on children's education, sense of filial piety, academic motivation and effort. However, to be able to confirm that such argument also applies to Chinese immigrant families in New Zealand, further investigation of the connection between children's sense of filial piety, familial obligation, academic motivation and effort is needed.

Most Chinese immigrant families in New Zealand continue to value behavioural discipline and parental control as the normal childrearing practices at home. Parents like to control and shape their children's behaviours, and schedule their time and learning at home. However, Chinese parents also take the values from the host culture into consideration that they lower their expectation of children's obedience and discipline accordingly. Without the intention to examine the term 'authoritarian'

parenting style and its relationship with Chinese immigrant parents in New Zealand, this research discovered that Chinese immigrant parents' seemingly strict educational expectations and childrearing practices are based upon their love and concern for their children's welfare. Expectations for their children are the manifestations of these parents' desires for their successful adjustment rather than from a need to dominate their children. Although these immigrant parents' close watch over their children's lives is suggestive of Baumrind's (1968) conception of authoritarian parenting style, the quality of the approach is more in compliance with Chao's (1994 & 2001) notion of training and Li's (2000) concept of filial piety (xiao 孝) and discipline (guan 管). Chinese parents want their children to listen and follow teacher's instructions, understand what's been taught, and achieve well at school. They want them to spend more time on learning tasks rather than TV or other games. Their preference of using a firm teaching approach and restricting children's behaviours is because they care for their children's future becoming and desire a better achievement from their children.

Chinese parents show a desire for their children to adapt and integrate well to New Zealand's society and culture. On the other hand, they also like their children to preserve their Chinese Confucian cultural identity. They want their children to maintain their mother tongue, Chinese language, as well as other cultural values. Other than a sense of filial piety, familial obligation, academic effort, and discipline, additional Chinese Confucian values that are related to morality and manners such as honest, hardworking and responsible are also valued for Chinese immigrant children's learning and development.

DIFFERENT TEACHING EXPECTATIONS AND PRACTICES

All parents have some goals and expectations for their children. Differences in parental goals and expectations arise in part because parents have children for different reasons and because societies have different expectations for the citizens of their communities (Okagaki & Diamond, 2000). The current study found that Chinese immigrant parents in New Zealand have some different expectations and practices than New Zealand teachers. Their responses to the different expectations and practices are varied. Some Chinese immigrant parents expressed that they are willing to understand and adapt to New Zealand's educational expectations and practices accordingly. At the same time, they like to preserve some of their cultural values and childrearing practices.

Different from previous literature where Chinese teaching and parenting was linked with firmness, discipline, and unquestioned obedience (Biggs, 1996; Chao, 1996 & 2001; Gorman, 1998; Ho, 2001; Li, 2004; Watkins & Biggs, 2001; Woodrow & Sham, 2001), the current study surprisingly discovered that a great number of Chinese immigrant parents express an appreciation to New Zealand's play, child-centred, loving and gentle teaching approach at primary schools. Furthermore, some Chinese immigrant parents are willing to adapt some of their own educational expectations to New Zealand schools and teachers'. Similar to Li's (2004) researches, Chinese immigrant parents in the current study demonstrate the ability to evaluate the pros and cons of the home and host values and approach, and they adapt their own expectations and practices accordingly. Some Chinese parents see the strictness and firmness of the Chinese traditional child-rearing practices as its disadvantage and choose to adapt their expectations to a more play and child-centred oriented approach for their

children's learning in New Zealand's context. They also like the gentle and loving teaching approach at school where teachers provide a lot of praise and encouragement throughout children's learning and development. Chinese parents desire for a happy and lively learning experience via playing at school for their children. Chinese immigrant parents in New Zealand are able to understand and appreciate New Zealand teachers' expectations, approaches and practices and some are even starting to shift their expectations and practices to the host'.

Incongruently, the study also shows that some Chinese parents in the current study continue to adore formal learning over playing for children at school. According to Parmar et al. (2004), Chinese parents believe that a good education leads to success in life, whereas play activities are only for amusement and passing time. Different from the westerners who view play with educational and cognitive benefits, Chinese parents perceive the way to achieve education is through academic achievement. As a result, they emphasise on early preparation for children's formal learning rather than playing. Many Chinese immigrant parents in the current study prefer a more directive, structured and firmer teaching approach. These parents hope that there could be more formal and firmer teaching and preparation for children's learning in New Zealand's primary schooling.

Chinese immigrant parents in the current study consider children's lack of familiarity with the English language to be most responsible for their children's initial difficulty in adjusting to New Zealand. As a result, they value English as the most important learning area for their children. As education is considered as the medium to obtain success, respected social positions and upward social mobility (Dandy and Nettelbeck,

2002; Li, 2001 & 2004; Sue & Okazaki, 1990), English is therefore emphasised as the important skill to enable children's learning, communication, and socialisation with others in New Zealand's context. The parents believe that the responsibility of children's learning in English language should not only rest upon the child, but also the teachers and the parents. The parents set up English tuition, read and also study with their children. Corresponding with Wong's (1999) suggestion, Chinese parents in the current study value extra assistance and preparation for their children's learning such as teacher aides, special curriculum or after-school tuition to assist children's English learning. Chinese immigrant parents treat assisting children's English learning as the most important parental task and they like the teachers to see this task as equally important as they do.

Aligning with New Zealand teachers' expectation (Trussell-Cullen, 1994), Chinese immigrant parents in New Zealand also want their new entrant children to be able to settle in and develop positive social relationships with others. One of their important goals that they have for their children is a good integration to New Zealand's culture and society. According to Chao (1995), Dandy, Nettelbeck (2002), Li (2001 & 2004), Sue and Okazaki (1990), Chinese parents treat Education as the important medium for a good career, upward social mobility and protection against racism. The parents in the study also hope that their children can lift the family's social position by having a good career in the future. As a result, they perceive 'good' English ability, communication skills and positive social relationships important for enabling children's better acculturation and integration. To facilitate their children to develop good communication and social skills, the parents encourage their children to learn English, socialise with others, and accompany them to familiarise with the new

environment and friends. These parents expect the teachers to also assist their children in making friends at schools and help them to gain confidence in social relationships.

Overall, the current study affirms that Chinese Confucian values continue to play a large part in Chinese immigrant parents' educational expectations and practices, such as children's development of a sense of filial piety, familial responsibilities, discipline, academic effort, morality, good manners, and many more. Chinese Confucian values of the importance of family, the responsibility of parenthood, and the duty to raise competent and successful adults seem to underlie these parents' expectations and childrearing. On the other hand, while the cultural values still persist in Chinese parents' expectations and practices, they also show some degree of understanding of the acculturation process and that they and their children have to integrate and adapt to the new society's values. As a result, they have loosened their ties to some traditional values and start to accept and appreciate some of New Zealand teachers' teaching strategies and approaches. While they continue to emphasise children's academic achievement and Chinese heritage and characteristics, they now also recognise the importance of play and praise for children's learning.

PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY CHINESE IMMIGRANT FAMILIES

Different educational expectations exist between New Zealand teachers and Chinese immigrant parents. There are different perceptions of what teachers and parents' roles and practices should be. However, when there is a lack of congruence between parents' and teachers' expectations and practices, it is likely to result in children's additional burden of determining the implicit rules and expectations (Okagaki & Diamond, 2000).

Living with two different cultures makes childrearing difficult for Chinese immigrant parents in New Zealand. Many Chinese parents in the current study find it hard to decide which educational expectations and practices they should adapt and change, and which to maintain. Feldman, Mont-Reynaud and Rosenthal (1992) stress that while immigrant parents continue to uphold values and beliefs of the home culture, their children gradually take on the values of the larger society that they live in. However, this acculturative gap between the parents and their children can create parent-child conflicts and disagreements (Lin & Liu, 1999). Hence, it is necessary to reduce this acculturative gap in order to preserve the familial harmonious relationship. As Li (2004) suggests, efforts need to be made by both the parents and the children to achieve mutual understanding. The parents should modify their expectations while the children are trying to understand their parents' positions and perspectives. For example, Chinese immigrant parents in New Zealand realise that a harsh childrearing approach does not function effectively in New Zealand's context. While New Zealand teachers are trying to create a classroom atmosphere where is child-centred, playful, loving and encouraging, Chinese immigrant parents understand that being too tough on their children will only cause conflict with the school values and result in children's rejection. However, at the same time they still feel that a moderate degree of discipline should be retained. Chinese parents make adaptations to different values, expectations and practices according to their acculturative experience and their family circumstances. As a result, every Chinese family will sustain different level of Chinese essence and take on different New Zealand values.

Chinese immigrant parents perceive language barriers and social problems to be responsible for their children's initial difficulty in acculturating to the new country.

Many Chinese immigrant children experience difficulties in communicating and building up an interactive relationship with the teachers and other children when they first start primary schooling in New Zealand. Chinese immigrant parents perceive these difficulties as having impacts on children's confidence in communicating with others and expressing their own ideas. Furthermore, they see the two barriers, English language incapability and socialisation problem, in relation with each other. As the lack of English language capability results in immigrant children's little social interactions with other children and adults, and children consequently continue to remain incapable in English.

Furthermore, the parents highlight several areas that they are unsatisfied in regard to New Zealand early primary schooling. First, Chinese immigrant parents in the current study are concerned about the lack of communication between the parents and the teachers. Many parents consider that the conversations they have with teachers do not communicate clearly the curriculum that their children are learning. Moreover, the parents comment that the school reports are generally too positive, and they suggest children's learning reports should be more clearly written to also inform the parents about children's learning areas which need further improvement. Other than communication problem, the quality of teachers and their teachings is also considered as top desired area for improvement by Chinese immigrant. This concern over the quality of teachers and their teaching may be due to their dissatisfaction for the lack of communication, standardised teaching curriculum and resources, lack of homework and discipline. However, this link is yet to be investigated. As a result, the parents believe that a lack of clear communication and standardised teaching curriculum and resources have limited their knowledge about their children's learning strengths and

needs, and discouraged their facilitation and preparation for their children's learning.

Many Chinese immigrant parents in the current study made several recommendations for New Zealand's primary schools. They suggest that there should be some standardised teaching curriculum, resources and textbooks. They want to be more informed about children's learning, so they can provide better assistance and preparation at home for their children's learning. They also feel the standardised curriculum and textbooks enhance the continuity if the child changes schools. Furthermore, they suggest that teachers should give more homework for their children to do at home. While the purpose of homework is for involving and informing parents in their children's learning progress to New Zealand primary teachers (Harris, 1996), it acts as the scaffolding and revision for children's learning. It is also considered as another medium to inform parents' about children's learning at school. Moreover, most parents feel New Zealand's primary education allows children too much freedom and many propose that teachers should be firmer at school.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Chinese immigrant parents' cultural values and acculturative experience have both contributed to their educational expectations and practices for children's primary education in New Zealand. As Ramsey (1998) notes, teachers often expect parents and schools to share common philosophies and practices about children. Yet the teachers' and parents' practices reflect their own, and their culture's, goals for children's development and education. When different expectations and practices are not being understood and appreciated, it results in difficulties for the two parties to work together cohesively for children's education. The lack of communication and

understanding then prevents a cooperative partnership between the two.

Understanding how immigrant parents view their parenting roles and responsibility for their children's learning and development enables teachers' understanding of immigrant parents' behaviours and interactions with them (Okagazi & Diamond, 2000, p. 77). So the teachers learn to appreciate these differences in educational expectations and practices. However, as each immigrant family has different expectations and practices due to different acculturative experience, teachers should not assume that every Chinese parent upholds the same educational values and expectations. Teachers can develop an effective communication and positive relationship with the parents by starting to share their own perspectives and listen to parents' responses. This is one way that teachers can begin the communication process to understand each family's expectations and goals for their children. They should also get to know the ways that parents assist their children's learning at home and facilitate these preparations by regular and honest feedback about the class curriculum, teaching approach, and children's learning strengths and weaknesses. Furthermore, teachers should listen to parents' needs by asking how they can compliment their efforts, rather than telling the parents what they ought to be doing.

Overall, Chinese immigrant parents in the current study demonstrate expectations and practices that are Chinese Confucian based. At the same time, they also show willingness to understand and adapt to New Zealand's educational expectations and practices accordingly. Chinese parents understand the need to adapt their values to reduce the cultural clashes between the home and the host and also the acculturative gap between their children and themselves. Ultimately, Chinese immigrant parents

just want their children to be well educated so they can become a respected and knowledgeable person, have secure a professional career and live a happy and quality life.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

There are many limitations to this study. First, it is necessary to note the limitations that restrict the generalisability of the findings. The sample was a relatively small one and was limited to Chinese immigrant parents who live in the two cities of Auckland and Christchurch. Moreover, the low return rate in the present study can argued as an indication of the sampling selectivity. Those Chinese immigrant parents who responded may be more concerned about their children's academic than others. There may be a possibility that those parents who responded are not representative of the population but are merely a group of parents who have higher academic standards and greater interest in their children's educational performance. Furthermore, the questionnaire only assessed a selection and not the full range of possible values. Given the great range of educational expectations and practices in Chinese and New Zealand culture, it is impossible to include all expectations and practices in the questionnaire and focus group interview. Further research is needed to determine whether the findings are consistent and generalisable to all Chinese immigrant parents in New Zealand.

As the majority of studies on parental expectations and practices only obtain the data from parents, including this research, the information presented is likely to be one-sided. This study cannot answer how Chinese immigrant children come to internalise, negotiate, or reject the different expectations and practices of the teachers'

and parents'. More research attention can be given to investigate children's achievements at school, behaviours at home, feelings and experience about acculturation, and their responses to the different expectations and practices.

Reference List

- Anderson, G. (1998). *Fundamentals of educational research*. London: Falmer Press.
- Baumrind, D. (1968). Authoritarian versus authoritative parental control. *Adolescence*, 3, 255-272.
- Biggs, J. B. (1996). Western misconceptions of the Confucian-heritage learning culture. In D. A. Watkins & J. B. Biggs (Eds.), *The Chinese learner: Cultural, psychological, and contextual influences*. Hong Kong: CERC & ACER.
- Biggs, J. B. & Moore, P. J. (1993). *The process of learning*. Sydney: Prentice Hall of Australia.
- Bogdan, R. C. & Biklen, S. K. (1992). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Brown, G. T. L. (2003). *Teachers' instructional conceptions: Assessment's relationship to learning, teaching, curriculum, and teacher efficacy*. Paper presented at the Australian and New Zealand Associations for Research in Education (AARE/NZARE) Joint Conference, Auckland, New Zealand.
- Chao, R. K. (1994). Beyond parental control and authoritarian parenting style: Understanding Chinese parenting through the cultural notion of training. *Child Development*, 65, 1111-1119.
- Chao, R. K. (1996). Chinese and European American mothers' beliefs about the role of parenting in children's school success. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 27, 403-423.
- Chao, R. K. (2001). Extending research on the consequences of parenting style for Chinese Americans and European Americans. *Child Development*, 72(6), 1832-1843.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K. (2000). *Research methods in education*. London: Routledge.
- Confucius (1979). *The Analects*, tr. D.C. Lao. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.
- Confucius (1979). *Confucian Analects, the great learning & the doctrine of mean*, tr. J. Legge. New York: Dover Publications.
- Corbetta, P. (2003). *Social research: Theories, methods, and techniques*. London: Sage.
- Creel, H. G. (1953). *Chinese thought, from Confucius to Mao Tse-tung*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Dandy, J. & Nettelbeck, T. (2002). Research note: A cross-cultural study of parents' academic standards and educational aspirations for their children. *Educational Psychology*, 22(5), 621-627.

- Davidson, C. & Tolich, M. (1999). *Social science research in New Zealand: Many paths to understanding*.
- Davidson, C. & Tolich, M. (2003). Competing traditions. In C. Davidson & M. Tolich (Eds.), *Social science research: Many paths to understanding*. Auckland: Pearson.
- Dornbusch, S., Ritter, P., Leiderman, P., Roberts, D. & Fraleigh, M. (1987). The relation of parenting style to adolescent school performance. *Child Development*, 58, 1244-1257.
- Ebbeck, M. & Glover, A. (1998). Immigrant families' expectations of early childhood. *The Australia Journal of Early Childhood*, 23(3), 14-19.
- Educational Review Office (1997). *Primary school reports: a guide for parents*. 8, Spring.
- Fejgin, N. (1995). Factors contributing to the academic excellence of American Jewish and Asian students. *Sociology of Education*, 68, 18-30.
- Feldman, S. S., Mont-Reynaud, R. & Rosenthal, D. A. (1992). When east moves west: The acculturation of values of Chinese adolescents in the U.S. and Australia. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 2(2), 147-173.
- Florsheim, P. (1997). Chinese adolescent immigrants: Factors related to psychosocial adjustment. *Journal of Youth and Adolescents*, 26(2), 143-163.
- Foddy, W. (1993). *Constructing questions for interviews and questionnaires: Theory and practice in social research*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Fuligni, A. J. (2001). Family obligation and the academic motivation of adolescents from Asian, Latin American, and European backgrounds. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*, 94, 61-75.
- Gibson, M. A. (2001). Immigrant adaptation and patterns of acculturation. *Human Development*, 44(1), 19-23.
- Gorman, J. C. (1998). Parenting attitudes and practices of immigrant Chinese mothers of adolescents. *Family Relations*, 47(1), 73-80.
- Gray, D. E. (2004). *Doing research in the real world*. London: Sage.
- Greenbaum, T. L. (1998). *The handbook for focus group research*. London: Sage.
- Harris, M. (1996). *New Zealand parents' guide to primary school*. Auckland: David Ling Publishing.
- Hinds, D. (2000). Research instruments. In D. Walkinson (Ed.), *The researcher's toolkit: The complete guide to practitioner research*. London: Routledge/Falmer.
- Ho, I. T. (2001). Are Chinese teachers authoritarian? In D. A. Watkins & J. B. Biggs (Eds.), *Teaching the Chinese learner: Psychological and pedagogical perspectives*. Hong Kong: CERC & ACER.

- Igoa, C. (1995). *The inner world of the immigrant child*. New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc.
- James, D. C. S. (1997). Coping with a new society: The unique psychosocial problems of immigrant youth. *The Journal of School Health*, 67(3), 98-102.
- Kao, G. (1995). Asian American as model minorities? A look at their academic performance. *American Journal of Education*, 103, 121-159.
- Kim, U. & Chun, M. J. B. (1994). The educational 'success' of Asian American: An indigenous perspective. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 15, 329-339.
- Lee, W. O. (1996). The cultural context for Chinese learners: Conceptions of learning in the Confucian tradition. In D. A. Watkins & J. B. Biggs (Eds.), *The Chinese learners: Cultural, psychological, and contextual influences*. Hong Kong: CERC & ACER.
- Leung, C. (2001). The psychological adaptation of overseas and migrant students in Australia. *International Journal of Psychology*, 36(4), 251-259.
- Li, J. (2001). Expectations of Chinese immigrant parents for their children's education: The interplay of Chinese tradition and the Canadian context. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 26(3), 477-494.
- Li, J. (2004). Parental expectations of Chinese immigrants: A folk theory about children's school achievement. *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, 7(2), 167-183.
- Lillemyr, O. F. (2001). Play and learning in school: A motivational approach. In D. M. McInerney & S. v. Etten (Eds.), *Research on sociocultural influences on motivation and learning*. USA: Information Age Publishing.
- Lin, C. & Liu, W. T. (1999). Intergenerational relationships among Chinese immigrant families from Taiwan. In H. P. McAdoo (Ed.), *Family ethnicity: Strength in diversity*. London: Sage.
- Lincoln, Y. S. & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. London: Sage.
- Liu, J. H., Ng, S. H., Weatherall, A. & Loong, C. (2000). Filial piety, acculturation, and intergenerational communication among New Zealand Chinese. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, 22(3), 213-223.
- Madriz, E. (2000). Focus groups in feminist research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research*. London: Sage.
- Marshall, C. & Rossman, G. B. (1999). *Designing qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Marton, F., Dall'Alba, G. & Kun, T. L. (1996). Memorizing and understanding: The keys to the paradox? In D. A. Watkins & J. B. Biggs (Eds.), *The Chinese learner: Cultural, psychological and contextual influences*. Hong Kong: CERC & ACER.

- Morgan, D. L. (1988). *Focus groups as qualitative research*. Beverly Hills: Sage.
- Moyles, J. (1997). Just for fun? The child as active learner and meaning maker. In N. Kitson & R. Merry (Eds.), *Teaching in the primary school: A learning relationship*. London: Routledge.
- Okagaki, L. & Diamond, K. E. (2000). Responding to cultural and linguistic differences in the beliefs and practices of families with young children. *Young Children*, May, 74-80.
- Ora Limited (2002). *Kiwi ora: Guide to the New Zealand education system: Pack three*. Auckland: Ora Limited.
- Parmar, P., Harkness, S. & Super, C. M. (2004). Asian and Euro-American parents' ethnotheories of play and learning: Effects on preschool children's home routines and school behaviour. *International Journal of Behavioural Development*, 28(2), 97-104.
- Prewitt-Diaz, J. O., Trotter, R. T. I. & Rivera, V. A. J. (1990). Effects of migration on children. *The Educational Digest*, 55(8), 26-29.
- Rao, N., McHale, J. P. & Pearson, E. (2003). Links between socialisation goals and child-rearing practices in Chinese and Indian mothers. *Infant and Child Development*(12), 475-492.
- Renwick, M. (1997). *Your children: Our schools: A guide for Korean parents in New Zealand*. Wellington: NZCER.
- Robson, C. (1993). *Real world research: A resource for social scientists and practitioner-researchers*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Schwandt, T. A. (2000). Three epistemological stances for qualitative inquiry: Interpretivism, hermeneutics, and social constructionism. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research*. London: Sage.
- Silverman, D. (2005). *Doing qualitative research*. London: Sage.
- Snape, D. & Spencer, L. (2003). The foundations of qualitative research. In J. Ritchie & J. Lewis (Eds.), *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers*. London: Sage.
- Spencer, L., Ritchie, J. & O'Connor, W. (2003a). Analysis: Practices, principles, and processes. In J. Ritchie & J. Lewis (Eds.), *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Spencer, L., Ritchie, J. & O'Connor, W. (2003b). Carrying out qualitative analysis. In J. Ritchie & J. Lewis (Eds.), *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- SPSS Inc (1996). *Survey with confidence: A practical guide to survey research using SPSS*. USA: SPSS Inc.
- Statistics New Zealand (1995). *A guide to good survey design*. Wellington: Statistics

- New Zealand.
- Steinberg, L., Dornbusch, S. M. & Brown, B. B. (1992). Ethnic differences in adolescent achievement: An ecological perspective. *American Psychologist*, 47(6), 723-729.
- Steinberg, L., Lamborn, S. D., Darling, N., Mounts, N. S. & Dornbusch, S. M. (1994). Over-time changes in adjustment and competence among adolescents from authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent, and neglectful families. *Child Development*, 65, 754-770.
- Stevenson, H. W. & Stigler, J. (1992). *The learning gap: Why our schools are failing and what we can learn from Japanese and Chinese education*. New York: Summit Books.
- Stigler, J. & Stevenson, H. W. (1991). How Asian teachers polish each other to perfection. *American Educator*, 15(1), 12-21 & 43-47.
- Sue, S. & Okazaki, S. (1990). Asian-American educational achievement. *American Psychologist*, 45, 913-920.
- Trochim, W. M. K. (2001). *Research methods knowledge base*. Cincinnati, OH: Atomic Dog.
- Trussell-Cullen, A. (1994). *Whatever happened to times tables: Every parents' guide to New Zealand education*. Auckland: Reed Books.
- Waldegrave, C. (1999). Focus groups: Participation in poverty research. In C. Davidson & M. Tolich (Eds.), *Social science research in New Zealand: Many paths to understanding*. Auckland: Longman.
- Waldegrave, C. (2003). Focus groups. In C. Davidson & M. Tolich (Eds.), *Social science research: Many paths to understanding*. Auckland: Pearson.
- Walliman, N. (2001). *Your research project: A step-by-step guide for the first-time researcher*. London: Sage.
- Watkins, D. A. & Biggs, J. B. (2001). The paradox of the Chinese learner and beyond. In D. A. Watkins & J. B. Biggs (Eds.), *Teaching the Chinese learner: Psychological and pedagogical perspectives*. Hong Kong: CERC & ACER.
- Wellington, J. (2000). *Educational research: Contemporary issues and practical approaches*. London: Continuum.
- Wilkinson, D. (2000). Analysing data. In D. Wilkinson (Ed.), *The researcher's toolkit: The complete guide to practitioner research*. London: Routledge Falmer.
- Williams, M. (2003). *Making sense of social research*. London: Sage.
- Wisker, G. (2001). *The postgraduate research handbook: Succeed with your MA, MPhil, EdD and PhD*. New York: Palgrave.
- Wong, S. L. (1999). *Niu xilan de huo po jiao yu: Niu gao jiao yu wen hua de te dian*. Taipei: The Publishing House of World Chinese Writers.

- Woodrow, D. & Sham, S. (2001). Chinese pupils and their learning preferences. *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, 4(4), 377-394.
- Wu, D. Y. H. (1996). Chinese childhood socialization. In M. H. Bond (Ed.), *The handbook of Chinese psychology*. Hong Kong: Oxford University Press.
- Wylie, C. & Smith, L. (1995). *Learning to learn: Children's progress through the first 3 years of school*. Wellington: NZCER.

Appendix One: Questionnaire Covering Letter (English)



INFORMATION FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

25-10-2005

Dear Parent,

Ni Hao, my name is Tiffany (Min-Tzu) Liao. I am currently enrolled in the Master of Education degree in the School of Education at Unitec New Zealand and would like to seek your help in meeting the requirements of research for a Thesis course which forms a substantial part of this degree.

The aim of my project is to investigate **Educational expectations and practices: The experiences of Chinese immigrant parents regarding their children's 'first year of primary school' education in New Zealand.** This research is proposed to complete by 31st July, 2006.

I am asking for your participation in completing a questionnaire. The research requires the participants whose child/children attended or currently attending the first year of primary school (New Entrant / Year 1) within the past five years.

The questionnaire aims to explore child's educational experiences, and your expectations, teaching and practices for your child when he/she was or is attending the first year of primary school in New Zealand. **Please return the questionnaire by 20 November**, with the stamped envelop.

You will not be identified in the Thesis. You are free to ask me not to use any of the information you have given, within one month of the submission of the

questionnaire, and you can, if you wish, ask to see the Thesis before it is submitted for examination. If you have any queries about the research, you may contact my principal supervisor who is Professor Carol Cardno at Unitec New Zealand, Phone 09 815-4321 ext 7411, email ccardno@unitec.ac.nz.

Yours sincerely

Min-Tzu Liao (Tiffany)

Ph: 09-5206230 Mob: 021-2121855

Email: t.liao@xtra.co.nz

UREC REGISTRATION NUMBER: 2005.390

This study has been approved by the Unitec Research Ethics Committee from 21-09-2005 to 28-02-2007. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Committee through the Secretary (Ph: 09 815-4321 ext 8041). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

Appendix Two: Questionnaire Covering Letter (Chinese)



研究參與者須知

您好。

本人為 UNITEC 教育系研究生，需要完成一份屬碩士課程中的論文研究。此次教育研究需要，於過去五年中有子女就讀紐西蘭小學一年級(New Entrant / Year 1)的華人家長一同參與。感謝您的慷慨贊助，分享您寶貴的時間與經驗。附上回郵信封，請在 **11月20日**前將問卷調查填寫並寄回。

我的論文研究題目為: Educational expectations and practices: The experiences of Chinese immigrant parents regarding their children's 'first year of primary school' education in New Zealand。中譯為 - 教育價值觀和方式: 紐西蘭華人父母對其子女於小學一年級教育的經歷。

藉由這份問卷調查，本研究將探討華人父母對其子女於紐西蘭小學一年級的教育期許。以調查華人家庭的教育價值觀及所使用的教育方法，進而了解父母及其子女對紐西蘭的小學教育的適應過程。希望透過本研究能協助紐西蘭社會以及華人父母間的溝通，促進種族文化交流。

本研究尊重個人隱私權，於論文中將不會指出任何參與者的姓名。您有權于問卷繳出的一個月內，要求任何您所填寫的資訊不被使用。本論文繳交審核前，您也有權要求閱讀本論文。所有參與者均可索取本研究之調查結果。如果您對本研究有任何的疑問，可以直接詢問本人或指導教授 Professor Carol Cardno (Unitec New Zealand, 電話: 09 815-4321 分機 7411, email ccardno@unitec.ac.nz)。

感謝您的參與。

敬祝 事事順心

廖敏芝 (Min-Tzu Tiffany Liao) 敬上

2005 年 10 月 25 日

電話: 09 520-6230 手機: 021-2121855 電郵信箱: t.liao@xtra.co.nz

UREC REGISTRATION NUMBER: 2005.390

This study has been approved by the Unitec Research Ethics Committee from 21-09-2005 to 28-02-2007. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Committee through the Secretary (Ph: 09 815-4321 ext 8041). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

Appendix Three: Questionnaire (English)

Parent Questionnaire

(Please return by **20 November** – Stamped envelope provided)

● **Background Information**

Date:

____/____/____

Name: _____ Gender: _____

Occupation: _____ Family Population: _____ people

Country and State of Origin: _____

Date of Immigration: ____/____/____ Home Language: _____

Immigrated to NZ for the purpose of children's education: Yes No

Children's Background Information

Child/ren Number	Gender M/F	Current Age	Attended New Entrant Class or Year One of primary school in New Zealand? (Please tick).	Year attended
1				
2				
3				
4				

● **Your Educational Expectation: New Entrant Class & Year One Education**

Your Educational Expectations for Your Child (New Entrant & Y1 Education):

What personalities and characteristics did you want your child/ren to develop?

What knowledge did you expect your child/ren to learn?

What abilities and behaviors did you expect your child/ren to learn?

Your Educational Expectations of Primary Schools (New Entrant & Y1 Education):

What type of learning environment and resources should school provide?

Your Educational Expectations of Teachers (New Entrant & Y1 Education):

What personalities and characteristics should teachers possess?

What professional knowledge should teachers obtain and what teaching content would you like them to focus on?

What teaching style and practices should teachers adopt?

How did you educate your child/ren at home (during New Entrant & Y1 Education)? Please comment on your teaching content, style, and strategies.

How did you assist your child/ren to adjust to New Zealand's New Entrant & Year One education?

During New Entrant and Year One education, what difficulties did your child/ren experience? Please provide examples.

How did you communicate with the teachers at school? Please describe the communication method.

How did you overcome the communication barrier, when you have difficulties to communicate with the school teachers? Please provide examples.

What areas do you wish the primary schools and teachers to improve to provide better quality Entrant & Year One education? Please provide examples, e.g., school system, education methods, contents, etc.

You consider the teaching content of New Zealand's New Entrant and Year One education to be: Too Easy Easy Balanced Difficult Too Difficult

You consider the teaching style of New Zealand's New Entrant and Year One education to be: Too much freedom/No Structure Quite a lot of Freedom Balanced Structure and Freedom Quite Structured Too Structured/No Freedom

● **Your perceptions of New Zealand Curriculum**

- What are the learning areas, skills and attitudes that you consider as important for children to learn during New Entrant and Year One education? (Please tick)

The importance of the essential learning areas to Entrant & Y1 children...	Very Important	Important	Neutral	Not so Important	Not at all Important
● Language & Languages (English & Others)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Mathematics	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Science	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Technology	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Social Science	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● The Arts	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Health & Physical Well-being	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The importance of the essential skills to Entrant & Y1 children...	Very Important	Important	Neutral	Not so Important	Not at all Important
● Communication skills	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Numeracy skills	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Information skills	<input type="checkbox"/>				

● Problem-solving skills	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Self-management and competitive skills	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Social and cooperative skills	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Physical skills	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Work and study skills	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The importance of the values and attitudes to Entrant & Y1 children...	Very Important	Important	Neutral	Not so Important	Not at all Important
● Honesty	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Reliability	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Respect for others	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Respect for the law	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Tolerance	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Fairness	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The importance of the values and attitudes to Entrant & Y1 children...	Very Important	Important	Neutral	Not so Important	Not at all Important
● Caring or compassion	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Non-sexism and non-racism	<input type="checkbox"/>				

● **Your Educational Expectations:**

- What are the important personalities and characteristics for children to develop during New Entrant and Year One education?

What personalities and characteristics should Entrant & Y1 children develop?	Very Important	Important	Neutral	Not so Important	Not at all Important
● Good manners	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Determination	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Self-esteem	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Confidence	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Sense of shame	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Responsibility	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Self-motivated learning attitude	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Independence	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Happy and active personality	<input type="checkbox"/>				

- What are the important behaviors and abilities for children to learn during New Entrant and Year One education?

What behaviors and abilities should Entrant & Y1 children develop?	Very Important	Important	Neutral	Not so Important	Not at all Important
● Ability to understand and follow the concepts	<input type="checkbox"/>				

● Ability to think and analyze	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Ability to communicate and express	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Self-control and discipline	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Creativity	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Look after self and take care of others	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Share resources and cooperate in groups	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Filial piety / Fulfill family obligation: look after family members and siblings	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Obey the teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>				

- What are the important goals for children to establish since young?

What goals do you want your children to establish since young?	Very Important	Important	Neutral	Not so Important	Not at all Important
● Maintain high academic achievement and achieve university qualification in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Healthy body and mind	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Maintain professional knowledge and contribute to the society	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Integrate to the local society and learn the culture	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Goal of good career and lift the family's social position	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Maintain and be proud of Chinese heritage	<input type="checkbox"/>				

● **Your Educational Expectations of Primary Schools:**

- What type of learning environment and resources should school provide?

Primary schools should provide for Entrant & Y1 children ...	Very Important	Important	Neutral	Not so Important	Not at all Important
● Adequate learning resources	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Comfortable learning environment	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● School trips / Outdoor learning sessions	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Teacher aides to assist students of Non English Speaking Backgrounds	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Extra special curriculum to assist students to learning English	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Regular learning reports	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Regular teacher-parent meeting	<input type="checkbox"/>				

● **Your Educational Expectations of Teachers:**

- What type of teaching attitudes should teachers possess?

Entrant & Y1 teachers should possess the teaching attitudes of ...	Very	Important	Neutral	Not so	Not at all
	Important	Important	Neutral	Important	Important
● Strict correction and punishment	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Positive praise and motivation	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Gentle and loving approach	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Assistance for peer relationships	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Respect individuality	<input type="checkbox"/>				

- What type of teaching content and practices should teachers adopt?

The teaching content and practices in Entrant & Y1 should be...	Very	Important	Neutral	Not so	Not at all
	Important	Important	Neutral	Important	Important
● Child-Centred pedagogy/curriculum	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Interesting and fun learning activities	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Adequate homework	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Learning instructions and assistance for any problems or learning difficulties	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Teachings of Maori language, culture, customs, values and history	<input type="checkbox"/>				

● **Your Educational Expectations of Yourself:**

- What type of teaching attitudes should you possess?

During Entrant & Y1 education, parents should possess the teaching attitudes of...	Very	Important	Neutral	Not so	Not at all
	Important	Important	Neutral	Important	Important
● Strict correction and punishment	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Positive praise and motivation	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Gentle and loving approach	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Holistic learning and development	<input type="checkbox"/>				

- What type of teaching content and practices should you adopt?

The parental teaching content and practices in Entrant & Y1 education should be...	Very	Important	Neutral	Not so	Not at all
	Important	Important	Neutral	Important	Important
● Stable learning environment	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Constant cooperation and communication with teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>				

● Involvement and volunteering at school	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Arrange after-school private tuitions	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Arrange other after-school learning activities: sports, music, etc	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Teach/encourage the use of Chinese language to think, listen, speak, write and read	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Maintain the Chinese heritage in children	<input type="checkbox"/>				

● During Entrant & Y1 education, what sort of after-school private tuitions did you organize for your child/ren?

● During Entrant & Y1 education, what are the other after-school learning activities did you organize for your child/ren?

● **Your Child's Socialization:**

You would like your child to...	Very Important	Important	Neutral	Not so Important	Not at all Important
● Socialize with European children	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Socialize with children from other ethnicities	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● Socialize with Chinese children	<input type="checkbox"/>				

● What language did you encourage your child/ren to speak at home?

● What language did you encourage your child/ren to speak to friends/classmates?

● Which group did you prefer your child/ren make friends with? English speaking friends or Chinese language speaking friends?

I would like to receive a copy of the research results (scheduled to be sent out in September 2006): YES NO

If yes, please provide address:

Thank you for your precious time and feedback

This study requires eight parents to participate in the focus group interview (two group interviews of four parents each). If you would like to participate in the one to two hour interview, please fill in the following contact details.

Name: _____

Contact Phone Number: _____

Contact Address: _____

Contact Email: _____

Thank you for your willingness to participate in the interview. You will be contacted shortly in regard of this matter.

Appendix Four: Questionnaire (Chinese)

華人子女教育研究:家長問卷調查

(請於 11 月 20 日前寄回-含回郵信封)

背景資料

填寫日期: ____/____/____

姓名: _____ 性別: _____

職業: _____ 國籍: _____ (國家) _____ (城市)

家庭人口: _____ 人 移民紐西蘭達: _____ 年 _____ 個月

家中使用語言: _____ 是否為兒童教育而移民: 是 否

孩童背景資料

孩童	性別	現在年齡	就讀過紐西蘭小學一年級? (Entrant or Y1 class)請打勾	於哪一年就讀小學一年級?
1				
2				
3				
4				

您的教育期許: 新生教育小學一年級 (New Entrant & Year One Class)

對孩童新生教育的期許:

您希望您孩童培養哪些品德及性格?

您希望您孩童學習哪些知識?

您希望您孩童發展哪些行為及能力?

對學校新生教育的期許:

您希望學校提供什麼樣的學習環境及資源?

對一年級(New Entrant & Year One)教師的期許:

您希望教師具備哪些品德及性格?

您希望教師具備哪些專業知識及設計哪方面的教學內容?

您希望教師使用哪種教學方法,如嚴厲管教、遊玩方式、一對一教學?

您如何教導您新生入學的孩童?請描述您的教導內容、方法及態度。

孩童的新生教育時期,您如何幫助孩童適應紐西蘭的新生教育?

您的孩童在新生教育時期,有哪一些不適應?請舉例。

您與學校教師如何溝通有關孩童的學習狀況?請描述您們的溝通方法。

與學校教師溝通有困難時,如何排解?請舉例。

您覺得學校以及教師的哪一些方面需要改善，有待加強？請舉例，如教學內容、方法、學校系統等。

您覺得紐西蘭的小學新生教育內容為：

太過簡單 簡單 適中 困難 太過困難

您覺得紐西蘭的小學新生教育型式為：

太過自由、鬆散 自由 適中 緊逼 過度逼迫

您對紐西蘭的教育課程及教學目標的看法

針對新生教育，您覺得哪些課程及技巧對新生教學特別重要？(請打勾)

您覺得哪個科目在新生教育中...	特別重要	重要	普通	不太重要	完全不重要
● 語文 (英文及其他)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 數學	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 科學	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 科技	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 藝術:美術及音樂	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 社會科學:文化、歷史、地理及環境	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 健康教育及體育	<input type="checkbox"/>				

您覺得哪個技巧在新生教育中...	特別重要	重要	普通	不太重要	完全不重要
● 溝通技巧	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 算數技巧	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 資訊運用技巧	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 解決問題技巧	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 自我管理及競爭技巧	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 社交及合作技巧	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 運動技巧	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 工作及讀書技巧	<input type="checkbox"/>				

您覺得培養新生的哪些特質...	特別重要	重要	普通	不太重要	完全不重要
● 誠實	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 責任心	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 尊重他人	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 遵循法律	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 耐心	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 公正公平	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 關心及愛心	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 無性別及文化種族歧視	<input type="checkbox"/>				

您的教育價值觀

針對新生教育，您希望您的孩童培養哪些品德及性格？

您希望您孩童發展的品德及性格...	特別重要	重要	普通	不太重要	完全不重要
● 禮貌	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 毅力	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 自尊心	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 自信心	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 羞恥心	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 責任心	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 主動學習、上進心	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 獨立自主	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 快樂活潑的個性	<input type="checkbox"/>				

針對新生教育，您希望您的孩童學習哪些行為及能力？

您希望您孩童學習的行為及能力...	特別重要	重要	普通	不太重要	完全不重要
● 理解能力	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 思考、分析能力	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 溝通、表達能力	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 自我管理能力	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 創作能力	<input type="checkbox"/>				

● 照顧自己，友愛同學	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 分享資源，互相幫助	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 孝順長輩父母，照顧家庭手足	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 遵從老師	<input type="checkbox"/>				

您希望您的孩童培養哪些教育目標及理想？

您希望您孩童培養的目標及理想...	特別重要	重要	普通	不太重要	完全不重要
● 達到好成績、高學位	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 健全的身心、人格	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 學習專業、貢獻社會	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 融入本地社會、學習當地文化	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 擁有高階層職位、提升家庭社會地位	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 保存並自傲自己的中華特質	<input type="checkbox"/>				

您對學校的期許:

您希望學校提供新生教育哪些學習環境及資源？

學校應該提供新生...	特別重要	重要	普通	不太重要	完全不重要
● 充足的學習資源	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 良好的學習環境	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 戶外教學活動	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 助理教師於課堂中輔導非英語系學童	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 特別課程(如 ESOL)輔導學習英文	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 定期孩童學習進度成績單	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 定期家長教師面談會	<input type="checkbox"/>				

您對教師的期許:

您希望教師秉持哪些教學態度？

教師對新生教育應該秉持哪些教學態度...	特別重要	重要	普通	不太重要	完全不重要
● 嚴厲管教孩童的對錯	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 積極鼓勵及肯定孩童的表現	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 溫柔友善、愛的教育	<input type="checkbox"/>				

● 注重孩童間的友誼發展	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 尊重孩童的個別及文化上的差異	<input type="checkbox"/>				

您希望教師使用哪些教學內容及方法？

教師對新生教育應該使用哪些教學內容及方法...	特別重要	重要	普通	不太重要	完全不重要
● 啟發式教學法(以兒童的興趣為中心)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 輕鬆有趣的學習活動	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 適當的家庭作業	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 給予指導，協助學習上的困難	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 教導原住民毛利人的語言文化及傳統歷史	<input type="checkbox"/>				

您對自己的期許：

對於新生教育的孩童，您身為家長秉持哪些教學態度？

家長應該秉持哪些教學態度...	特別重要	重要	普通	不太重要	完全不重要
● 嚴厲管教孩童的對錯	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 積極鼓勵及肯定孩童的表現	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 溫柔友善、愛的教育	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 注重全面發展(德智體群美)	<input type="checkbox"/>				

對於新生教育的孩童，您身為家長使用哪些教學內容及方法？

家長應該使用哪些教學內容及方法...	特別重要	重要	普通	不太重要	完全不重要
● 安穩固定的學習環境	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 常與學校老師溝通合作	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 常參加學校活動及去學校幫忙	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 課後安排課業性的輔導補習課程	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 安排其他非課業性活動，如音樂、運動等	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 教導孩童使用中文思考及聽說讀寫	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 保持孩童的中華文化	<input type="checkbox"/>				

- 請列出孩童新生教育時，您安排的課業性輔導補習(課後):

- 請列出孩童新生教育時，您安排的非課業性的其他學習活動(課後):

您孩童的社交活動

於新生教育時，您希望您的孩童...	非常重要	重要	普通	不太重要	完全不重要
● 多交往紐西蘭孩童	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 多交往其他種族孩童	<input type="checkbox"/>				
● 多交往華人孩童	<input type="checkbox"/>				

- 您鼓勵孩童於家中使用什麼語文?

- 您鼓勵孩童使用什麼語文與朋友同學溝通?

- 您的孩童大多交往講英文的朋友還是講中文的朋友?

您是否需要一份本教育研究調查結果(預計 2006 年 9 月寄出) 是 否

- 如是，請填寫郵寄地址:

感謝您寶貴的時間及意見

本研究尚需要八位家長參加小組會談，如您願意貢獻您寶貴的時間參加約一至二小時的面談，請於下方填入聯絡資訊。

姓名: _____

聯絡電話: _____

聯絡地址: _____

聯絡 Email: _____

感謝您願意參加面談，本研究將於近期內將會連絡您，謝謝。

Appendix Five: Preliminary Questionnaire Results (English)

Preliminary Questionnaire Results

Expectations of Children:

Personality & Characteristics: Effort in learning (19.9%), Morality & Manners (17%), Honest & Justice (16%), Confident & Independent (16%).

Knowledge: English (20.70 %), General day to day knowledge (18.4%), Mathematics (17.3%).

Ability & Behaviours: Social ability (25.6%), Responsible & Self-Control (18.2%), Communication ability (10.7%).

Expectations of Schools:

Environment: Open, Friendly, Happy & Comfortable (35.3%), Safe & Secure (26.5%), Inspire and motivate learning (13.2%).

Resources: Plentiful and multidimensional resources to meet students' learning needs (34.2%), Books & Library(15.1%), Quality teachers(13.7%).

Expectations of Teachers:

Personality & Characteristics: Friendly, Compassionate, Love, Caring (33.3%), Patient (25.6%), Equality, Fair, No-discrimination (10.3%).

Knowledge & Ability: Knowledge of children education (34.5%), Children psychology (14.9%), Qualified for teaching (12.6%), Curriculum designing ability (12.6%).

Teaching Content: English (20%), Art & Music (11.4%).

Teaching Approach: Play (29.3%), Discipline & Firm (15.9%), Based on children's learning needs and interests (14%).

Expectations of Self:

Help children's learning: Read with them (32.5%), Strengthen their English (16.3%), Cooperate with the teaching progress at school (13.8%).

Assist children to adjust to school: Accompany & Encouragement (36.3%), Discuss school life and happenings with them (16.7%), Communicate and interact with teachers (13.7%).

Encourage children to make friends with classmates (60.8%).

After class tuition: Chinese (51.9%), Mathematics (23.5%), English (17.3%).

After class activity: Swimming (24.4%), Piano (21.1%), Other sport (17.9%).

Communication and other problems:

Difficulties encountered by children: Language barrier (41.9%), Insecurity, Shy, Scared (22.6%), Social, Hard to make friends (17.7%).

Communication Methods between teachers and parents: Verbal Communication (17.4%), Parent teacher interview, conference (28.9%), Through Parent help (9.3%).

Communication Content: Learning progress (50%), Problems children encountered, or learning needs (19.4%), Teaching goals and expectations (16.7%).

Ways to solve communication problem: Written communication (23.1%), Seek other parents' advice or opinions (23.1%).

Areas for Improvement:

Lack of or unclear communication for teaching progress, content, goals, and expectations (23%).

Teaching content – too easy, needs improvement (19.7%).

Lack of teachers, class number too large (13.1%).

Lack of discipline and too much freedom for children (9.8%).

Lack of or too little homework or exercise (8.2%).

Lack of systematic teaching content, materials and progress (8.2%)

Appendix Six: Preliminary Questionnaire Results (Chinese)

初步問卷分析結果

對孩童的期許:

品德及性格: 努力不懈、上進、對學習的毅力及熱情(19.9%)，倫理與道德 (17%)，誠實正義(16%)，獨立自主、自信勇敢(16%)。

具備的知識: 英文 (20.70 %)，日常生活基本知識(18.4%)，數學(17.3%)。

具備的能力: 人我關係社交能力 (25.6%)，自主負責(18.2%)，溝通能力(10.7%)。

對學校的期許:

環境: 友善開放、快樂舒適(35.3%)，安全(26.5%)，激發學習的興趣、動力(13.2%)。

資源: 充足、多元化、達到學生學習需求(34.2%)，書本、圖書館(15.1%)，優質老師(13.7%)。

對老師的期許:

品德及性格: 友善、愛心、關心(33.3%)，耐心(25.6%)，平等、無歧視(10.3%)。

具備的知識能力: 兒童教育知識(34.5%)，兒童心理學(14.9%)，教師文憑(12.6%)，設計教學能力(12.6%)。

教學內容: 英文 (20%)，藝術、美術及音樂(11.4%)。

教學方式: 遊玩方式(29.3%)，嚴格教學(15.9%)，教學針對學生需求及興趣(14%)。

對自己的期許:

輔助孩童學習: 陪伴閱讀(32.5%)，加強孩童英文(16.3%)，配合學校教學進度(13.8%)。

幫助孩童適應學校生活: 陪伴鼓勵(36.3%)，討論學校生活、發生的事情(16.7%)，與學校老師溝通互動(13.7%)。

鼓勵孩童多結交朋友適應學校生活(60.8%)。

課後課程: 中文(51.9%)，數學(23.5%)，英文(17.3%)。

課後活動: 游泳(24.4%)，鋼琴(21.1%)，其他運動(17.9%)。

溝通及其他問題:

孩童就學面臨的問題: 語言不通 (41.9%)，缺乏安全感、害羞、害怕(22.6%)，交友問題(17.7%)。

家長與學校互動: 談話聊天(17.4%)，PTA 家長會談(28.9%)，擔任學校義工(9.3%)。

溝通內容: 學習進度(50%)，孩童學習問題及需求(19.4%)，教學期許目標(16.7%)。

解決溝通不良問題: 書面解釋(23.1%)，詢問其他家長(23.1%)。

需要加強的部分:

老師與家長的溝通 – 不了解教學進度、內容、目標(23%)。

教學內容 – 太簡易、不夠紮實、缺乏部分教學(19.7%)。

師資不夠、班級學生過多(13.1%)。

太過放鬆、對學生的管教不夠(9.8%)。

家庭作業、練習太少(8.2%)。

缺乏統一有系統的教學制度、內容、教材(8.2%)。

Appendix Seven: Focus Group Interview Questions

Interview Questions:

1. Please introduce yourself: country of origin, length of immigration, your family and your children.
2. What do you think about these preliminary questionnaire results? Anything that you disagree or like to share your experience about?
3. What were your responses when you experienced different educational values, expectations, and practices from teachers?
4. What are your expectations of children's homework, discipline and punishment?
5. What type of teaching approach or approaches (one to one, firm or play) do you prefer teachers practicing? Describe if different approach should be used for different situations?
6. Have your child ever experienced bullying or problems at school?
7. Have your child ever experienced social problems?
8. How do you encourage and facilitate your child's learning?
9. Have you arranged any afterschool activities or tuition for your child? If so, what activities and why?
10. How do you communicate with the school teachers and what do you discuss about?