Family Finds a Way:

Experiences of

Multigenerational Transnational New Chinese Immigrant Families in New Zealand

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Abstract

The Immigration Act 1987 fundamentally transformed New Zealand's immigration policy from one that was race-based to one based on economic needs of New Zealand society. It opened the borders to immigrants from much wider regions. As a result of this "open-door" immigration policy, a substantial new Chinese immigrant community from the People's Republic of China (PRC) was established in New Zealand. Building a closely-tied multigenerational family is an important feature of family life for this immigrant group. Often, multiple generations live together or within close proximity with one another in highly interdependent relationships. However, a growing number have also started to maintain their family lives transnationally, with different family members across generations living apart but maintaining close ties, with frequent interactions across national borders. Given this transnational family arrangement is very different from Chinese traditional practices of family maintenance, the impact of this change on the wellbeing and functioning of these families and their individual family members is an issue of increasing academic interest.

This thesis responds to these concerns and explores the relationship between people's experiences of transnational migration and their multigenerational family dynamics. Through engaging with individual life stories and perspectives of 45 participants across generations from new PRC immigrant families living in New Zealand, this thesis seeks to understand how those families with closely-tied multiple generations cope with dislocation and relocation during the process of transnational migration. It also investigates how transnational migration experiences contribute to new emergent domestic dynamics, including the development of new strategies and practices to

maintain family traditions, interests and coherence across national borders, as well as shifting intergenerational relationships.

The empirical data demonstrates that despite the increasing proportion of new PRC families living transnationally, their experiences of managing family lives vary. I argue that this diversification of transnational family experiences is largely attributed to the interaction of various impact factors associated with both the internal dynamics of immigrant families themselves and external contexts where those families are closely related. My research also attests that family members' transnational migration experiences accelerate changes to the way they perform family life, particularly amplifying intergenerational differences and altering intergenerational dependency. Even though those changes introduce vital challenges towards multigenerational family maintenance and coherence, my research reveals that families are resilient and able to actively forge multistranded resources as well as engage various transnational activities in response to those challenges. While this thesis poses intriguing perspectives and culturally-specific scenarios to study immigrant families in New Zealand society, more importantly, it also contributes to the broad theorisation of transnational family formation and maintenance in the increasingly globalised world.

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Chapter One

Introduction

In late 2017, I set off on my journey of PhD studies in New Zealand. On the flight I took from Guangzhou to Auckland, I was surprised to see almost a full plane of older Chinese passengers. This was quite different from other trips I had taken, which were primarily full of younger and middle-aged people on their way to overseas holidays or business and study trips. I wondered why there were so many older Chinese people on that flight. I knew that if it was my mother, she would avoid such a long-haul flight in a confined space without ample opportunity to move around. A long flight like this, around ten hours, would cause her severe back pain and swelling in her legs that could make her forget about the upcoming exciting encounters at her destination. During the trip, I talked with the older Chinese gentleman sitting next to me. He shared with me why he was on this flight, which to some extent resolved my questions. He explained that he was flying to Auckland to visit his only son, who settled in New Zealand seven years prior after finishing his Master's degree at the University of Auckland. His son had already been granted New Zealand citizenship, worked for a local Information Technology company in Auckland, had married and had a lovely three-year old daughter. He also told me that he did not initially immigrate to New Zealand together with his son because his life was at home in Shanghai with his wife. But when his wife died a year prior to our conversation, the centre of his family life started to shift from China towards New Zealand—the place where his only son lived and called home.

But this was not straightforward for the older gentleman. Due to changes in immigration policy and restrictions on family reunification visas in 2016, he had no choice but to travel back and forth between New Zealand and China on a family visitor visa. He was at ease with continuously travelling between the two countries as he was still physically fit and the flight tickets were relatively affordable. But what concerned him was that he didn't know how long this situation would last and what would happen if his health deteriorated in the future.

Long after we parted company, his story kept coming to mind. I wondered whether his story was just his, an individual experience, or whether it was an example of a wider pattern of transnational mobility among the Chinese immigrant group in New Zealand. I started to ponder other questions. How do families with members spanning across national borders negotiate their everyday lives as a family? How happy and at ease are family members across generations with this kind of transnational family arrangement? Are there particular difficulties or advantages they face? This encounter thus became the genesis of my PhD research, to better understand how transnational migration experiences influence families and family life.

The introduction of the 1987 Immigration Act fundamentally shifted the immigration system of New Zealand. It transformed New Zealand's previously racial-based immigration policy to an economic-centric immigration policy, and opened its borders to a much wider range of immigrants worldwide. After more than three decades of New Zealand embracing an "open-door" immigration policy, a substantial new Chinese immigrant community from the People's Republic of China (PRC) was established in New Zealand (Liu, 2018). The practice of building a closely-tied multigenerational family is an important feature of family life for this immigrant group (Ran, 2020); often, multiple generations live together or within close proximity with one another in highly interdependent relationships. But just like the older gentleman that I met on the plane and his family, it is evident that a growing number have also started to maintain their family lives transnationally, whereby different family members across generations live apart but maintain close ties, with frequent interactions across national borders (Ho & Bedford, 2008; Liu, 2016; Ran & Liu, 2020). Given this transnational family arrangement is vitally different from this demographic group's traditional practices of family maintenance, there are concerns about how this might

influence the wellbeing of family members across generations, as well as sociocultural family practices performed by the family (Tan, 2016a, 2016b; Ho & Chiang, 2017; Ran & Liu, 2020).

This thesis responds to these questions and concerns by examining how new Chinese immigrant families living in New Zealand adapt to transnational family arrangements in ways that maintain family coherence and relationships across generations. The research aims to understand how multigenerational immigrant PRC families function and cope with family dislocation and relocation, and how transnational migration experiences impact on inter-generational dynamics.

This introductory chapter outlines the research background, subject, questions, significances, overall theoretical framework, and methodology. It also provides an overview of the thesis structure.

New Chinese Immigrant Families From the PRC to New Zealand

The Formation of Multigenerational PRC Immigrant Families in New Zealand

My research focuses on new Chinese immigrants from the PRC, often referred to as new PRC immigrants. In the New Zealand context, the term “new Chinese immigrant” normally refers to a Chinese immigrant who came to this country after the introduction of the New Zealand Immigration Act 1987, which abolished the “traditional origin” preference that favoured European immigrants, in particular British immigrants (Trlin, 1992). While Hong Kong, Taiwan and the PRC are the three major sources of these new Chinese immigrants, ethnic Chinese populations from other regions, such as Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia, are also categorised as new Chinese immigrants in the New Zealand context (Liu, 2018). Compared to new Chinese immigrants, their earlier counterparts who arrived in New Zealand in the late nineteenth and early

twentieth centuries were almost exclusively males originating from Southern rural China (Ip, 1995). This group of Chinese immigrants normally had very little or no education and came to New Zealand largely to escape poverty or political disturbance (Ip, 1995). In contrast, new Chinese immigrant groups are more diverse in terms of gender, ethnicity and country of origin. They are also more likely to be highly educated and possess specialised skills or financial capital (Liu, 2018).

There are two major factors that contribute to the formation of many multigenerational new Chinese immigrant families in New Zealand. The first is the fast-growing population of new PRC immigrants in New Zealand since the late 1980s (Trlin, 1992; Liu, 2018), and the second is related to the Chinese population's family-specific socioeconomic and cultural features (Ho et al., 2010; Ho & Chiang, 2017; Ran & Liu, 2020).

The PRC's Perspective on Emigration and New Zealand's Neoliberal Immigration Regime

Since 1997, PRC immigrants have become the second-largest immigrant group in New Zealand. Their numbers are now just below those of immigrants from the United Kingdom, which make up crucial parts of New Zealand's total population (Liu, 2018). The most recent national census showed that in 2018, 132,906 New Zealand residents were born in the PRC, which made up 2.83% of the total population in New Zealand (4,699,755) and 53.39% of the total ethnic Chinese population (248,919) (Statistics New Zealand, 2019). The total ethnic Chinese population here refers to as ethnic Chinese population in New Zealand coming from various regions, which is not only limited to Mainland China.

The rapid growth of the PRC population has been driven by a number of factors. First, it has been led by the large-scale social, economic, and political shifts in the PRC since 1978. Ever since the

PRC's Communist government started unprecedented socioeconomic reform from 1978, Mainland Chinese society has been undergoing tremendous societal changes. Those changes include the modification of its domestic economic system from a planned economic model to a market-oriented one, whereas the state ideology has been kept as socialism and communism at the same time (Wang & Zheng, 2012). As a result, it took just thirty years for the PRC to become the second-largest economy in the world. Changes also include the enhancement of the PRC's connection with the outside world through opening its borders at various levels, particularly the lifting of restrictions to allow citizens to travel internationally (Wang & Zheng, 2012). As a consequence, the PRC's population started to practice increasing geographic mobility both domestically and internationally, for instance, running international businesses, studying and traveling overseas (Wang & Zheng, 2012; Liu, 2018).

Since the late 1990s, international migration has become a growing phenomenon in the PRC. While it is important to recognise that the fast-developing economy of the PRC produced increased financial capital to support its citizens' international travels (Liu, 2018), the changing attitude of the PRC's government towards international emigration also contributed significantly to the motivations of its citizens' international movement. Compared with an earlier position that often treated those who emigrated, or intended to emigrate, especially to Western democratic countries, as being disloyal and betraying the country, the current PRC government's attitude towards citizens' international migration has become relatively non-ideological and non-political (Xiang, 2003). What is more, the PRC government has increasingly seen international migration as a means to enhance the PRC's integration into the world economy and society (Xiang, 2003). In other words, the more recent non-ideological and non-political stance of the PRC government

towards emigration has afforded Chinese citizens greater freedom of international movement, including immigrating to New Zealand.

Second, New Zealand's ongoing immigration policy reform also contributed significantly to the fast-growing PRC immigrant population in New Zealand. The introduction of the Immigration Act 1987 opened New Zealand's borders to a wider, more diverse range of immigrants, and irrevocably led to profound changes in the country's immigrant source countries (Trlin, 1992). The immigration policy reform and ongoing policy adjustments are fundamentally underpinned by neoliberalism, which replaced the previous racial and cultural determinants for immigrants with a consistent emphasis on immigrants' skills and economic contributions to the New Zealand society (Bedford et al., 2005). In practice, talent and economic investments became the key criteria for immigration approvals (Trlin, 1992). Accordingly, this change had a major impact on both the size and characteristics of the Chinese immigrant population in the country.

In addition to attracting skilled and business immigrants, New Zealand immigration policy also accommodated the family needs of immigrants to a certain degree. New Zealand Permanent Residents or New Zealand citizens were permitted to bring their partners, dependent children, and older parents to the country through a sponsorship model whereby financial responsibility is borne by residents (Bedford & Liu, 2013). In Chapter Three of this thesis, *Contemporary Family Immigration Under New Zealand's Neoliberal Immigration Regime*, I provide a detailed discussion of how exactly the changing family immigration policy has influenced the new PRC immigrant population in New Zealand.

Third, the new PRC immigrants' aspirations for a desired lifestyle and socioeconomic development also greatly impacted population growth in New Zealand. Searching for "greener

pastures" is a significant feature of new PRC immigrants. A better lifestyle and living environment, an advanced educational system, and sometimes the securing of foreign passports, has largely propelled their migratory movements all over the world (Eng, 2006, Skeldon, 1996; Skeldon, 2004). In the New Zealand context, these factors became major motivators of the immigration of individual PRC immigrants under skilled and business immigration categories, as well as the settlement immigration of their families (Liu, 2018). Many of these new Chinese immigrant families are financially comfortable "lifestyle immigrants" with great financial assets (Spoonley et al., 2009). In more recent years this type of immigration has arguably turned into a new social phenomenon. Liu-Farrer (2016) suggested that the most recent wave of emigration from the PRC, in particular wealthy immigrants, is actually a form of class consumption, a strategy of class reproduction, and a way of converting economic resources into social status and prestige. To most wealthy immigrants, emigration may not entail settlement in foreign countries. Instead, it is a pathway towards becoming a global elite (Liu-Farrer, 2016).

Family-Specific Factors in the Making of Multigenerational Immigrant Families

Despite the large-scale arrival of new PRC immigrants in the New Zealand society led by the broader social, economic and political changes in both New Zealand and the PRC, this new PRC immigrant group's family-specific socioeconomic and cultural features also contribute to their family-making process in New Zealand, particularly multigenerational family-making. Once resident status or citizenship is achieved, many PRC immigrants sponsor their parents to come to New Zealand (Bedford & Liu, 2013; Ran & Liu, 2020). New Zealand resident decision data for the periods 1997/98 to 2018/19 (Immigration New Zealand, 2019) indicated that among the top ten immigrant source countries of New Zealand (i.e. the United Kingdom, South Africa, United States of America, the PRC, India, South Korea, Philippine, Fiji, Samoa, and Tonga), the PRC

accounted for the largest number of residence approvals under the Parent Category (28,820 out of 68,098, 42% of the total Parent Category approval among the top ten immigrant source countries—see Figure 1).

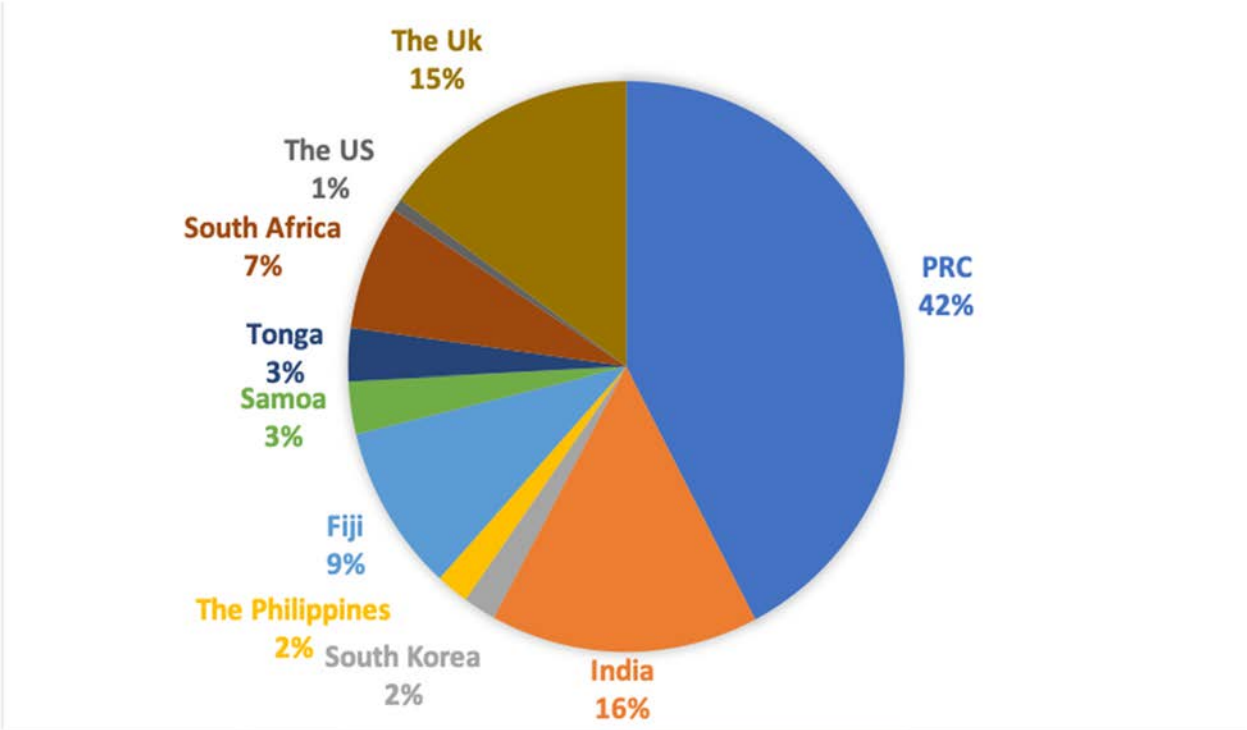
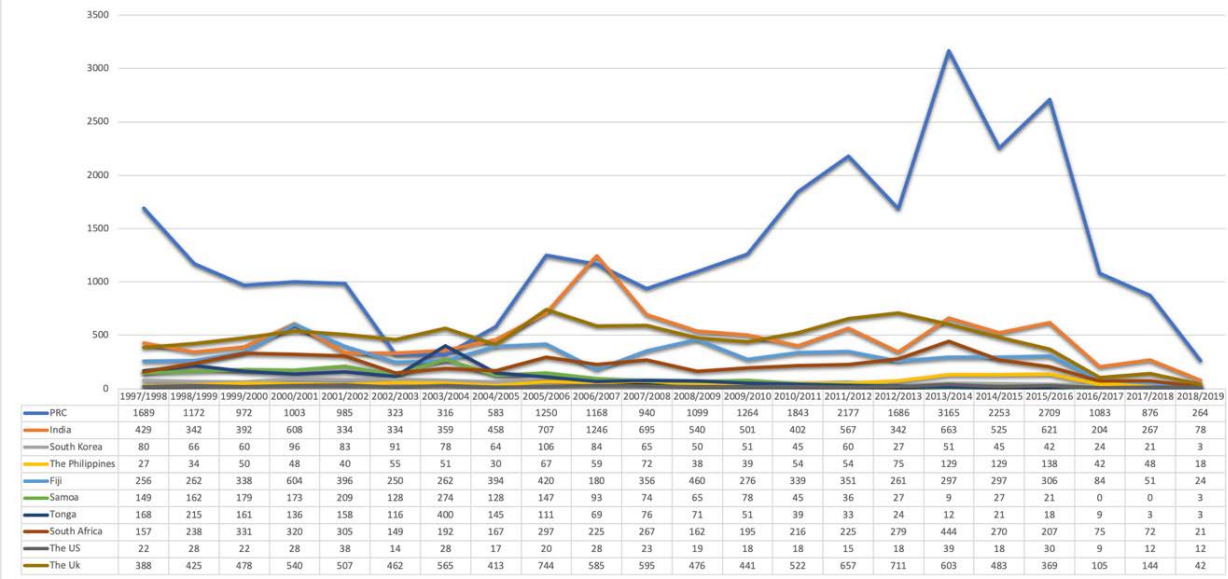


Figure 1: Parent Category Approval Percentage Among Top Ten Immigrant Source Country of New Zealand From 1997/98 to 2018/19 (Source: Immigration New Zealand, 2019)

In addition, the new PRC immigrant group's leading position in the parent immigration category in New Zealand can be traced back to the 1990s (see Figure 2).



	1997/1998	1998/1999	1999/2000	2000/2001	2001/2002	2002/2003	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019
PRC	1689	1172	972	1003	985	323	316	583	1250	1168	940	1099	1264	1843	2177	1686	3165	2253	2709	1083	876	264
India	429	342	392	608	334	334	359	458	707	1246	695	540	501	402	567	342	663	525	621	204	267	78
South Korea	80	66	60	96	83	91	78	64	106	84	65	50	51	45	60	27	51	45	42	24	21	3
The Philippines	27	34	50	48	40	55	51	30	67	59	72	38	39	54	54	75	129	129	138	42	48	18
Fiji	256	262	338	604	396	250	262	394	420	180	356	460	276	339	351	261	297	297	306	84	51	24
Samoa	149	162	179	173	209	128	274	128	147	93	74	65	78	45	36	27	9	27	21	0	0	3
Tonga	168	215	161	136	158	116	400	145	111	69	76	71	51	39	33	24	12	21	18	9	3	3
South Africa	157	238	331	320	305	149	192	167	297	225	267	162	195	216	225	279	444	270	207	75	72	21
The US	22	28	22	28	38	14	28	17	20	28	23	19	18	18	15	18	39	18	30	9	12	12
The Uk	388	425	478	540	507	462	565	413	744	585	595	476	441	522	657	711	603	483	369	105	144	42

Figure 2: Parent Category Approval Trend Among Top Ten Immigrant Source Country of New Zealand From 1997/98 to 2018/19 (Source: Immigration New Zealand, 2019)

Chinese older parents come to New Zealand for a variety of reasons, including retirement, being close to their adult children, or taking care of their grandchildren (Ho et al., 2010; Ho & Chiang, 2017; Ran & Liu, 2020). Under New Zealand's previous policies relating to the Parent Category of the Family Sponsorship Stream, it was relatively easy for adult immigrants to bring their parents to New Zealand. If an immigrant was 18 years of age or over, had New Zealand citizenship or permanent residence, could provide financial support (i.e. NZ$33,675 per year) and accommodation for their parents, and could demonstrate that the family's "centre of gravity"[1] is in New Zealand, the parent(s) could be sponsored to come to New Zealand as permanent residents

[1] Family's "centre of gravity" in New Zealand refers to: 1) the principal applicant parent has no dependent children, and the number of a couple's adult children lawfully and permanently in NZ is equal to or greater than those lawfully and permanently in any other single country, including the country in which the principal applicant is lawfully and permanently resident; or 2) the principal applicant parent has dependent children, and the number of his or her adult children lawfully and permanently in NZ is equal to or greater than those lawfully and permanently in any other single country, including the country in which the principal applicant parent is lawfully and permanently resident, and the number of their dependent children is equal to or fewer than the number of their adult children who are lawfully and permanently in NZ (Trlin, 1992; Trlin, 1997).

(Trlin, 1992, 1997; Bedford & Liu, 2013). It has been noted that previously New Zealand's family-reunion policy was especially PRC-friendly by default, given that the PRC's "one-child"[2] policy means that parental applicants can easily demonstrate that their families' "centre of gravity" is in New Zealand, thus qualifying for family reunification under New Zealand's immigration legislation (Tan, 2010).

Adding to this condition, filial piety is an important cultural value that underpins the multigenerational family-making of the new PRC immigrants in New Zealand. As one of the most influential Confucian family values, filial piety defines a hierarchical relationship between parents and children (Dai & Dimond, 1998). It is a demonstration of normative intergenerational solidarity addressing younger generations' obligations towards their older parents within the Chinese culture. Under this relationship, children are expected to act with complete obedience and unlimited responsibility towards their parents and sometimes also other family seniors (Ho & Chiang, 2017). Filial piety is important for this research given it regulates many PRC immigrant families' multigenerational living arrangements since living together is perhaps the most convenient way for younger generations to provide care to their older relatives. Nonetheless, there are also political and social aspects from the PRC society that also facilitate the formation of many PRC multigenerational immigrant families in New Zealand.

In 2013, a legal amendment was introduced to the Law of the People's Republic of China on Protection of the Rights and Interests of the Elderly (as Chapter Two, Article 18 in the legislation)

[2] The "one-child" policy was introduced by the PRC government in 1979 to combat China's population problem. The policy decreed that a couple should have only one child and inflicted penalties on couples that have more than one child. This policy was replaced by a "two-children" policy from October 2015 (Tu, 2019).

requiring adult children to visit their ageing parents each year and stay in touch “often”. The amendment does not particularly target PRC’s overseas population, but it has significant implications for it. Although the majority of older parents of many younger Chinese adult immigrants do not need financial assistance from their children, ageing care is nevertheless a critical moral responsibility for adult immigrants to provide. This legal amendment was passed as part of the government’s efforts to respond to the social issues related to the “left behind” ageing population (Liu, 2016). Due to the fast-growing trend and volume of the PRC’s rural-to-urban migration, particularly the younger people’s migration to big cities for job opportunities, a large number of the ageing population have been left to cope alone in their later stage of life (Lin et al., 2014).

The legacy of PRC’s “one-child” policy makes the fulfilment of filial duty increasingly challenging for many of the adult Chinese population, including those overseas immigrants who are often the only-children. As mentioned above, if the only-child of a family emigrates, his or her older parents are simply left-behind. Hence, providing care for older parents in the country of origin (i.e. the PRC) becomes unrealistic. Consequently, bringing their older parents to settle in New Zealand is an ideal way to address the eldercare issue.

Research also shows that the provision of childcare by grandparents is a common strategy that many PRC immigrant families adopt to cope with multiple life transitions in the course of immigration (Ho & Chiang, 2017; Ran & Liu, 2020). In return, the adult children assume responsibility for supporting their parents in New Zealand when they are unable to live on their own. In such a way, generations mutually benefit from such multigenerational family arrangements (Ho et al., 2010; Liu, 2016; Ran & Liu, 2020).

All these factors across social, cultural and political terrains reveal how multigenerational PRC immigrant families are typically formed and sustained in New Zealand. Therefore, these factors serve as critical contextual background for better understanding new PRC immigrants and their families in this thesis. These factors also play a crucial role in facilitating the research analysis, drawing attention to the interaction between PRC immigrant family's transnational migration experiences, inter-generational dynamics, and policy settings.

Challenges Towards Maintaining Multigenerational Families

Despite the necessity and desire to generate closely-tied multigenerational families, it is evident that more and more PRC immigrants living in New Zealand have started to maintain their family lives transnationally (Liu, 2018; Ran & Liu, 2020). While recent immigration policy changes in New Zealand have made family reunifications increasingly difficult to achieve and further contributed to many of their transnational family arrangements, the growing transnational migratory mobility of new PRC immigrants themselves also promoted their transnational way of family life (Bedford & Liu, 2013; Liu, 2016, 2018).

New Zealand has increasingly prioritised "talent" (usually embodied in young and highly educated men and women) and discriminated against the entry of older immigrants (Bedford & Liu, 2013; Liu, 2016). This echoes the broad trend of immigration policy patterns in the traditional "lands of immigration" which border the Pacific Rim, including Australia, Canada, and the United States (Ali, 2014; Larsen, 2013; Neborak, 2013; Bonjour & Kraler, 2015). From 2007 to the present in New Zealand, a series of policies have been implemented that tightened the entry conditions for immigrants' older parents. In 2007, the Parents Category was capped with an annual quota of 4,000. In 2012, a two-tier selection system was introduced to the Parent Category of New

Zealand's Family Sponsorship Immigration Stream. This policy change created two quite different criteria for sponsoring older parents to immigrate to the country, largely based on the immigrant adult sponsors' financial income level. In general, Tier 1 applications had a much higher financial threshold than Tier 2. Accordingly, Tier 1 applications also had much higher priorities for the application process than those from Tier 2. In 2016, the Parents Category was closed to new immigration applications entirely. When the category was reopened in 2018, the new policy came with an extremely high financial threshold for adult children sponsors to meet. These changes were made deliberately to limit the entry of older parents of skilled immigrant, to reduce the welfare, medical, and superannuation costs arguably associated with older immigrants (Bedford & Liu, 2013; Ran & Liu, 2020). These policy changes also reflect the soaring tension between the state's claim for more control over immigrant selection, welfare distribution, and increasing demand from immigrants moving out of their countries of origin to seek new lives in the "desired places" of the world. For PRC immigrant families, in particular, such a policy change has influenced their family lives and further imposed critical challenges towards their traditional multigenerational family practices (Bedford & Liu, 2013). In order to cope with these challenges, being able to manage their multigenerational families across different geographic, cultural, linguistic, and political boundaries becomes more or less the last resort.

Apart from the family immigration policy pertinent to the "older generation", the evolving transnational migratory mobility of PRC immigrant families' "younger generations", including the first-generation adult immigrants and their children, also contributes greatly to the transnational family phenomenon. Anecdotal evidence suggests that some adult immigrants sponsored their older parents to immigrate to New Zealand, but later left them in New Zealand when the adult immigrants embarked on renewed migratory trajectories to other countries (Tan, 2016a).

Accordingly, these older parents have to face the challenges of isolation, loneliness, language barriers, cultural differences, and lack of mobility (Tan, 2016a). New Zealand society values positive ageing and recognises older people as important members of society who have the right to be afforded dignity in their senior lives (Ministry of Social Development, 2001). Given this, the responsibility for looking after older parents who are left behind poses a serious challenge, not only within families but also for New Zealand society (Liu, 2016; Tan, 2016a).

After more than three decades since the introduction of the 1987 Immigration Act that removed New Zealand's long-established immigrant source country preference (i.e. Great Britain) and allowed its immigrant selection base on immigrants' personal merits and financial capitals, many early arrival new PRC immigrants' children have reached their late teens or early adulthood. They are either 1.5 generation immigrants who came with their immigrant parents to New Zealand when they were very young (Bartley & Spoonley, 2008), or second-generation (Levitt & Waters, 2002) who were born in New Zealand. Due to their family's immigration backgrounds, these 1.5 and second generations often inhabit a mixed social terrain between the mainstream destination society and their ethnic community (Levitt, 2009). Therefore, they constantly face competing demands for their loyalty and attachment to both their ancestral homeland and country of adoption or birth (Bartley & Spoonley, 2008; Levitt, 2009). They are also situated between adolescence and adulthood—a crucial period in life (Levitt, 2009; Bartley, 2010). Living within this hybridised social terrain, these immigrant children are negotiating new identities and aspirations while coping with challenges that come from the tension between their parentally-imposed transition from the "old world" and the "new world" they have discovered by themselves. This acculturation gap between generations has developed mainly through the older generations' fear of losing their

children to the new culture and their expectation for their children to embark on a better life (Levitt, 2009; Bartley, 2010; Liu, 2016; Tan, 2016b).

These 1.5 and second generations play an important role in influencing many PRC immigrant families' transnational trajectories, particularly because most PRC immigrant families give considerable attention to their children's education (Water, 2005; Ho & Bedford, 2008). Depending on the kind of education families anticipate younger generations will receive, this can impact on the family's decision to settle in New Zealand, move to a third country, or even return to their homeland if a better Chinese education is demanded (Ho & Bedford, 2008; Liu, 2018). Graduating from high school and completing tertiary education are two significant turning points when multigenerational immigrant families may reconfigure their transnational arrangements (Ho & Bedford, 2008; Liu, 2018). As transnationalism emerges as a normative expectation in many PRC immigrant families, these immigrant children are also highly likely to continue their immigrant parents' transnational practices, such as returning to the PRC to work or moving to a third destination to secure better jobs or business opportunities (Liu & Lu, 2015). Young adult children of immigrants are often keen to go overseas to broaden their life experiences in either their ancestral home country, or other places where economies are thriving, career opportunities are better, and lifestyles are more exciting (Ho & Bedford, 2008).

These new patterns of transnational mobility carried by these PRC immigrant family members provide fertile ground for investigating the relationship between transnational family experiences and multigenerational family dynamics. This research brings the field of transnational migration studies and family studies into close dialogue. It contributes to local and international scholarship on transnational families by providing an empirical case study that demonstrates the intersection

of socioeconomic developments, policy-making and inter-generational familial practices in an age of migration and globalisation.

Research Question

The research recognises that transnational migration is an evolving process that involves personal and family transitions and adjustments across the life course (Collins & Sergei, 2015). In line with the overall research aim discussed earlier, this research examines how multigenerational families navigate the process of transnational migration. With this in mind, the research seeks to answer the following questions:

1) How important is transnationalism in the lives of PRC immigrant families who are highly mobile and whose migratory movements often occur across multiple generations?

2) How are the transnational PRC immigrant families formed by choice and/or by force in the context of globalisation, particularly under an increasingly restrictive family immigration policy regime that does not easily accommodate their cultural preference to live as multigenerational families in the destination country?

3) How do different generations pursue their interests and goals while maintaining family relations and cohesiveness to adjust to transnational living in contexts of increased mobility opportunities and constraints?

4) How do transnational family arrangements transform the Chinese cultural norms of family dynamics, composition, finance, and hierarchy across generations?

Research Significance

The research responds to the growing demand to theorise transnational families worldwide, by offering a socioculturally-specific angle of PRC immigrant families living in New Zealand. It is significant for four reasons. First, since the research brings the "forced" transnationalism dimension associated with immigration policy restrictions on mobility into sharp focus, it makes a particular contribution to the theory of transnational family formation in contexts where neoliberal immigration policy directly results in members of multigenerational immigrant families living across different countries. Second, this research addresses an important but under-researched area in transnational migration studies; namely, the intersection among individual transnational migratory mobility, inter-generational dynamics and transnational immigrant family experiences. Third, the research develops a fresh perspective on the study of PRC transnational migration, a family perspective, which brings transnational migration and the inter-generational dimension of immigrant families into close dialogue. Last, it targets the largest non-European immigrant group in New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2019) in recognition that PRC immigrants are the fastest-growing community in New Zealand and an important social force that impact New Zealand society, economy, and everyday life (Spoonley & Bedford, 2012). Research on this significant immigrant group has the potential for far-reaching implications and benefits for the New Zealand society. As New Zealand becomes increasingly multicultural, understanding the largest Asian immigrant group of this country and how their families function is crucial for social policy developments and enhancing immigrant integration, social cohesion, and understanding of cultural diversity.

In addition, the implications drawn from this research in the New Zealand context can also be extended beyond this country. Multigenerational PRC immigrant families are important "global citizens" of the modern world as well as contributors to the transnational circulation of migration and transnational care circulation (Lie, 2010; Baldassar & Merla, 2014; Ho & Chiang, 2017; Tu, 2019). The lived experience of these families poses intriguing perspectives and culturally-specific scenarios to study transnational immigrant families. Therefore, this research can further contribute to the broad theorisation of transnational family formation and maintenance in the increasingly globalised world.

Theoretical Framework

The major theoretical framework of this research takes shape within the rapidly developing field of transnational immigrant family studies. Additionally, given its multigenerational focus, life course theory has also been adopted as a useful analytical tool to assist the exploration, particularly facilitating the understanding of how different generations with different life experiences navigate their personal and collective family lives alongside transnational processes. The combination of these two theoretical threads provides an integrated theoretical approach to examine the lived experiences of multigenerational immigrant families.

Transnational Immigrant Family Studies

Transnational immigrant families, also referred to as transnational families, are the families whose members, both nuclear and extended, are separated geographically but maintain close ties, with frequent interactions, across national borders (Lima, 2001; Shih, 2016). Following heightened scholarly attention paid to transnational migration since the 1990s (Glick-Schiller et al., 1992;

Faist 1998; Portes 1999), transnational families have emerged as an important phenomenon for research (Bryceson & Vuorela, 2002). Maintaining families across national borders is nothing new. Yet the transnational family phenomenon only started to capture substantial scholarly attention in recent decades, following its high exposure in the worldwide media and increasing global application (Schans, 2009; Jeong et al., 2014; Liu, 2018).

Scholars have since investigated the transnational family phenomenon from different perspectives. From a macro and functionalist perspective, a large body of research has successfully built up an epistemological paradigm conceptualising transnational family as a major social institution that can effectively bridge multifaceted transnational social, cultural and political domains. For instance, Lima (2001) used the case of Mexican transnational families in the United States to illustrate how family fosters hybridised cultural practices and economic ties across national borders, which turns the "radical compartmentalized" (p. 91) transnational family life into an intensive "fluid continuum" (p. 91). Another example, also in the United States, is Gutierrez's work (2018) on middle-class transnational Filipino families, which sheds light on how cross-generational dynamics in transnational families shape transnational business and social networks. From a micro and interactionist perspective, a sizable and still growing body of literature demystifies the everyday practices of transnational families, including the rationale and working mechanisms of their transitional movements, and the resultant impact on the wellbeing of family members involved. For example, by looking into the Salvadoran transnational families in North America, Benítez (2012) demonstrated how transnational families utilise Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) to enhance their family ties across national borders. Drawing on the experiences of the Caribbean and Italian families in the United Kingdom, Zontini and Reynolds (2018) adopted the concept of transnational family habitus to examine how the

transnational family's daily routines sculpt the young people's conventional understanding of belonging and lived experience of social inclusion and exclusion in the host society.

The rapid emergence of transnational family studies since the new millennium brings a fresh transnational angle to study families. It deepens comprehension of the strong linkage between contemporary immigrants and family members who stay behind in the country of origin (Bryceson & Vuorela, 2002; Lima, 2001). But it also stimulates the understanding that family units are able to forge and sustain multistranded social relations connecting immigrants' homelands and their migration destinations alongside other associated places (Lima, 2001; Ho, 2002; Gutierrez, 2018).

Chapter Two of this thesis, *Navigating Transnational Immigrant Family: A Multigenerational Perspective*, offers a comprehensive review of the scholarly literature pertaining to transnational families. In order to echo the multigenerational focus of this research and further shape the analysis of the empirical data, this literature review employed a specifically multigenerational perspective to map out how different generations are perceived and positioned in existing transnational family studies.

Life Course Theory

Life course theory pays considerable attention to how social structures and sequences of life transitions can impose profound influences on individuals across their life span (Elder, 1994; Collins & Shubin, 2015). It advances the point that, living in an increasingly modernised society, individuals are facing growing contingencies in their everyday lives which can effectively trigger complex changes of their life trajectories (Elder, Johnson, & Crosnoe, 2003). Heinz and Krüger (2001) point out that life course theory has been largely adopted to investigate the extent to which

“biographies have lost their determining frames that used to be social origin, gender, age and ethnicity, and highlights how the shaping by structural forces shifts to social processes of negotiation between the person, social networks, opportunity structures and institutions” (p 29). With this understanding in mind, the application of life course theory can effectively demonstrate the intricate relationships among individuals as well as between individuals and various levels of institutions. It provides a comprehensive analysis framework to elucidate the interaction between individual agencies and institutions, the timing of life-stage transitions, and the relational structures of life experiences.

The emergence and further development of life course theory are closely related to the research of human migration. First of all, at the time when life histories and future trajectories of individuals and social groups were largely neglected by social science researchers, Thomas and Znaniecki (1927) pioneered a longitudinal approach by using life record data (e.g., handwritten letters at that time) to probe the biography change and cultural adaption of Polish peasant immigrants to the United States in 1920s. This methodological and theoretical initiation was later widely recognised as the earliest application of life course approach in social science research (Elder, Johnson, & Crosnoe, 2003). Second, as a vital life change of individuals as well as a consequence of social and institutional transformations, migration fits perfectly the research focus of life course theory—as life course theory always takes pivotal biographical turning points and critical social events as the focal point of investigation (Elder, 1998; Clausen, 1995). That’s also the reason why Collins and Shubin (2015) deemed that the use of life course perspective in migration study could “develop broader understandings of life transitions, behavioural patterns and sequences of events in the lives of mobile individuals” (p. 96).

The PRC's overseas population have come from the largest communist regime in the world and experienced distinctive life experiences prior to their immigration. Due to the particular socioeconomic, cultural and political contexts, many critical social events and institutional settings in the PRC have also been unique. The Cultural Revolution, for example, advanced a planned economic system, the national economic reform from late 1970s, and the "one-child" policy, which introduced irreversible demographic change. Therefore, life course theory is useful as an analytical lens to facilitate the understanding of multigenerational PRC immigrant families, especially the sociocultural underpinning of their generational differences and how those differences result in various degrees of intergenerational solidarities and tensions in their transnational family settings.

Methodology

My research adopted a qualitative approach specifically informed by the framework of narrative inquiry to explore the chosen topic. This approach brings its distinctive epistemological and ontological perspectives to the investigation. It values the subjective perceptions of participants and regards their subsequent narratives as the most trustworthy materials to establish the understandings of their lived experiences as members of multigenerational and transnational families. As such, this research further developed a three-generational in-depth interview scheme to lead the data collection and analysis. This section outlines the theoretical underpinning of the chosen qualitative approach, the detailed research methods, as well as relevant ethical considerations.

A Qualitative Approach Informed by Narrative Inquiry

Researchers have long employed qualitative approaches for transnational family-related investigations (Bryceson & Vuorela, 2002; Baldassar et al., 2007). This has primarily been determined by the nature and foci of qualitative approaches that allow investigations to capture more effectively the depth of transnational familial stories instead of only the breadth of understanding transnational family structures and dynamics (Ambert et al., 1995; Zontini & Reynolds, 2018; Ran & Liu, 2020). Qualitative research often pursues a more explorative and inductive approach and values the discovery of new social practices, structures and connotations rather than simply verifying existing social behaviors and patterns (Ambert et al., 1995; Becker & Geer, 2003). Also, it prioritises the perceptions from both participants and researchers during the process of research. Hence, it better serves the explorations of how and why people think, behave, and generate social meanings in their everyday lives within the given context (Ambert et al., 1995).

Among various forms of qualitative approaches, my research was specifically informed by the framework of narrative inquiry. This manifested through how it incorporated life story inquiry questions into the interview scheme to guide detailed data collections. The major rationale behind this methodological orientation lies in the belief that, on the one hand, the core of good qualitative research is whether the research participants' subjective opinions, actions and social contexts, as understood by the participants themselves, are thoroughly illuminated (Fossey et al., 2002). On the other hand, narratives and narrative-constructed biographies are the major mediums that can effectively reflect people's subjective constructions towards their lived experiences as they are situated (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Spector-Mersel, 2010; Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007; Caine et al., 2013).

Narrative inquiry carries an inherent social constructionist perspective towards understanding human societies (Riessman & Speedy, 2007). It considers storytelling as a powerful means of delivering and generating social meanings and experiences, as well as regarding people as critical storytelling organisms who individually and socially lead storied lives (Patterson, 2008). Therefore, doing research on narratives is essentially doing research on how people experience the world and produce social connotations (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). Narrative inquiry pays attention to not just subjective accounts from individuals, but also the broad context in which these accounts are engendered. It brings a sophisticated way of evaluating storytelling by emphasising the critical influence brought by a wide range of factors to the formation of narratives, including the subjectivity of narrators who constantly "monitors, manages, modifies, and revises the emergent story" (Gubrium & Holstein, 1998, p. 170) and the social structure and power relation in which the narrator and audience dwell (Caine et al., 2013). From this point of view, narrative inquiry goes beyond a research methodology towards a way of thinking about social phenomena based on a narrative view of experiences (Caine et al., 2013).

The focus and scope of narrative inquiry sit well within an investigation of multigenerational dynamics in transnational family settings. This is because, first, family dynamics, particularly the interpersonal relations across generations, are often a common private sphere of people's daily life, which are difficult to examine without the participation and perception of family members themselves. Hence, being able to access the insights of family lives through the narratives of family members becomes a crucial way of better understanding family dynamics. Indeed, its subjectivity means it is well positioned to elucidate the emotional and relational aspects of family dynamics. Second, given the transnational and multigenerational focus, conducting this research requires the guiding methodology be able to bring together multi-level and multifaceted factors across national

borders and family generations into the analysis. Therefore, narrative inquiry can effectively respond to this requirement as it draws attention to not only the voice of individual narrators but also the broad contexts in which these narrators are situated (Riessman & Speedy, 2007; Caine et al., 2013). It provides the investigation with a more comprehensive and holistic approach to understanding lived experiences.

Therefore, the research is grounded in the lived experiences of PRC multigenerational immigrant families in New Zealand, and the application of narrative inquiry greatly facilitates the exploration of the participants' lived experiences. Regardless of which generation participants are from, each of them has their own experience of, and particular attitude towards, living in multigenerational and transnational family settings. These experiences and attitudes are not simply the product of their personalities and family dynamics, but also highly pertinent to their experiences generated in broader society, including the immigrant-sending (i.e. the PRC) and receiving (i.e. New Zealand) country. Applying narrative inquiry to interrelate the individual storytelling to the broader social and cultural context thus provides this research with an integrated perspective to examine the lived experience of participants and further enables a multi-level analysis of family processes and dynamics.

Research Methods

I invited participants across generations from different families to participate in individual interviews. To be eligible to take part, participants had to be over 16 years of age. Additional criteria also had to be met. All the first-generation adult immigrants and their older parents must have been born in the PRC and arrived in New Zealand after the open-door immigration policy was introduced in 1987. The first-generation adult immigrant participants had to hold a New

Zealand residence visa or citizenship. The older parents of first-generation adult immigrant were not subject to any criteria with regard to visa category (they could be New Zealand citizens, New Zealand permanent residents, or hold a New Zealand family visitor visa). To participate in the research, the children of first-generation adult immigrants (i.e. 1.5 generation or second-generation) had to be over the age of 16 and have New Zealand citizenship or permanent residence. While they could be born in either the PRC or New Zealand, their parents must originally be from the PRC and have arrived in New Zealand after 1987.

Purposive sampling was carried out in the beginning based on my existing social networks within the New Zealand Chinese community, largely with help from local Chinese associations, such as North Shore Chinese Association, Auckland Central Chinese Community Coalition Association, and East Auckland Chinese Health Network. After that, the snowballing technique was applied to reach more participants. Given Auckland accommodates the largest Chinese population in New Zealand—about 69% of the total New Zealand Chinese population by 2017 (Auckland Council, 2017)—it was chosen as the major sampling location for this research.

The major channel of disseminating participant recruitment information was Wechat—a smartphone application that integrates multi-purpose messaging, video call, mobile payment, and various social networking services. This app is extremely popular among new PRC immigrant groups regardless of age groups and it is used daily to facilitate online communications among families and friends, both locally and internationally. New Zealand-based Chinese associations often have their own chat groups on Wechat to keep in touch with members and service users. With help from these associations, I joined their chat and circulated information about the research,

inviting people to take part. This online method of participant recruitment proved effective and efficient; almost all my participants were recruited directly or indirectly via the Wechat groups.

Guided by the qualitative and narratively oriented framework, coupled with the multigenerational focus, I developed a three-generational interview scheme to lead the detailed data collection and analysis. This scheme comprises three different sets of semi-structured interview questions (See Appendix 1 Interview Questions) tailored respectively for three major generations from those PRC immigrant families, namely, the first-generation adult immigrant, their child or children, and their parents.

In reflection of the research questions and overall research aim of this study, these interview questions were designed to, first, capture the demographic feature of the participants; and second, guide the storytelling of the participants about their lived experiences within their multigenerational and transnational family settings, including their individual positioning in their families and multigenerational dynamics. Each set of semi-structured interview questions is composed of multiple closed- and open-ended questions. These questions are divided into four major sections. Section one captures participants' basic demographic information, including their gender, age range, citizenship and immigration status, socioeconomic status, and so on. Section two explores the participants' detailed family lives, particularly their family arrangement and relationships prior to, during and after immigration and the associated challenges in terms of maintaining multigenerational relations and cohesion alongside immigration and settlement processes. This section was guided by the narrative inquiry framework and employed largely open-ended questions, for instance:

- *"Could you tell me the story about your family, anything prior to, during and after your family's migration to New Zealand?"*
- *"How is your relationship with other generations in your family?"*

Section three identifies the generational characteristics of each participant, including their sense of the belonging and attitudes as an immigrant or immigrant descendant towards the immigrant-sending and -receiving societies, the perception towards eldercare, childcare and childrearing, and the identity and understanding towards the traditional Chinese culture. This section was guided by questions such as the following:

- *"Can you tell me, how do you identify yourself?"*
- *"Where do you feel you belong?"*
- *"How might you describe your perspective towards childrearing and child education?"*

The final fourth section concludes by enquiring about the future familial and individual plans of participants, and also provides participants with the opportunity to comment further on anything they think is important but was not raised during the interview, to wrap up the interview.

The three-generational interview scheme facilitated the data collection of multiple generations from those PRC immigrant families, but more importantly, it provided a cross-generational perspective to comparatively evaluate their respective experiences of transnational multigenerational family life. Additionally, the strategy of using semi-structured interview questions enabled me as the researcher to maintain a degree of control over the direction and pace

of each interview, while still providing participants with sufficient space to tell their stories, and articulate their own experiences and feelings towards different topics (Packer, 2017).

The field study was conducted from January 2018 to December 2019. In total, 45 multi-sited semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants across different generations from different new Chinese immigrant families in New Zealand and the PRC. The participants included 16 first-generation adult immigrants, 17 older parents of adult immigrants, and 12 children of adult immigrants (See Appendix 2 Interviewee Profile). Six interviews were conducted in the PRC (two in Chongqing, two in Shanghai, one in Chengdu, and one in Xi'an) with the remaining 39 interviews were carried out in Auckland. The prominence of Auckland-based participants reflects the fact that the city is the largest in New Zealand, and Auckland also hosts New Zealand's largest Chinese population (Auckland Council, 2017). Interviews were conducted in locations of each participant's choice (e.g. their home, café, or other public spaces like libraries and parks) and were between one and two hours long. At the participant's preference, most interviews with first-generation adult immigrants and the older parents were conducted in Mandarin, while interviews with the children of immigrants (i.e. 1.5 and second generations) were in English.

With the permission of participants, all the interviews were audio-recorded and later transcribed for thematic analysis using NVivo 12 software. Using thematic analysis enabled me to detect common patterns of familial experience, particularly their personal behaviours, emotions and perceptions, as well as their interactions and dynamics with other members of their multigenerational and transnational families. Following preliminary high-level coding, I reviewed all preliminary codes systematically and re-organised emergent codes into different hierarchical relations to identify further themes and sub-themes.

The research was evaluated by peer review and, given no particular ethical issues were identified, judged low-risk under the guideline and requirement of the Massey University Human Ethics Committee. The Low-Risk Notification was granted from the Research Ethics Office at Massey University on 18th January 2018 (See Appendix 3 Human Ethics Approval, notification number 4000018863, valid from January 2018 to January 2021). While conducting this research, the Code of Ethical Conduct for Research was complied with. Prior to each interview, a participant information sheet with detailed information about the research, including statements of participant rights was presented and discussed (See Appendix 4 Participant Information Sheet). Once prospective participants agreed to take part, a participant consent form assuring them of confidentiality was signed (See Appendix 5 Participant Consent Form). All participants' names used in this research are pseudonyms.

Thesis Outline

This is a thesis by publications. Except for the introduction and conclusion, the rest of the thesis is constituted by five individual research papers. These papers are either published in the form of academic journal articles or conference proceedings, or have been submitted to academic journals and are currently under review.

Each of these papers plays a different role in exploring the chosen topic but with inherent connections. The first of the five papers is a literature review that systematically maps out the lived experiences of different family generations within existing transnational immigrant family studies in recent decades. The second paper is a review of New Zealand family immigration policy with a particular focus on immigration policy related to older parents of adult immigrants and its impact on immigration inflow from PRC to New Zealand. These two papers lay the theoretical foundation

and policy context respectively for this thesis. The third, fourth, and fifth papers comprise the empirical chapters and each reflects a dominant theme emerging from the analysis. The third paper provides an evaluation of how transnational family separations impact multigenerational family dynamics of PRC immigrant families living in New Zealand. Through investigating the phenomenon of seasonal parents/grandparents of PRC immigrant families, the fourth paper offers a systematic conceptual framework to study the formation of diverse transnational family experiences. The last empirical paper, the fifth paper, explores the reverse-remittance sending practices in the PRC immigrant families, and further elucidates how socioculturally embedded intergenerational dynamics mediate the practice of remittance-sending in immigrant families. The final chapter of this thesis draws conclusions from the empirical work in response to the overall research questions. The conclusion also provides implications of this research with regard to future research in the field of transnational immigrant family studies. Table 1 details the chapter arrangement and abstract for each chapter.

Table 1: Thesis Outline

Thesis Outline
Chapter One: Introduction This chapter introduces the research background and subject, research questions and significance, overall theoretical framework, and research methodology. It also provides an outline of the thesis.
Chapter Two: Literature Review – Transnational Immigrant Families and Their Multi-generations **<u>Article one (published)</u>**

Ran, G. J., & Liu, L. S. (2019). Navigating transnational migrant family: A multi-generational perspective. In *Proceedings of RC06 (Research Committee of Family, International Sociological Association)-VSA (Vietnam Sociological Association) International Conference - The Family in Modern and Global Societies: Persistence and Change*, 78. Hanoi, Vietnam: Vietnam Sociological Association.

To echo the multigenerational focus, this chapter builds up the major theoretical framework for this thesis through systematically mapping out how different family generations (i.e. first-generation adult immigrants, the children and the parents of first-generation adult immigrants) from a wide range of geographic, social, and cultural contexts are positioned by existing transnational immigrant family studies in recent decades. While this chapter demonstrates how these generations navigate their individual interests and ambitions as they are situated in transnational family settings, more importantly, it also brings to light the complicated intergenerational interactions and dynamics that shape transnational family decisions and trajectories. By constructing transnational family experiences as the consequence of intricate interpersonal interactions among generations within family structures across national borders, this chapter points out that adopting a multigenerational perspective can greatly advance the understanding of transnational family experiences, especially understanding the nuanced family-level rationale behind elusive and complex transnational family strategies and arrangements.

Chapter Three: Family Immigration Under New Zealand's Evolving Family Immigration Policy

<u>Article two (under review)</u>

Ran, G. J., & Liu, L. S. (n.d.). Contemporary family immigration under New Zealand's neoliberal immigration regime. *Journal of Population Research*.

This chapter establishes the immigration policy context for the thesis. It illustrates the neoliberal trend of New Zealand's immigration policy change through the lens of family

immigration, particularly the immigration of the older parents of first-generation adult immigrants. By juxtaposing New Zealand's family immigration policy change over the last three decades and its actual family immigration intake numbers under the policy, empirically this chapter demonstrates the crucial impact of the neoliberal immigration regime on family immigration in New Zealand. Theoretically, this chapter uses the New Zealand case to bring to light the enlarged disparity between family immigration demands and family immigration policy targets under the rising trend of neoliberal immigration regimes worldwide.

Chapter Four: "Forced" Family Separation and Intergenerational Dynamics: Multigenerational New Chinese Immigrant Families in New Zealand (empirical paper one)

Article three (published)

Ran, G. J., & Liu, L. S. (2020). "Forced" family separation and intergenerational dynamics: Multigenerational new Chinese immigrant families in New Zealand. *Kotuitui: New Zealand Journal of Social Sciences Online*. https://doi.org/10.1080/1177083X.2020.1801772

This chapter is the first of the three empirical chapters of this thesis. It focuses on evaluating how transnational migration experiences impact the multigenerational dynamics of new PRC immigrant families in New Zealand. It reveals that many of these families face both external and internal challenges arising from their transnational migration process. Externally, New Zealand's increasingly restrictive family immigration policy causes many members across generations of these families to live separately. While the emotional cost of maintaining families across national borders is hard to measure, the financial burden and physical challenges these families endure with family separation are more obvious. This finding brings the aspect of "forced" immigrant family separation into sharp focus and discusses the importance of family reunification for the immigrant families under the context of a neoliberal immigration regime**.** Internally, these PRC immigrant families also have to deal with the emerging generational contradictions and differences alongside the migration process. Some family-specific factors, including family structure and formation, financial

arrangements, different life experiences and sense of identity, and the transforming roles played by different family members through different life courses influence their family relations.

Chapter Five: Seasonal Parents/Grandparents (empirical paper two)

Article four (under review)

Ran, G. J., & Liu, L. S. (n.d.). A conceptual framework for studying transnational migrant family experiences: The phenomenon of Chinese seasonal parents/grandparents in New Zealand. *Population, Space and Place*.

This chapter explores a particular phenomenon of these new PRC immigrant families in New Zealand, a process I refer to as seasonal parents/grandparents—a transnational family experience featured by routinised transnational movements of older immigrant family members between the immigration-sending and -receiving countries. It reveals that the formation of seasonal parents/grandparents is attributed to multi-level and multifaceted reasons. This includes the immigration policy regime of the host society, especially the increasing restrictions on family reunifications, but also other factors such as the geolocations and living environments of sending and receiving countries, and evolving internal family dynamics across generations. Based on the analysis of seasonal parents/grandparents, this chapter further proposes a systematic analysis framework explaining the formation of transnational family experiences. It specifies impacts at three levels: macro-level institutional foundations, meso-level living environments and micro-level family dynamics. Moreover, this analysis framework does not look into these factors separately. Instead, it brings a holistic perspective within and across levels to produce family-specific circumstances. Additionally, it also pays special attention to the geographic space and time related impacts on transnational families, which further promotes the uniqueness and dynamism of transnational family experiences.

Chapter Six: Reverse Family Remittances (empirical paper three)

Article five (under review)

Ran, G. J., & Liu, L. S. (n.d.). Re-constructing reverse family remittance: The case of new Chinese immigrant families in New Zealand. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies.*

Transnational family remittance normally indicates the transfer of money from immigrants to their left-behind families in the country of origin. However, a significant remittance pattern in many new Chinese immigrant families in New Zealand demonstrates a reverse money-flow, whereby family remittances are largely from older parents to their immigrant descendants living in the host-society. This chapter explores the phenomenon of reverse remittance by demonstrating how socioculturally embedded intergenerational dynamics mediate the practice of remittance-sending in new Chinese immigrant families in New Zealand. It reveals that families' financial statuses and intergenerational relations play a vital role in shaping the formation of reverse remittance practices. Four major patterns of reverse remittance are identified: the medium of the gift, financial support, pooling financial resources for collective family life, and investment—each of which carries distinctive material, cultural, and relational implications. This chapter deepens the debate on how family remittances form under social and cultural contexts and further reinforces the reciprocal feature of transnational family relations across generations in the age of globalisation.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion

This chapter summarises the research findings, its contribution towards the empirical and theoretical field of transnational family studies, as well as identifying the implications of this research for future research.

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Chapter Two

Literature Review – Transnational Immigrant Families and Their Multi-generations

Statement of Contribution Doctorate With Publications/Manuscripts

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TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUROA
UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND

GRADUATE RESEARCH SCHOOL

STATEMENT OF CONTRIBUTION
DOCTORATE WITH PUBLICATIONS/MANUSCRIPTS

We, the candidate and the candidate's Primary Supervisor, certify that all co-authors have consented to their work being included in the thesis and they have accepted the candidate's contribution as indicated below in the *Statement of Originality*.

Name of candidate:	Guanyu Ran
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Abstract

Transnational immigrant families have emerged as an important site for research following heightened scholarly attention paid to transnational migration since the 1990s. However, much of the existing literature examining transnational immigrant families often overlooks its multigenerational aspect. To raise awareness, this paper outline a systematic literature review that employs a multigenerational perspective to map out transnational immigrant family experiences. Through navigating the particular experiences of closely connected transnational family members (i.e. the first-generation adult immigrants, their children, and older parents), this paper contributes to knowledge production and raising awareness of the multigenerational dimension for transnational immigrant family studies, which will help to identify and remedy relevant research gaps and provide guidelines for new directions towards deepening this research area.

Introduction: Transnational Immigrant Family as an Emerging Research Paradigm

Following heightened scholarly attention paid to transnational migration since the 1990s (Faist, 1998; Glick-Schiller et al., 1992; Portes, 1999), transnational immigrant families have emerged as an important site for research (Bryceson & Vuorela, 2002). Transnational immigrant families, also referred to as transnational families, are the families whose members, both nuclear and extended, are separated geographically but maintain close ties, with frequent interactions, across national borders (Lima, 2001; Shih, 2016). Maintaining families across national borders is nothing new. Yet the transnational family phenomenon only began to capture substantial scholarly attention in recent decades, following its high exposure in the worldwide media and increasing global application (Jeong et al., 2014; Liu, 2018; Schans, 2009).

Scholars have since been investigating the transnational family phenomenon from varying perspectives. From a macro and functionalist perspective, a large body of research has successfully built up an epistemological paradigm, which conceptualises transnational family as a major social institution that can effectively bridge multifaceted transnational social, cultural and political domains. For instance, Lima (2001) used the case of the Mexican transnational families in the United States to illustrate how family fosters hybrid cultural practice and economic ties across national borders, which turns the "radical compartmentalized" (p. 91) transnational family life into an intensive "fluid continuum" (p. 91). Gutierrez's work (2018) on the middle-class transnational Filipino families, another example from the United States, sheds light on how cross-generational dynamics in transnational families shape transnational business and social networks. From a micro and interactionist perspective, a quite sizable and still growing body of literature attempts to demystify the everyday practice of transnational families, including the rationale and working mechanism of their transitional movements, as well as associated impacts on the wellbeing of family members involved. For example, by looking into the Salvadoran transnational families in North America, Benítez (2012) demonstrate how transnational families utilise *Information and Communication Technologies* (ICTs) to enhance their family ties across national borders. Drawing on the experiences of the Caribbean and Italian families in the United Kingdom, Zontini and Reynolds (2018) adopted the concept of transnational family habitus to examine how the transnational family daily routines sculpt the young people's conventional understanding of belonging and lived experience of social inclusion and exclusion in the host society.

Building on this emerging research, scholars in the field also presented some solid theoretical reviews in response to particular enquiry into contemporary transnational families. Firstly, in the introductory essay of the book entitled *The Transnational Family: New European Frontiers and*

Global Networks, Bryceson and Vuorela (2002) brought forward some ground-breaking frameworks to stimulate the understanding of contemporary transnational families within the European context. For example, they suggest that, while conducting transnational family research, scholars should utilise the concept of "delocating" (p. 6) to broaden their investigating horizon instead of only focusing on the host society context. This is because today's transnational families are characterised by a more resilient relationship to their place of origin, ethnicity and national belonging. In addition, they introduced another two critical concepts to depict transnational family daily practices, i.e. "frontiering" (p. 11) and "relativizing" (p. 14). The former denotes "the ways and means transnational family members use to create familial space and network ties in terrain where affinal connections are relatively sparse" (p. 11), and the latter refers to "the variety of ways individuals establish, maintain or curtail relational ties with specific family members' (p. 14). Secondly, Skrbiš (2008) outlined the ways in which emotions and belonging are discussed in the transnational family context to facilitate the further application of emotion related theory in future transnational family research. Thirdly, Dreby and Adkins (2010) applied a macro perspective to demonstrate how the global structures of inequality affect the everyday lives of transnational family members. And fourthly, Zentgraf and Chinchilla (2012) proposed an analytical framework aiming to capture the full impact of transnational family separation toward family wellbeing. This includes not only the transnational parents, but also other important family and community members, such as the children of transnational immigrants, substitute care-givers and members of the communities in the immigrant sending (and receiving) countries.

From these empirical and theoretical explorations on transnational families worldwide, it is observed that people, mainly identified as family members across different generations, are always at the centre of investigations. This is due to the family's ontological feature as a basic social unit

usually comprising multiple members across generations (Dempsey & Lindsay, 2014), and also the inextricable connection between transnational family practices and highly involved family members. Essentially, transnational family practices can be understood as the consequences of intricate human agency interactions among different family members across national boundaries. Evidence suggests that the transnational family arrangement can greatly affect different family members' lifelong trajectories, individual wellbeing and their cross-generational relations (Lima, 2001; Waters, 2002). Equally, the individual family members and their family relations can also impact the formation of transnational family strategies and practices. In the process of negotiating transnational family strategies and practices, some family members may resist proposed ideas while some may agree; this can result in tensions in family relations (Ho & Chiang, 2017; Parreñas, 2005).

To the scholars in the field, the complicated relationships between immigrants and their family members, between immigrant families and individual wellbeing, and between immigrant families and societies, intuitively reveal the necessity of bringing a multigenerational perspective to bear on transnational family investigations. In other words, a multigenerational perspective can help migration scholars to comprehensively capture the features and dynamics of transnational families. This multigenerational perspective has also been adopted by other research with transnational families. For example, Shih (2016) points out, in *The Wiley Blackwell Encyclopedia of Family Studies,* that deploying a cross-generational comparative perspective contributes significantly to our knowledge of transnational immigrant families and enables researchers to track "how individuals of different generations understand their transnational experiences and articulate generational differences, and how power dynamics operate within transnational families" (p. 5). Investigating the new Chinese transnational immigrant families in New Zealand, Liu (2016) argues

that the socio-culturally embedded multigenerational dynamics in these families play a constructive part in shaping family migratory decisions and trajectories.

Yet, with the exception of these theoretical reviews mentioned previously, which pay great attention to the problematic characteristics of transnational family as a critical social institution across national boundaries and cultural domains, a theoretical review that focuses on the different generations of transnational families and their interactive dynamics has not been pursued thus far. To address this, we proposed a literature review to systematically map out how different generations are positioned in the existing scholarship of transnational families to raise comprehension on transnational family studies from a multigenerational perspective - outlining the scope of current research to clarify what has been done, what has been found, and what has been overlooked. This will help to identify and remedy the research and literature gaps in transnational family studies and provide guidelines for new directions to extend research in this area.

In what follows, we begin by exploring how different generations are depicted and situated in the existing transnational family literature, particularly their unique life encounters and challenges under the multigenerational context. The discussion is presented in three sections themed by respective generations, namely the first-generation adult immigrants, their children (i.e. 1.5 and second generations) and older parents (i.e. grandparent generation). We will then offer some heuristic reflections on the pivotal role multigenerational dynamics play in shaping transnational family practices, as well as the implications of applying a multigenerational perspective to future transnational family investigations.

Before proceeding, a few points need to be clarified. Firstly, the discussion that follows does not attempt to generalise the characteristics of each generation in the transnational family settings, but rather to present heuristic reflections on the chosen literature. Secondly, due to the inextricable connections among different generations, the issues related to different generations may overlap. Thirdly, the chosen literatures are all contextualised by transnational family, in keeping with the boundaries of the research topic, rather than simply transnational migration or the immigrant family. Narrowing the focus of the literature helps to build up a more focused and accurate comprehension of the chosen topic to inform future research.

First-Generation Adult Immigrants: The Backbone of Transnational Families

Early transnational migration research has largely focused on the first-generation adult immigrants and aims to ascertain their movement patterns, intentions and commitment towards their new homelands (Ho, 2002; Pe-Pua et al., 1996). However, in transnational family studies, the focus on this generation is slightly different. Considerable attention has been paid to their intra-generational issues, such as their shifting identity and the sense of belonging alongside their changing transnational trajectories (Liu, 2018) and transnational intimacy between the transnational immigrants and their spouses (Piper & Lee, 2016). However, since this review focuses on transnational families in the multigenerational context, literature on their intra-generational issues will not be included in the analysis. Given transnational family separation has often been perceived as a problematic family maintaining strategy vis-à-vis its domestic relation and individual wellbeing (Zentgraf & Chinchilla, 2012), in the multigenerational contexts, scholars tend to focus on the first-generation adult immigrants and their transnational caregiving practices towards their left-behind family members, including the children and older parents.

It is evident that the adult immigrant generation always plays the role as dominant caregivers in transnational families and there are two important factors defining their caregiver roles. Firstly, from the individual perspective, the immigrant generation often blames themselves for triggering the family separation. Therefore, they are more likely to accept the responsibility for care as redemption for their absence in the family lives (Zentgraf & Chinchilla, 2012). Secondly, from the perspective of the family life cycle, since most of the adult immigrant generations are at peak-earning capacity gaining significant social and financial capital, they naturally become the principal breadwinners for the wellbeing and prosperity of their families (Wilding & Baldassar, 2009).

Sending remittances back to the left-behind families is a critical manifestation of transnational caregiving carried by the adult immigrants. Zentgraf and Chinchilla (2012) explain that, while sending remittance back home is at the core of most transnational immigrants' decision to migrate in the first place, it is also an important means for them to maintain contact and interaction with the left-behind family members from afar. However, De Bruine and his co-authors (2013) suggest that the form and scale of the remittance-sending is not universal, but depends on many characteristics of the immigrants, such as social class, gender and age. For example, Tamagno (2003) found that the lower income group of transnational immigrants would send home remittances more often than the higher income group because they experience family responsibilities differently.

Another significant way for the adult immigrants to provide transnational caregiving, is through maintaining contacts with the left-behind family members. This is a pivotal way to mitigate the emotional costs of transnational separation. Evidence indicated that the contact maintenance of

transnational family can be carried out through various forms, including the information exchange through mail and phone calls and exchange of material products (e.g. food, clothes, gifts) (Tamagno, 2003). To the immigrant generation, regular and high-quality contact may help them reduce the sense of guilt they experience from their prolonged absence from the family life, particularly the mothers working or living away from their children (Parreñas, 2005). Nevertheless, studies found that the frequency and quality of maintaining contacts with the left-behind family members might change due to the changing settlement courses of the adult immigrants. For instance, as the immigrants' first arrival in the host society always involves settlement challenges, contact with their left-behind families is more likely to be infrequent and short; following that, when they are more settled and stable, they may increase to more regular and frequent contacts (De Bruine et al., 2013). It is worth mentioning that with the increased development of *Information and Communication Technologies* (ICTs) and their use by immigrants for communicating with their left-behind family members, migration scholars have also started to pay more attention to probing how ICTs could act as an emerging force in the configuration of a new communication processes and practices among transnational families (Benítez, 2012; Nedelcu & Wyss, 2016).

A large number of investigations also revealed that the organisation of transnational caregiving is typically gendered (Ambrosini, 2015; McCabe et al., 2017). For instance, in transnational communication between the immigrant parents and left-behind children, evidence suggests that fathers would be more likely to maintain the distance with the children and emphasise discipline, but the mothers tend to take responsibility for the children's social and emotional needs (Parreñas, 2005). Gender also influences remittance-sending. Existing literature is contradictory and possibly culturally specific. De Bruine and his co-author (2013) point out, to some extent, men would undertake more responsibility to remit than women due to the different life experiences between

men and women shaped by broader social and cultural contexts, such as employment opportunities and cultural expectations. Yet, when it comes to the case of the Salvadorian transnational families whose parents live in the US, Abrego (2009) argues that children could have more stable financial support when mothers migrate presumably because mothers feel more obligated to send money back to the families left behind. In addition, existing literature also reveals that the traditional gender roles in transnational families can either be reinforced or challenged through the adult immigrants' practice of transnational caregiving. Researching Filipino transnational families whose mothers are the principal immigrants, Parreñas (2005) noticed that the physical removal of mothers from the home coincided with their higher income contributions to the household. This reverses the traditional gender roles in the Filipino families where the fathers are normally expected to be the major breadwinner and mothers to fulfil the role of major nurturer in the household. However, in certain transnational family settings, both Waters (2002) and Man (1995) found that transnational caregiving toward the child orchestrated by the left-behind father and immigrant mother somehow escalated the traditional gender roles.

Apart from the role of caregiving, which is primarily undertaken by the first-generation adult immigrants, evidence also affirms that the kinship relation strongly persists in transnational families, mainly attributed to the efforts made by this generation (Baldassar et al., 2007). This is because this generation of immigrants is normally the principal facilitator in transnational family arrangements. They are located at the frontier to handle, adjust and adapt families' geographical separation, and accommodate the families' various needs (Haagsman & Mazzucato, 2014). For instance, from the case of the Chinese transnational families living between the UK and China, Tu (2017) points out that the adult immigrant generation's effort to satisfy the financial and

aspirational expectations of their older parents residing in China plays a vital role in shaping the quality of their intergenerational relationship.

Child Generation: A Key Determinant of Transnational Family Arrangements

Similar to the first-generation adult immigrants, the child generation also draws significant scholarly attention in transnational family studies. In the broad transnational migration research field, many studies have attempted to explore what kinds of transnational activities the children of first generation immigrants engaged in and how transnational they are, including the 1.5 and second generations (Bartley, 2010; Levitt & Waters, 2002), However, within the context of transnational families, the research focus on the child generation can be organised as four thematic categories: the left-behind children *in situ* (Graham et al., 2012); the children in the astronaut family (Waters, 2002, 2005); the parachute kid (Zhou, 1998); and, the transnational engagement of immigrant child generations (Bartley & Spoonley, 2008; Wolf, 2002).

Left-Behind Children in situ

One of the most common practices of transnational families is that the parents move abroad for better job opportunities but leave the children behind in the home country. Geographically, this transnational family practice is common-place in countries that are the major suppliers of immigrant labour in the global migration system, such as, the Southeast Asian and Latin American countries (Parreñas, 2005). The rationale of leaving the children behind is multifaceted owning to diverse family scenarios, for instance, reducing the initial migration cost, working in the foreign country as only a temporarily plan of the immigrant parents, or a restricted immigration policy in host countries (Graham et al., 2012; Zentgraf & Chinchilla, 2012). This type of family arrangement

can have a profound influence on the wellbeing of the children left-behind, particularly in the aspects of inadequate care received and negative psychosocial impacts due to the absence of their parents (Dreby, 2010; Waters, 2002).

To compensate for the cost of separation, Graham and her co-authors (2012) noticed the transnational families would organise a triangle care delivery system across national borders, which comprises three major parties within and beyond the family structure, namely, the left-behind child(ren), immigrant parent(s) and co-present carer(s). Under this care triangle, a combination of factors can subsequently shape the overall wellbeing of the left-behind children, for instance: the age of the children when parents immigrate (Dreby, 2010); the gender of the immigrant parent when only a single parent immigrates abroad (Graham et al., 2012); the frequency and quality of transnational communication and remittance-sending (Borraz, 2005); and, the substitutive caretaker arrangement when both parents immigrate (Zentgraf & Chinchilla, 2012).

A significant body of evidence indicates that the mother's absence is more influential to the left-behind children than a father's (Zentgraf & Chinchilla, 2012). This has been presumably attributed to two major reasons underpinned by traditional familial gender expectations. On the one hand, since mothers have been invariably playing the role of major caregiver in families, their absence would understandably directly trigger the declined family care toward the children left-behind (Hondagneu-Sotelo & Avila, 1997). On the other hand, while mothers are away, some left-behind fathers are reluctant to cross gender boundaries to provide care for the children (Shih, 2016).

When both parents choose to immigrate, the arrangement of the substitutive caretaker becomes vital for the wellbeing of left-behind children and parent-child relations (Graham et al., 2012;

Zentgraf & Chinchilla, 2012). Existing literature shows that families under different cultural contexts have distinctive preferences when selecting candidates of substitutive caregivers, which ranges from family members to close friends, or even strangers or maids in paid employment (Best, 2014; Kufakurinani et al., 2014). However, the impact of the substitutive caregivers on the left-behind children is difficult to measure or ascertain; there are, thus, no conclusive findings in this area. Battistella and Conaco (1998) argue that, in the case of the Filipino transnational families, the substitutive caregivers, mainly family members, could adequately fulfil the role of parents to provide sustained care to the left-behind children. In contrast, also in the Philippine case, Cortes (2007) found that the left-behind boys are in the high risk of being physically abused even under substitutive care.

Regardless of different transnational care arrangements, compared to the children from non-immigrant families, to a great extent, the human agency of the left-behind children is largely constrained by the transnational family structure itself. And this could ultimately contribute to their vulnerability in the transnational family life, such as the feeling of ambiguity toward the family future and happiness deficit (Graham et al., 2012). Nonetheless, some evidence also indicated that the children left-behind could still exert power through manipulating the various expectations they have of their parents (Shih, 2016). For example, using emotional manifestations to create moral burden and the feeling of guilt to the immigrant parents (Parreñas, 2005).

Children in Astronaut Families

The astronaut family is a transnational family practice largely manifested by the Asian immigrant families who are from a business or professional background. The astronaut family household is split across national borders, as one of the parents from the nuclear family (in most scenarios, it is

the husband) works in the country of origin (or elsewhere) to generate income and provide financial support to other family members who are located overseas, mostly in the "white settler" countries (Ho et al., 2001; Waters, 2002). Research on astronaut families tends to focus on the separated parents, particularly the mother's experience (Huang & Yeoh, 2005; Jeong et al., 2013), and recently to the father's (Waters, 2010), as well as the wellbeing of individual family members and intimate relationships under family separation and cooperative transnational parenting (Waters, 2002).

Existing studies show a variety of reasons which could trigger astronaut family practice, such as the increasingly developed cosmopolitan life style (Abelmann et al., 2014). Nevertheless, in most scenarios, the primary reasons are twofold. The first is the lack of job and business opportunities in the immigrant-receiving countries, which necessitates one parent – normally the fathers as the financial backbone for the families – to go back to the home countries to pursue their economic ambition (Ho et al., 2001). The second is the concern about the children's future development, especially their opportunities for quality education (Huang & Yeoh, 2005). In reality, both reasons together contribute to the phenomenon of astronaut families: the family ambition towards securing both financial wellbeing and better education opportunities for the children cannot be fulfilled in the same locality. It is observed that the child factor is prominent in the formation of astronaut families. Both Ong (1999) and Waters (2005) pointed out that obtaining education in Western countries for the migrants' children is a key symbolic capital that can permit a certain degree of social mobility for them and the families, which to a great extent could be interpreted as the middle-class concerns over social reproduction (Bourdieu, 1996). This is also the reason why many of the parents in the astronaut families, particularly the mothers, find themselves having to prioritise

parenthood over couple relationship and self-interests to sacrifice their own career or personal aspirations and family life (Shih, 2016).

Within the context of astronaut families, both the 1.5 and second generations of migrants' children have constituted a major cohort for scholarly investigations. This body of research mainly focuses on their sense of identity and belonging, and challenges they face when dealing with schooling, academic pressure, peer and family relations in a new social environment (Huang & Yeoh, 2005). More specifically, some studies focus on the impact of the arrangement of astronaut households on these children's emotional wellbeing. Some evidence suggests that the single parent is still unable to provide sufficient emotional support to the children due to the long-term absence of another parent. This situation could also ultimately jeopardize parent-child relations (Ho et al., 2001; Waters, 2002).

There is also a body of research which adopts a multigenerational and longitudinal perspective to re-examine the astronaut family phenomenon and child generations from the families. Using the multigenerational perspective, some new dynamics have been found. For example, some studies have revealed that the practice of astronaut family is only a temporary strategy to achieve the short-term family goal, such as for children's education. However, once the accomplishment of the designated education goal for the children is achieved, the family's structure and transnational migratory trajectories change subsequently to fit new circumstance for their future family projects (Ho & Bedford, 2008; Liu, 2018; Waters, 2005). This is to say that an evolving feature of the transnational trajectories of the immigrant families can be only found through a multigenerational and longitudinal perspective.

Parachute Kids

As an immigrant practice, which emerged in the 1980s and peaked in the 1990s, parachute kids are minor-aged children (normally between ages 8 and 17) who are originally from some Asian countries and left behind in the immigrant-receiving countries (i.e. Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United States) by their parents (Shih, 2016). In most cases, they live alone or with relatives, guardians or host families in the host society, but their parents continue working and residing in their home countries for economic reasons.

Parachute kids possess distinctive dynamics in transnational families. First of all, their immigration is typically the result of their parents' decision, not their own. In the exploration of the Chinese parachute kids in California, Zhou (1998) points out that there are multifaceted reasons triggering the parachute kids phenomenon, which are mainly attributed to 1) the broader social, political and economic contexts of the sending and receiving countries, such as the political uncertainty and unbalanced opportunity structure in the country of origin and the migration networks in the host country; and 2) the family dynamics and ambitions, like avoiding compulsory military service for boys, accumulating social and symbolic capital for the family through children's foreign education and paving the path for the future family immigration plan. Secondly, compared with the most common practice of astronaut families where the children and one parent stay in the immigrant-receiving country, parachute kids stay in the host society alone without sustainable parent supervision. Arguably, they can be conceptualised as either the first-generation immigrants or left-behind immigrant children. They are not left-behind children *in situ* as discussed before, but left-behind children in the immigration host society who receive care by distance or through other means. For instance, some of them may receive a significant amount of living allowance from their

parents, as well as houses to live with supervision from maids or other guardians (Zhou, 1998). They may commute between the host and home countries, and their mothers and fathers may also visit them in the host countries periodically (Orellana et al., 2001). And thirdly, the parachute kids possess a distinctive position and face numerous challenges, especially emotional and psychological challenges resulting from migration adaption and adjustment.

So far, the literature concerning this specific immigrant children generation is very limited. It primarily focuses on the problematic features of living alone in immigration receiving countries. What has been overlooked is the contextualisation of their lives into the overall family transnational setting to analyse their distinctive position in their families' immigration participation and processes. Given their age and immigration status, this group of immigrant children is particularly vulnerable because they are forced to stand on the frontline of their families' child-rearing strategies and are responsible to achieve their families' education expectations, aspirations and social reproduction (Lee & Friedlander, 2014; Mok, 2015; Sun, 2014).

Transnational Engagement of Immigrant Child Generations

A handful of literature in the transnational family studies also pays attention to the transnational engagement of the child generation in the family's post-migration era. In other words, it is concerned with how transnational the child generations are under the influence of their parents' deep transnational engagements. In general, two major forms of transnational engagements have been identified and discussed in existing literature, actual transnational movement and emotional transnationalism.

Firstly, the transnational family itself has been shown to actively shape their children's transnational ambition and mobility (Bartley & Spoonley, 2008; Gutierrez, 2018). Evidence suggests that contemporary immigrant families are more likely to carry strong transnational ties based on either family networks or social and business connections *in situ* or in other immigrant destinations (Bryceson & Vuorela, 2002). The daily transnational practices demonstrated by the family members, particularly by the immigrant parents, could somehow demythologise the practice of transnational engagement to encourage transnational ambition for their children (Gutierrez, 2018). The major drive of this kind of transnational engagement is referred to as transnational habitus (Kelly & Lusis, 2006), which is an internalised and often unconscious intention for transnational engagement (Nedelcu, 2012). In addition, as some of the child generation are also more likely to inherit significant social, cultural and economic capital from either their families or transnational migratory experience, they are also more likely to follow their parents' transnational pathways or pave their own trajectories to become a member of the transnational communities (Bartley, 2010; Bartley & Spoonley, 2008). This trend has echoed the idea from Faist (1998) that transnationalism as a by-product of international migration is not limited to the first generation of immigrant but features across generations.

Secondly, apart from the physical transnational engagement, the child generations' transnational engagement can also be extended to their emotional world, such as the ways they perceive their cultural identity and sense of belonging to the ancestral homeland and immigration destination countries. Wolf (1997, 2002) coined the notion of emotional transnationalism when investigating Filipino second generations in the United States, and used this term to capture both individual family members' emotional journeys and the emotional dynamics between family members when these immigrant families are in transnational movements. The work has a particular focus on the

immigrant children's experience of emotional distress (Wolf, 2002). Wolf argues that, situating in the post migration era, immigrant families constantly act as a container stimulating drastic intercultural interactions between different family generations, which ultimately shapes the emotional wellbeing of every family members, including the child generations. Such emotional interaction is mainly manifested by the cooperation and conflicts among different family generations who carry unique cultural and personal orientations, shaped by their life courses and experiences across national borders (Takeda, 2012).

Older Parent Generation: A Left-Behind Generation in Practice and Research

Compared to the adult immigrant generation and the children, the older parent generation is the least researched group in transnational family studies. However, due to the increasing concerns toward the global ageing phenomenon, particularly the ageing care, the older parents of the immigrant generation started to receive steadily growing attention in transnational family studies. There are three major themes emerging, including the left-behind older parents as transnational care receivers (De Silva, 2017), older parents as transnational family caregivers (Zickgraf, 2017), and the lived experience of older parents after family reunification in the host society (King et al., 2014).

Left-Behind Older Parents as Transnational Care Receivers

Compared with the adult immigrant generation who engage in ever-increasing transnational mobility, the older is far less mobile and more likely to become the left-behind family members *in situ*. First of all, they are more likely to carry less economic, social and personal capital which significantly impacts their transnational movement capacities (Krzyżowski & Mucha, 2014). At

their age, most of them are not in the labour force. They, therefore, have fewer financial resources to fund costly transnational movements. Their declining health also constrains their physical ability to cope with frequent long and tiring international travels. Many of them experience language barriers in the immigrant-receiving countries. More importantly, they are not desirable immigrants since they are not likely to contribute economically to the host society. Instead, they are often viewed as a group of potential immigrants likely to incur high cost on the medical and welfare support systems of the host society. Therefore, immigration policy restriction has been increasingly enforced to limit their entry to the immigrant-receiving countries (Bedford & Liu, 2013; De Silva, 2018). As a consequence, many of these older parents of adult immigrants have been left behind in the home country and are not able to join their children and grandchildren.

When their health deteriorates, the ageing care for them is a great challenge. To raise awareness of this issue, limited but increasing literature in transnational family studies has started to pay attention to the wellbeing of this older generation, particularly the provision of transnational ageing care to them (De Silva, 2018). Based on existing literature, there are five major factors which could effectively shape the patterns of transnational ageing care: 1) the health situation of the older parents themselves; 2) family structure and status, such as the numbers of the siblings and family economic wellbeing (De Silva, 2017; Ho & Chiang, 2017); 3) life stage of the immigrant generation; 4) cultural values towards aging care, such as filial piety in the Chinese society (Ho & Chiang, 2017); and 5) societal reality, such as the older care policy, facilities and resource, welfare system *in situ*, and immigration policy in the host society (Bedford & Liu, 2013; De Silva, 2018).

Similar to transnational care towards the left-behind children, transnational aging care is provided by the transnational family members through two major channels: remittance sending and

maintaining contact with the left-behind older parents. The usual practice of maintaining this contact with older parents can be through either physical visits or using a variety of communication tools and virtual engagement platforms, such as telephone calls or online social networks and media (De Bruine et al., 2013; Francisco, 2015). Evidence from study of the Lithuanian transnational families suggests that while the financial support could be easily fulfilled by sending remittances, the emotional needs between the elder parents and adult immigrants seem to be much more difficult to achieve regardless of the advanced communication and transportation technologies employed by the families (Gedvilaitė-Kordušienė, 2015).

It is important to point out that much of the literature about transnational aging care is somehow problematic since their analyses are predominantly centred on the adult immigrants who are the care providers. More specifically, the literature overwhelmingly focused on how the adult immigrant generation perceives the efforts and emotions they have made to provide transnational aging care, but overlooked the perspective from the left-behind older who are the major care receivers (Karpinska & Dykstra, 2019; Merla, 2012). To consolidate future research, juxtaposing the perspectives from both sides is very much needed.

Older Parents as Family Caregiver

Given the reciprocal nature of human relationships, particularly in the family context, some investigations suggested that the elder parents of the adult immigrant generation are not merely care receivers. In some instances, they also play the role as caregivers to provide emotional, practical, even financial assistance to their immigrant adult children and grandchildren. The most common practice is that the older parents undertake major responsibilities of housekeeping and taking care of grandchildren either in the host society or home country (Baldassar et al., 2007;

Treas, 2008; Zickgraf, 2017). To better understand this reversed care flow, Baldassar and Merla (2014) created the concept of care circulation. The concept articulates a multidirectional family care as the consequence of multifaceted human agency interactions among different transnational family members, such as the individual caregiving capacity and sense of family obligation. One of the most typical cases is that when the adult immigrants step into a new life stage of having their own families and children, which requires family support and assistance to sustain their life and work routines in the host society, many older parents would provide necessary help to their adult immigrant children if they are still in good health or economically capable (Lie, 2010). In addition, some evidence indicates that there are many ways to organise caregiving by the older parents, but what is essential is whether the immigration policy in the host society allows the entry of older parents to assist with caregiving in immigrant destinations (Treas, 2008).

An increasing research interest in this field has been paid to the growing practice of transnational grandparenting. Under this research area, there are two major research themes: the diverse ways of organising transnational grandparenting (King et al., 2014); and the cultural, political and geographic barriers of practicing transnational grandparenting and corresponding coping mechanisms against those barriers (Sigad & Eisikovits, 2013). For example, Nedelcu's (2017) investigation on the Romanian transnational families in Canada and Switzerland brought to light how the grandparents adopted manifold technological skills (e.g. Skype) in order to cope with separation and to improve the quality of their interaction and relationships with grandchildren living abroad.

Lived Experience of Older Parents After Family Reunification

Transnational family scholars also paid some attention to the older parents' life after the end of prolonged transnational family separation. Evidence suggests that family reunification after a prolonged separation could possibly lead to family power structure changes, even power struggles, which could subsequently result in tension and conflicts among families (Wong et al., 2006). To a great extent, this situation is derived from the changing human agency of family members in the host society context, particularly the lifted dependency of older parents on their adult immigrant children in the immigrant destination where they face significant challenges in the adaptation of changed cultural, language and social habitus (De Haas & Fokkema, 2010; Wong et al., 2006). These changing family power relations, coupled with the loss of a previous comfort zone and social relationships *in situ* and the unfamiliar social and cultural environment of the host society could result in a declined mental health for some older parents. Coping with loneliness and depression is a considerable concern (King et al., 2014). Nonetheless, some evidence also showed that, family reunification in the host society could provide the older parents with comforting family surroundings to give and receive care; better emotional well-being could, thus, be achieved (King et al., 2014).

Conclusion: Applying the Multigenerational Perspective for Transnational Family Studies

This paper systematically analysed existing literature about transnational immigrant family lives. By examining different generations one by one, it revealed the different experiences of every generation and the roles each family generation fulfil during the process of migration and trans-migration in negotiating family life. It disclosed particular dilemmas and challenges different

generations face, their reasoning and impacts on family relations. It also identified key research themes that the existing literature covers for each generation. Cumulatively, the analysis suggested a multigenerational dimension that strongly exists in transnational migration and many transnational families. This confirmed that transnational migration is a cross-generational phenomenon, which is, not only limited to the first-generation adult immigrants who initiates transnational migration but also applicable to other generations of immigrant families. Such a transnational habitus has been forged as a norm across multiple generations. To a great extent, the rationale behind this inevitable multigenerational dimension lies in the inextricable intergenerational relations within varying transnational family structures. The multigenerational dimension implies the existence of 'extended family' in a geographical sense, extending across national borders and time-zones, but the intergenerational ties are stronger than expected. The family also extends and contracts according to the different stages of the members' life cycles. Transnational migration is, thus, an evolving process for every member of immigrant families, which in turn shapes cross-generational interactions and family's internal dynamics.

Given this theoretical assumption, acknowledging the significance of multigenerational dimension is fundamental to achieve a better understanding of transnational family practices. Much of the existing literature touched upon this multigenerational dimension when studying respective generations or immigrant families as a whole, but unfortunately did not acknowledge it sufficiently, particularly acknowledging it through integrating a multigenerational perspective into the research's methodological designs and theoretical conceptual frameworks. This review explicitly highlighted a scholarly urgency to adopt a multigenerational perspective on transnational migration and transnational families. Based on the theoretical analysis, we argue that multigenerational interactions play substantial roles in shaping diverse transnational family

practices, as well as both the individual and collective wellbeing of transnational family members. For future research on transnational families and its relevant issues, we deem that a multigenerational perspective should not simply be taken as a useful tool to broaden analytical gaze, but as an integral theoretical and methodological imperative for those investigations.

The paper also found that much of the existing research on transnational immigrant families was largely shaped by a Western dominated nuclear family perspective. However, the migration from Global South to Global North is still one of the major forces in the world migration system. This trend implies that many immigrants are from different cultural and social contexts which define family quite differently to the nuclear family structure. Therefore, we are challenging the traditional nuclear-structured transnational family research paradigm by advocating the application of multigenerational perspective in guiding transnational family research. By doing so, future transnational family research could go beyond the existing theoretical boundary to reach wider ranges of transnational family practices and more family members under different cultural contexts, particularly to those who emphasise extended family structures. Methodologically, the application of a multigenerational perspective is also more conducive for researchers to achieve thorough data collection plans based on the broader identification of key stakeholders in different transnational families. Supported by rich data from different generations, the researchers would be able to use the comparative lens to capture more insights of transnational family practices, such as how the cross-generational power dynamics operate within different transnational family structures and how different generations understand their transnational experiences.

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Chapter Three

Family Immigration Under New Zealand's Evolving Family Immigration Policy

Statement of Contribution Doctorate With Publications/Manuscripts

DRC 16

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUROA
UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND

GRADUATE RESEARCH SCHOOL

STATEMENT OF CONTRIBUTION
DOCTORATE WITH PUBLICATIONS/MANUSCRIPTS

We, the candidate and the candidate's Primary Supervisor, certify that all co-authors have consented to their work being included in the thesis and they have accepted the candidate's contribution as indicated below in the *Statement of Originality*.

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Abstract

A neoliberal immigration regime often takes an "economic" lens to frame and reframe immigration regulation based on a rational cost-benefit analysis of what immigration might bring to immigration-receiving countries. Under such a regime, skilled and business immigration is framed as an "economic" immigration category which can channel in financial and human capital, while family and international humanitarian immigration is regarded as a "social" immigration category assumed to produce immigrants who are more dependent and not able to bring immediate and direct economic gain for immigrant-receiving countries. In New Zealand, such a neoliberal trend is very much alive within its contemporary immigration policy development. The paper aims to illustrate the neoliberal trend of New Zealand immigration policy that relates to the entry of immigrants' family members. In order to achieve this goal, a detailed review of the evolving New Zealand family immigration policy over the last three decades and a quantitative analysis of New Zealand family immigration intake will be presented. By juxtaposing the family immigration policy and the actual immigration intake numbers under the policy, a thorough understanding of how the neoliberal immigration regime impacts on the family immigration in New Zealand can be established.

Introduction

Neoliberalism is a political ideology which advocates market-oriented reform of policies, aiming at eliminating price controls, freeing market capitalism, lowering trade barriers; and more importantly, reducing government spending in order to increase the role of the private sector in the economy and society (Bockman, 2013). In today's society, the neoliberal thoughts play an unprecedented role in shaping governments' decision- and policy-making, including immigration

policy-making (Comaroff, 2011). A neoliberal immigration regime often takes an "economic" lens to frame and reframe immigration regulation based on a rational cost-benefit analysis of what immigration might bring to immigration-receiving countries. It promotes the idea that through the immigration of wealthy and skilled people, a society can maximise its profit as these immigrants can effectively contribute to its market (Mulvey & Davidson, 2019). Under such a regime, skilled and business immigration is often framed as an "economic" immigration category which can channel in financial and human capital, while family and international humanitarian immigration is usually regarded as a "social" immigration category assumed to produce immigrants who are more dependent and not able to bring immediate and direct economic gain for immigrant-receiving countries (Bedford & Liu, 2013). The consequence is that skilled and business immigrants are often welcomed, but immigrants from the "social" immigration category are seen as a by-product of skilled and business immigration and should be kept as low as possible. In the New Zealand context, such a neoliberal trend is very much alive within its immigration policy development in the past three decades (Simon-Kumar, 2015).

Empirically, this paper aims to illustrate the neoliberal trend of New Zealand immigration policy that relates to the entry of immigrants' family members. In order to achieve this goal, a detailed review of the evolving New Zealand family immigration policy over the last three decades and a quantitative analysis of New Zealand family immigration intake will be presented. By juxtaposing the family immigration policy and the actual immigration intake numbers under the policy, a thorough understanding of how the neoliberal immigration regime impacts on the family immigration in New Zealand can be established.

Theoretically, the paper uses the New Zealand case to bring to light the enlarged disparity between family immigration demands and family immigration policy targets under the rising trend of neoliberal immigration regime worldwide. Although the geo-political context of this paper is New Zealand, it can serve as a powerful reference to and meaningful comparative parameter for other studies on family reunification immigration in other social, political and cultural contexts. It can make the theoretical contribution to the understanding that coping with the increasing demand for family reunification immigration, especially old parent immigration has become a major challenge for most Western immigrant-receiving countries that have social welfare systems providing support for the older population, and addressing the fiscal challenge that originated from population ageing is proven to be one of the most difficult and contentious areas of policy formulation in many welfare societies (Bedford & Liu, 2013).

The paper is divided into two parts. The first part is to review and analyse the changing policy that relates to the entry of immigrants' family members with a particular focus on the old parents of adult immigrants. The choice of this focus has two reasons. Firstly, how this group of dependent and vulnerable immigrants have been perceived and treated in the immigration policy narrative is an important indicator of how neoliberal the New Zealand immigration regime is. Secondly, compared with other family immigration categories, the Parent Category has gone through much more frequent changes over time. This policy analysis is contextualised within the overall framework of the key transitions in the immigration policy in New Zealand since 1987 when the country abolished the traditional source-country preference (i.e. Great Britain) and proclaimed a liberal philosophy of selecting immigrants based on personal merits (Burke, 1986). The paper adopts this narrative approach because we believe that it is impossible to discuss the evolution of New Zealand family immigration policy without addressing the overall policy context and the

broad immigration policy transitions over the last three decades. The second part of the paper is a statistical analysis based on the data of resident decisions by financial year from Immigration New Zealand (INZ) (https://www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/research-and-statistics/statistics). This quantitative analysis aims to map the numbers of residence approvals under each immigration category by New Zealand's top 10 immigration source countries. The analysis results can show 1) the significance of family immigration, 2) the variation of using different family immigration categories for immigration purposes in different immigrant groups, and 3) the impact of immigration policy changes on family immigration.

Family Immigration Policy Review and Analysis

Initial Framing of Family Immigration Policy

The Immigration Policy Review 1986 made by the Labour Government's[1] Minister of Immigration was perhaps one of the most significant immigration policy reviews in New Zealand during the twentieth century. It laid the foundation for major changes in the 1987 Immigration Act and is the introduction of an open-door immigration policy to welcome immigrants with financial and human capital. It transformed New Zealand's immigration system fundamentally from one based on a racial preference of the traditional immigrant source countries (i.e. Great Britain) to a point-based system which selects immigrants based on their skills and financial well-being (Bedford et al., 1987). This immigration policy change was a part of the Fourth Labour Government's effort to embark on a radical path of economic de-regulation to revitalise the economy (Trlin, 1992). Along with this economic perspective, another clear objective of this "open-door" immigration policy was "to strengthen families and communities" (Burke, 1986, p. 7). Trlin made a comment on the family reunification immigration policy in the Immigration Policy Review 1986 as the policy was

"with respect to aged parents, adult children and siblings" (Trlin, 1992, p. 7). One significant requirement for family immigration, especially the entry of immigrants' old parents was the "centre of gravity" principle[2]. This principle regulated that the parents of New Zealand residents or citizens would be considered for entry "if more family members are resident in New Zealand than in their home or any single third country" (Burke, 1986, p. 22). Furthermore, if the number of children in the home country and New Zealand was evenly balanced then the parents could elect to join their family in New Zealand (Trlin, 1992). This principle had lasted as a fundamental point underpinning the parent's immigration until the 2012 policy change.

Following the 1987 Immigration Act, a point-based system was introduced in 1991 for immigration admission in New Zealand (Trlin, 1997). Points were awarded based on age, qualifications, work experience, sponsorship by family members or community groups, a job offer, and settlement and investment funds[3]. The point system shifted the focus from obtaining immediate economic and financial benefit from new immigrants to a greater determination to secure human capital and "quality" immigrants. The "quality" immigrants were those who would make a contribution to the nation's economic growth and strengthen the international linkages required for that growth (Trlin, 1997). It brought in a substantial immigrant gain to New Zealand, both as skilled and business immigrants, mainly from Northeast and Southeast Asia (Bedford et al., 2002).

While the economic immigration flow kept going, family immigration continuously appeared on the agenda of immigration policy making and adjustment. In the 1991 policy, a formal Family Category was established, which covered three situations: marriage to a New Zealand citizen or resident; a de facto or homosexual relationship; and the case of parents, dependent children, and

single adult siblings and children (Trlin, 1997). All of these possible ways of family immigration were based on sponsorship provided by the immediate family member(s) who had been New Zealand permanent resident(s) or citizen(s).

Obviously, right from the very beginning of the establishment of the family category under the INZ policy, immigrants' parents are included in the category of family members who could be sponsored to come to this country as residents. This is quite social-liberal compared with many other countries where only nuclear family members (i.e. spouse and child) are defined to belong to the family immigration category, such as Sweden and Netherland (Borevi, 2015; Robinson, 2013). Some scholars commented that the social-liberal family immigration policy during the early 1990s was largely influenced by a social-liberal model of citizenship, emphasising a full range and equal "social rights" for all citizens and even permanent residents (McMillan et al., 2005, p. 78). Under this model, immigrants' old parents were not only allowed to immigrate to New Zealand but also entitled to social services and welfare provision.

Balancing the "Social" and "Economic" Immigration

By the end of 1998, the number of approvals for "social" immigrants (including immigrants who are granted for residence under the Family Sponsorship Stream and International/Humanitarian categories) was over the approvals number for "economic" category immigrants (including immigrants who are granted for residences under the Skilled/Business Stream) for the first time (Bedford et al., 2005). Concern over the increasing proportion of "social" category immigrants was raised in New Zealand Immigration Services (NZIS)[4] 1997 review of immigration policy, as noted:

> In these circumstances, economic migrants become the "balancing item" within the overall immigration target. The lower the target, and without numerical controls on social category migrants, the lower the percentage and actual number of economic migrants (New Zealand Immigration Services, 1997, p. 17).

The review led to the next significant change in immigration management and policy in 2001. Firstly, the New Zealand Immigration Programme (NZIP)[5] was officially launched. The programme manages residence approvals and was structured in three immigration streams, including the Skilled/Business Stream, the Family Sponsorship Stream, and the International/Humanitarian Stream. Secondly, a managed entry regime was established. Within this managed entry regime, the Skilled/Business Stream was allocated 60 per cent of the government's total target for residence approvals, while the Family Sponsorship Stream was allocated 30 per cent and the International/Humanitarian Stream with 10 per cent (Bedford et al., 2005). Here one can see that the suggestion of keeping a good balance between "economic" immigrant approvals and "social" immigrant approvals in the 1997's NZIS policy review had been well pursued. It was the first time that the INZ regime started to regulate the "economic" and "social" streams of immigrants based on actual numerical terms (Bedford & Liu, 2013). The emphasis on "economic" migration signalled a clear shift of immigration policy orientation from social-liberalism to neoliberalism which focuses on economic output from immigration (McMillan et al., 2005; Simon-Kumar, 2015).

In December 2003, a new selection system that involved two-stages of applications was introduced. This new system shifted the way the points system worked from passive acceptance to active selection of immigration applications. It replaced the "pass" mark system with a process

whereby people who qualify above a certain level of points (at least 100 points) submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) to a selection pool, from which they are then invited to apply. Points were allocated on the basis of age, qualifications, a skilled job or offer, the regional location of the job offer, work experience, and identified skills shortage. This new system has remained since then, but it was not applied to immigration categories under the Family Sponsorship Stream until 2012 when a two-tier system was introduced.

As demonstrated above, INZ policy has been constantly refined and re-defined; however, regardless how the policy emphasis shifted from one to another, the factors of human capital and economic investment in recruiting immigrants have not changed much (Bedford et al., 2010). While this neoliberal ideology was well advanced, it needs to be pointed out that there was new discourse emerging in immigration policy-making – that is "a shift in emphasis in policy from a focus on numerical targets towards settlement outcomes" (Bedford et al., 2005, p. 1). Settlement and integration support were promoted and seen as a key pillar to ensure a better settlement outcome of immigration. These trends accelerated a full formation of a neoliberal immigration regime which is in favour of highly skilled and business immigrants over family and social immigrants.

One Step Further Towards a Neoliberal Immigration Regime

The progressive neoliberal construction of the family immigration policy in New Zealand can be further evidenced in the policy change of the Family Sponsorship Stream in 2007. In the Review of Family Sponsorship Policies for Cabinet early in 2007, the Minister of Immigration (Cunliffe, 2007) recommended that "while the [family] stream performs an important social role, it is critical that policies also be considered through an economic lens" (Cunliffe, 2007, p. 7). This review led

to a critical change in the policy of family immigration. Firstly, the Family Sponsorship Stream was divided into two sub-streams in May 2007: the Parent, Adult Child(ren) and Sibling Stream (PASS) and the Partner and Dependent Children Stream (PDCS). Under the first stream, there were three sub-categories: the Parent Category, the Sibling Category, and the Adult Child(ren) Category. Under the second stream, there are two sub-categories: the Dependent Child(ren) Category and the Spouse/Partners Category. Secondly, although the overall family sponsorship stream had a notional ceiling of 30 per cent of all residence approvals before May 2007, there had been no specific cap on the numbers of parents, adult children, and siblings. However, the 2007 policy change capped these categories with actual numbers. It meant that when the limit; namely, the cap was reached, no further visas would be granted in that visa class in the programme year. The Parent Category was given approximately a 4,000 quota per year. In addition, the 2007 policy change also included requirements of a minimum income for sponsors (i.e. NZ$33,675 per year) and an increased length of time an immigrant sponsor would have to support their old parents without access to benefits from 2 years to 5 years.

These two changes were a deliberate attempt to prioritise the entry of immediate family members; namely, overseas-born partners and dependent children, while limiting the entry of old family members who were dependent, had relatively low workforce participation, and had a high tendency of welfare dependence (Cunliffe, 2007). Compared with immigrants admitted under the skilled and business categories, old parents of these immigrants were assumed to have much higher levels of welfare dependency and demand for health and medical provisions. These rationales were documented in details in some official government papers and reviews. For example, in the background paper prepared for the Cabinet Policy Committee in May 2007, it was estimated that "the net savings in benefit expenditure at current rates from the proposal to extend sponsors'

support of parents from two to five years would be $16.163 million per annum" (Cunliffe, 2007, p. 2). In a Department of Labour report to Minister Hon Coleman entitled A Comprehensive Overview of Family-Sponsored Migration (09/87071, 30 September 2009), it argued, with reference to data on costs by age and gender in 2007/08, that

> Even when based on the lowest level of superannuation ($519.72 per fortnight) parent migrants can cost $100,000 each in superannuation over their lifetime. Combining this figure with potential health costs means each parent migrant can equate to around $200,000 (Department of Labour, 2009, p. 8).

The economic lens to construct parent immigration in New Zealand was further refined by the Minister of Immigration in a paper for the Cabinet's Domestic Policy Committee early in 2011. In the paper, the Minister proposed a refocusing of parent policy "to better support the attraction and retention of skilled migrants" (Coleman, 2011, p. 1), but he also indicated that "parents sponsored by high-contributing sponsors, or who bring a guaranteed income or fund, will have a high priority for New Zealand residence. They will also have more flexible eligibility criteria and reduced processing times" (Coleman, 2011, p. 1).

These recommendations led to the final approval of the enforcement of the two-tier selection system in the Parent Category by Cabinet in May 2011, starting from July 2012. Similar to the two-stage EOI system that was introduced for skilled immigrant selection in December 2002, people seeking entry under the Parent Category are also required to submit an EOI before making a formal application to enter New Zealand. Furthermore, the EOIs must be submitted with reference to criteria applying to two tiers of entry, with Tier 1 having a much higher financial requirement for sponsors than Tier 2. The sponsor adult child or his/her partner under Tier 1 should

demonstrate that his/her individual annual gross income is at least NZ$65,000 or a minimum combined annual gross income of the sponsor adult child and his/her partner as NZ$90,000, while the income threshold for a sponsor adult child under Tier 2 is NZ$33,675 per annum. However, applicants under Tier 2 have to meet an additional requirement – that is the applicants cannot have any adult children living in the country where they live lawfully and permanently at the time of the application (Bedford & Liu, 2013).

The rationale behind the new EOI policy under the capped Parent Category is to monitor the number of EOIs in the pool, quantify the EOIs under the Tier 1 and Tier 2 schemes, and give Tier 1 priority over those submitted under Tier 2 criteria. Unlike the system that applies to skilled immigrants, where EOIs stay in the pool for a maximum of three months, in the case of the Parent Category, EOIs can stay in the pool for an extended period of time. They are considered strictly in order of date of entry into the pool and the waiting time for sponsored parents to be granted permanent residence is much longer than before. As for applications submitted before 16 May 2012 under the previous Parent Category, they are re-assessed to be categorised as either Tier 1 or Tier 2. The queue for applications under the previous policy is estimated to be five years, while the waiting time for applications under Tier 2 is up to seven years (Bedford & Liu, 2013).

Apart from the different financial thresholds and assessment priority for applicants under Tier 1 and Tier 2, another major difference of the 2012 policy change from the previous Parent Category was the “centre of gravity” principle. As mentioned before, this principle had previously underpinned the family reunification system and had been enforced ever since a major review of immigration policy in 1986 (Burke, 1986). However, this principle was removed from the 2012 policy change. Parents seeking entry under Tier 1 are not subject to the “centre of gravity” test,

while parents under Tier 2 have to meet more restricted requirements of the residence place of all their adult children if they have more than one child.

Additionally, another significant change in the Parent Category under the two-tier selection system was that the sponsors would be responsible for covering any costs to the government for their parents (e.g. medical costs) for 10 years whereas the previous regulation only required the sponsors to do so for five years. Bedford and Liu pointed out that "for the first time in the history of New Zealand's family immigration policy, income/wealth of parents and/or their adult sponsors has become the defining selection criterion" (Bedford & Liu, 2013, p. 30). This policy clearly reflects the shift "towards a stronger economic focus on the costs and benefits of a migration policy stream" (Bedford & Liu, 2013, p. 25). The rationale of these changes is that parent immigrants impose fiscal costs to New Zealand because most of them are highly likely to have low labour market participation, high rates of benefit uptake, and high health costs (Office of the Minister of Immigration, 2016).

Approaching a Full Formation of a Neoliberal Immigration Regime

In a Cabinet Paper (October 2016), the Minister of Immigration articulated that since there were about 4,000 people who had applications being processed or had already been approved this financial year; it would take two years to clear the current caseload. In addition, there was a queue of around 4,000 Parent Category EOIs that had not been selected yet. Based on the fact, the Minister of Immigration proposed to temporarily close the Parent Category (Tier 1 and Tier 2) for at least two years, starting from 11 October 2016 (Office of the Minister of Immigration, 2016). Whether this immigration category would be re-opened or not was unknown, depending on further policy review over the next two years (Woodhouse, 2016).

It is worth mentioning that the 2016 policy change in the Parent Category together with an overall cutting-down of residence approval numbers for all incoming residence applications to New Zealand, the reason that the immigration volume reached a historical new peak. The overall cutting-down aimed to reduce the total number of residence approvals to the range of 85,000-95,000 from the previous range of 90,000-100,000 over the next two years (till June 2018). To achieve this goal, firstly, the immigration bar was lifted for the Skilled Migrant Category (SMC). The required total points for applying for residence under the SMC increased from 140 to 160, and the average band score of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) for the applicants also increased from 5 to 6.5. Secondly, the scale of family immigration intake was reduced, especially the capped family immigration categories. The targeted quota for these categories was reduced from 5,500 to 2,000 per year (Woodhouse, 2016).

While the close-off of the Parent Category, there were only two other visa schemes allowing the old parents of adult immigrants to come to New Zealand for family related immigration or visit. The first is an investment immigration plan called Parent Retirement Resident Visa (Immigration New Zealand, 2020b), and another is a short-term visitor visa called Parent and Grandparent Visitor Visa (Immigration New Zealand, 2020a). The former requires significant funding resources to support the application. According to the INZ website, to apply for a Parent Retirement Resident Visa, by the time of application, the old parent of adult immigrants needed to have a guaranteed annual income of NZ$60,000 or more and NZ$1 million or more to invest in New Zealand for at least four consecutive years, plus another NZ$500,000 or more savings in the bank account to guarantee the settlement. The later one – the Parent and Grandparent Visitor Visa, grants the old family member multiple entries to New Zealand without a significant financial threshold but only allows them to stay for up to six months at any given time, with a maximum total stay of 18 months

every three years. Apparently, due to the substantial financial requirement, many immigrants are unable to bring their old parents to New Zealand through the Parent Retirement Resident Visa. However, if they had to rely on the Parent and Grandparent Visitor Visa for family reunifications, all family reunifications were only fragmented and temporary.

On 21 October 2019 after three years the Parent Category was closed, the New Zealand Government finally announced that the Parent Category would be re-opened to accept applications from February 2020. However, the re-opened Parent Category carries new regulations with much higher financial requirements for sponsors. Firstly, the two-tier system has been changed to a single system. Secondly, the number of people who can get the residence visa under the Parent Category is reduced to 1,000 annually from 2,000 annually. Lastly, the new policy enforces much higher financial requirements for the adult immigrant-child sponsors. If one person sponsors one parent, the income threshold should double the New Zealand median income, which is about NZ$106,080 per year. The income threshold for one sponsor to sponsor two parents is NZ$159,120. If a sponsor and his/her partner want to sponsor two parents, the income threshold is NZ$212,160 (Immigration New Zealand, 2019). As can be seen, achieving the residence visa for the old parents of adult immigrants through family sponsorship has become increasingly difficult in New Zealand.

The policy analysis above highlights the fact that the contemporary New Zealand immigration regime has progressively pursued a neoliberal discourse in which skilled and business immigration is favoured, while family immigration is constantly discouraged. Such policy discourse is a significant manifestation of a nation's ambition for further economic growth in which skilled and business immigrants are viewed as an important resource to channel in human and financial capital

to the immigrant-receiving countries, while low skilled labour immigrants and dependent family members of skilled and business immigrants are regarded as a burden for host countries' welfare and health support systems (Borevi, 2015; Czaika & De Haas, 2013; DeShaw, 2015). The tightening-up of the policy of the Parent Category is a particular arena through which the arising of neoliberalism-led immigration programmes can be testified. The policy analysis also reflects the soaring tension between the state's claim for more control in immigrant selection, welfare distribution, and increasing demand from immigrants of moving out of their countries of origin to seek new lives in "desired places" of the world. New Zealand is one of these places.

It can be concluded that the progressive shift of family immigration policy, especially the policy of the Parent Category in New Zealand has been from inclusive to exclusive. Namely, the previous policy intended to ensure a certain scale of parent immigration because of the consideration of family need. However, this approach has gone through a fundamental change under the government's desire of establishing a neoliberal immigration regime. The primary reason for such a change is economic. Concern over welfare and health costs among those dependent family members is central for the New Zealand Government's reconstruction of the concept of "family" and right of the legal insider (namely, the sponsor) who has a legal tie to the country and also involves a moral claim of the insider/sponsor (Bonjour & Kraler, 2015). This reflects exactly a neoliberal approach towards immigration in which economic ambition from immigration takes over some important social values of being a family, how to be a family and what makes a better family from various cultural perspectives. Under this immigration regime, the value of having families and creating better family lives for immigrants has been overlooked, and the government is applying double measurements and treatments to its citizens with and without migration backgrounds. As Bedford and Liu argued, one class of citizens is those who can have the

opportunity to have their parents living in the same country, and another class is those who cannot have the same opportunity to do so (Bedford & Liu, 2013).

Mapping Family Immigration in New Zealand: A Quantitative Analysis

The quantitative analysis looks at the numbers approved for entry under different immigration streams/categories from 1997/98 to 2018/19. The data is from INZ's data of resident decisions by financial year (https://www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/research-and-statistics/statistics). The analysis focuses on the top 10 immigrant source countries of New Zealand (including the United Kingdom, South Africa, United States of America (USA), China, India, South Korea, Philippine, Fiji, Samoa, and Tonga). These 10 countries have provided more than 80% of the immigrants approved for residence in New Zealand since 1997/98. These include four countries in Asia – China, India, South Korea, and Philippine, three Pacific island countries – Fiji, Tonga, and Samoa, and three English-speaking countries from various regions – the United Kingdom (UK), South Africa, and the USA. Through the analysis of the residence decision data by financial year, the significance of family immigration to New Zealand from these countries can be identified, some major variations of the usage of different immigration pathways among these top 10 immigrant groups can be shown, and the impact of the immigration policy changes on family immigration can be revealed.

The General Picture

To examine family immigration in New Zealand, it is necessary to employ a comparative framework to compare it with other immigration streams/categories to understand its position in the whole immigration landscape of New Zealand. Table 1 shows that between 1997/1998 and

2018/2019, 826,872 permanent residences were approved under the New Zealand Residence Programme (NZRP). Approximately 83.78% (692,830) of these approvals were from the top 10 countries. Among the total residence approvals for the top 10 countries, 33.65% (233,169) is the Family-sponsored immigrants, 56.15% is the Skilled immigrants, 3.99% is the Business immigrants, and 6.20% is the immigrants in the International Humanitarian category. As can be seen, the Family Sponsorship Stream contributes substantially to the immigrant arrival for the top 10 immigrant source countries, following the contribution made by the Skilled Category. Within the Family Sponsorship Stream, residence approvals under the Spouse category are accounted for the largest proportion, approximately 17.97% (124,474) of the total residence approvals for the top 10 countries, while the Parent Category is ranked as the second channel for residence approvals, approximately 9.83% (68,098) of the total residence approvals for the top 10 countries.

Table 1: Approvals for Residence of Top Ten Immigrant Source Countries by Nationality and Migrant Stream/Category, 1997/98-2018/19 (Source: Immigration New Zealand, 2019)

Nationality	Total Approval	Total Family Sponsorship	Family Sponsorship Sub-categories				Skilled	Business	International/humanitarian
			Partnership/ Spouse	Parent	Child	Other (Sibling, family quota, humanitarian, etc.)			
Asia									
China (PRC)	132,846	62,560	24,375	28,820	3,655	5,710	53,096	15,690	1,500
		47.09%	18.35%	21.69%	2.75%	4.30%	39.97%	11.81%	1.13%
India	108,087	35,294	20,213	10,614	1,731	2736	71,587	385	821
		32.65%	18.70%	9.82%	1.60%	2.53%	66.23%	0.36%	0.76%
South Korea	27,433	6,558	4,113	1,292	538	615	14,775	5,841	259
		23.91%	14.99%	4.71%	1.96%	2.24%	53.86%	21.29%	0.94%
Philippines	54,439	12,163	8,623	1,297	1,834	409	41,709	56	511
		22.34%	15.84%	2.38%	3.37%	0.74%	76.62%	0.10%	0.94%
Pacific									
Fiji	51,048	21,889	9,825	6,464	1,872	3,728	23,968	695	4,496
		42.88%	19.25%	12.66%	3.67%	7.30%	46.95%	1.36%	8.81%
Samoa	45,262	20,026	7,966	2,027	9,158	875	679	0	24,557
		44.24%	17.60%	4.48%	20.23%	1.93%	1.50%	0.00%	54.26%
Tonga	20,251	10,346	5,990	2,039	1,450	867	1,866	27	8,012
		51.09%	29.58%	10.07%	7.16%	4.28%	9.21%	0.13%	39.56%
Other countries									
United Kingdom	153,101	43,213	30,230	10,255	1,519	1,209	105,160	3,268	1,460
		28.23%	19.75%	6.70%	0.99%	0.79%	68.69%	2.13%	0.95%
South Africa	74,491	10,823	3,990	4,814	1,314	705	62,501	525	642
		14.53%	5.36%	6.46%	1.76%	0.95%	83.90%	0.70%	0.86%
United States	25,872	10,297	9,149	476	532	140	13,716	1,173	686
		39.80%	35.36%	1.84%	2.06%	0.54%	53.01%	4.53%	2.65%
Total top ten	692,830	233,169	124,474	68,098	23,603	16,994	389,057	27,660	42,944
% res. Approvals		33.65%	17.97%	9.83%	3.41%	2.54%	56.15%	3.99%	6.20%
Total NZ Approval	**826,872**								

*Note: The category of International Humanitarian include a number of immigration schemes, including 1995 Refugee Status, Refugee Family Support Tiers, Refugee Quota, Section 61, Section 35a, Pacific Access, Samoa Quota, and others.

The analysis also shows that the proportion of residence approvals under the Parent Category of the total residence approval is varied significantly by nationality. Table 1 shows that the total residence approvals under the Family Sponsorship Stream for the top 10 countries is 233,169, while China has the greatest number (62,560) of residence approvals within this immigration stream. This was followed by the UK (43,215) and India (35,294). This top rank was followed by two Pacific countries - Fiji (21,889) and Samoa (20,026). The remaining countries have a small share of the total residence approvals under this immigration stream. As for the residence approval under the Parent Category for the top 10 countries (68,098), China also contributed the largest number (28,820). This is followed by the UK and India as the second and third largest contributor to the share of the residence approvals under this category.

Variations in the Shares of Residence Approvals by Immigration Category and Nationality

In addition to looking at the absolute numbers of residence approvals of the top 10 countries, this analysis also pays attention to the percentages of residence approvals under different immigration categories by each top 10 country. Results show that there are major variations in the shares of residence approvals under each immigration category by nationality. Table 1 shows that for people from the UK, South Africa, the USA, Philippine, India, and South Korea, the Skilled Category was highly used to obtain permanent residence compared to other categories. This is highlighted from all six countries which all had more than 50% residence approvals under the Skilled Category from their respective total residence approvals. This rank is followed by Fiji and China. Both countries' residence approvals under the Skilled Category accounted for just below 50% of their total residence approvals (46.95% for Fiji and 39.97% for China).

However, when examining the overall Family Sponsorship Stream, particularly the Parent Category, percentage analysis presents a very different story. Tonga has the highest percentage of residence approvals under the Family Sponsorship Stream (51.09%), while the percentage of China's residence approvals under this stream is also significant (47.09%). This was followed by Fiji (42.88%), Samoa (44.24%), the USA (39.80%), and India (32.65%). Other countries had relatively smaller shares of residence approvals under the family stream. The Philippines and South Africa had the smallest percentages of residence approvals under this stream, with 22.34% and 14.53% respectively, both were well below the average percentage of family migration among the top 10 countries (34.68%).

For all sub-categories under the Family Sponsorship Stream, China has the highest share of its total residence approvals under the Parent category (21.69%) compared with the other nine countries in the top ten, followed by Fiji (12.66%), Tonga (10.07%), and India (9.82%), while the UK (6.70%), South Africa (6.46%), South Korea (4.71%), Samoa (4.48%), and the Philippines (2.38%) have rather smaller percentages – all are below the average of 8.08% under this category for the top 10 countries. The lowest percentage is found with the USA, with only 1.84% of its total residence approvals under the Parent Category. The significant percentage of Chinese who are in the Parent Category may relate to filial piety, in which living together with older parents and taking care of them is an important value in Chinese Confucian culture and tradition, even today (Bedford & Liu, 2013). However, the highest percentage of residence approvals under the spouse category was found with the US (35.36%), followed by Tonga (29.5%8), the United Kingdom (19.75%), Fiji (19.25%), and India (18.70%).

Some Key Points

There are three key points from this quantitative analysis. Firstly, the force of immigration under the Family Sponsorship Stream cannot be under-estimated. Table 1 shows that family migration is ranked as the second major pathway for New Zealand's immigrant inflow (33.65% of the total residence approval).

Secondly, there were major variations between countries in the percentage of residence approvals under the Family Sponsorship Stream. Compared with the three Pacific and two Asian countries (China and India), the UK and South Africa – the two English-speaking immigrant source countries contribute much less to the immigrant intake under the Family Sponsorship Stream, especially under the Parent, Dependent Child, and Sibling and Adult Child Categories. The USA has a relatively higher percentage of residence approvals under the Family Sponsorship Stream (39.80%) but the Spouse Category makes the major contribution to its total approvals under this stream, which accounts for 35.36%, while the share of residence approvals under other sub-categories of the Family Sponsorship Stream is nominal. This phenomenon again reflects certain Asian and Pacific island cultural difference from the West - that is the unified family life involved with both nuclear and extended families is an important cultural value and practice in many Asian and Pacific countries. This cultural value can be found in the immigration scenery. Apart from the children and spouse, Asian and Pacific immigrants are perhaps much more willing to bring their other immediate family members (older parents and siblings) into their immigrant destinations. Family-related chain migration, an "old fashioned" immigration pattern is still very alive among Asian and Pacific immigrants.

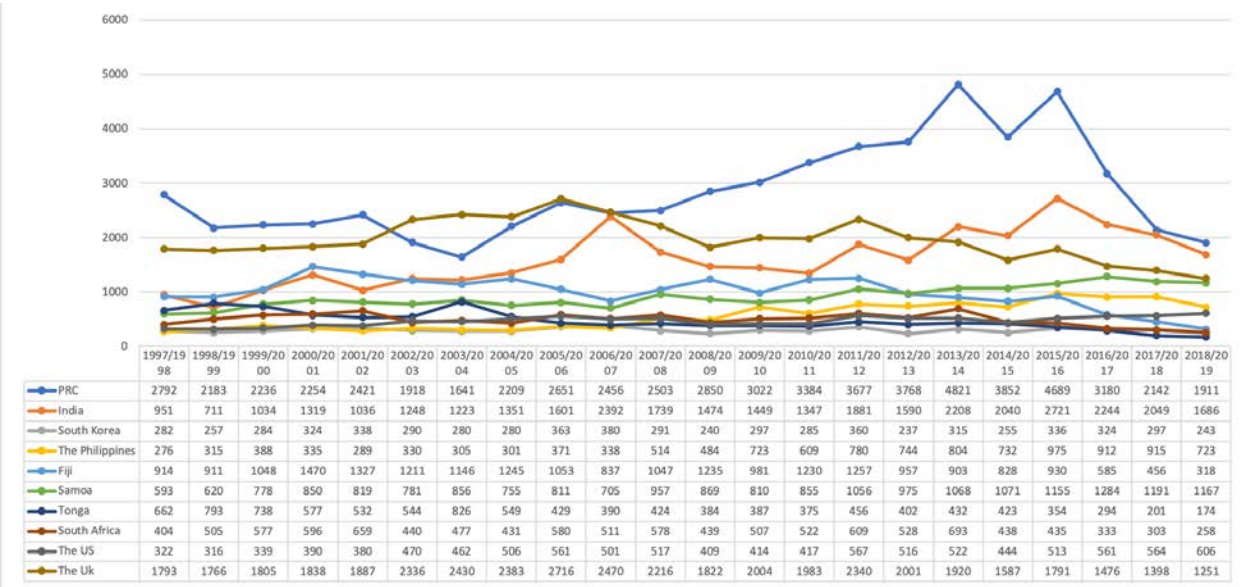
Thirdly, among those immigrant source countries with a developing economy, China demonstrates a distinctive pattern of family immigration. More specifically, this distinction is about the Parent Category. The immigrants from some developing countries (such as Samoa and Tonga) intended to prioritise their spouse and dependent children to immigrate to New Zealand, which is in line with New Zealand's current immigration regime that gives the priority of family reunification to immigrants' spouses and dependent children rather than their other dependent family members. However, as Table 1 shows, the highest number of residence approvals for people from China is under the Parent Category. Again, this reflects a strong value of filial piety in Chinese culture, but also reflects that the better-off economic conditions in today's China allow its nationals to have the financial ability to meet the increasing financial requirement to sponsor their old parents to immigrate. In addition, the "one-child policy"[6] in China resulted in many families with only a single child. As the only child of a family who immigrates to New Zealand through the economic stream, when they advance in their age, they assume increasing responsibility for supporting their parents. One option of taking care of his/her ageing parents is to bring their parents to this country.

Lastly, apart from this cultural reason, economic conditions in these immigrant-sending countries seem to also play a major role in prompting family immigration. Compared with countries with relatively better economic conditions, immigrants from those developing countries seem to be much keener to move away from their homelands and find a foothold in developed immigrant-receiving countries as a family collective. This is largely due to a mixed driving force of both potential economic advances and the social benefits these immigrant families can obtain from immigration by participating in a more viable labour market and well-established social system with comprehensive welfare provision. From this analysis, one can perhaps argue that the centre-periphery model that implies an enduring trajectory of migration from global South to North

(Massey et al., 1993, 1994) has not been changed much regardless of many current discussions about return migration and some unconventional immigration routes from the developed countries to developing countries or from the developing countries to other developing countries.

Impact of Immigration Policy Changes on Family Immigration

Combining the policy review and the data analysis pursued above, Figure 1 shows that the family immigration policy changes in New Zealand do impact on the changing volume of family immigration. This is especially obvious when looking at the residence approval numbers for the top three immigrant source countries (i.e. the UK, China, and India).



	1997/1998	1998/1999	1999/2000	2000/2001	2001/2002	2002/2003	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019
PRC	2792	2183	2236	2254	2421	1918	1641	2209	2651	2456	2503	2850	3022	3384	3677	3768	4821	3852	4689	3180	2142	1911
India	951	711	1034	1319	1036	1248	1223	1351	1601	2392	1739	1474	1449	1347	1881	1590	2208	2040	2721	2244	2049	1686
South Korea	282	257	284	324	338	290	280	280	363	380	291	240	297	285	360	237	315	255	336	324	297	243
The Philippines	276	315	388	335	289	330	305	301	371	338	514	484	723	609	780	744	804	732	975	912	915	723
Fiji	914	911	1048	1470	1327	1211	1146	1245	1053	837	1047	1235	981	1230	1257	957	903	828	930	585	456	318
Samoa	593	620	778	850	819	781	856	755	811	705	957	869	810	855	1056	975	1068	1071	1155	1284	1191	1167
Tonga	662	793	738	577	532	544	826	549	429	390	424	384	387	375	456	402	432	423	354	294	201	174
South Africa	404	505	577	596	659	440	477	431	580	511	578	439	507	522	609	528	693	438	435	333	303	258
The US	322	316	339	390	380	470	462	506	561	501	517	409	414	417	567	516	522	444	513	561	564	606
The Uk	1793	1766	1805	1838	1887	2336	2430	2383	2716	2470	2216	1822	2004	1983	2340	2001	1920	1587	1791	1476	1398	1251

Figure 1: Impact of New Zealand Immigration Policy Changes on Family Immigration Among Top Ten Source Countries

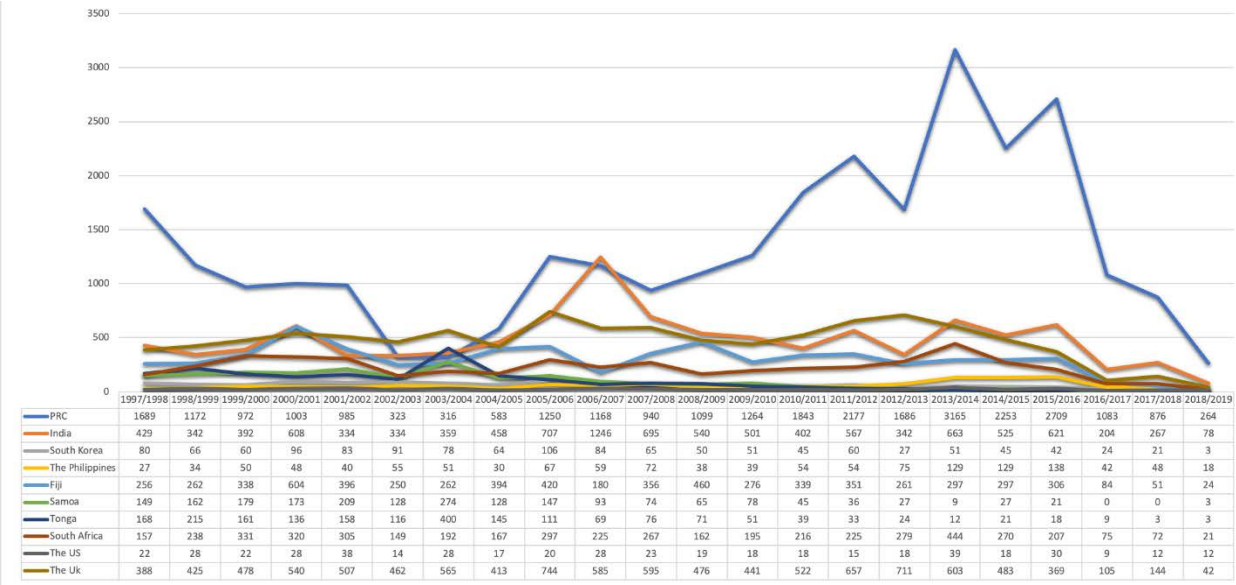
As can be seen, China experienced a sharp drop in family immigration between 2002 and 2004 but started to climb back again around 2005 and 2006. The drop is mainly because of a series of immigration policy changes in 2002 and 2003 (Liu, 2018). These policy changes include, 1) an increase in the "pass" mark for the General Skilled Category (GSC), from 28 to 29, in September

2002, and then to 30 in October 2002; 2) an increase of the minimum IELTS score for the GSC from an average of 5 to 6.6 across all four bands and for the Business Category from an average of 4 to 5; 3) a compulsory requirement of a job offer issued by any New Zealand employer under the GSC; and 4) the introduction of the new selection system in 2003 that involved two-stages of application. These changes, especially the raised English language requirements and a job offer were big challenges for Chinese applicants to meet and subsequently resulted in reduced numbers of immigrant intake from China. Moreover, the overall reduction in the immigrant intake during this period also saw a decline in the family immigration volume. In contrast, the policy tightening-up and changes had no negative influence on the immigrant intake from the UK and India. Opposite to China, the family immigration approvals for these two countries had a slight increase during the same period of time. This is perhaps because these two groups of immigrants were able to adapt to the new policy better due to various reasons. The first is the linguistic advantage. While people from the UK are English native speakers, people from India also have better English proficiency given its colonisation experience with Great Britain. As for people from the UK, in particular, its historical connection with New Zealand also provides them social and cultural capital which means relatively easy access to the New Zealand job market.

After 2006, the family immigration volume from China increased steadily and reached its first peak between 2013 and 2014 and then a second peak between 2015 and 2016. This trend coincides with the increase in the overall immigration volume in New Zealand (Liu, 2018). Family immigration from India shows a similar trend with China. Unlike China and India, there was no significant fluctuation of the family immigration volume from the UK through all the years before 2016. After 2016, family immigration volumes from all source countries declines significantly.

This is due to the complete closing-off of the Parent Category in 2016 which dragged overall family immigration down.

Figure 2 shows the changing volume of parent immigration, which is largely in line with the overall family immigration trend. China is the biggest contributor to parent residence approvals. It encountered a sudden drop of immigration volume under the Parent Category between 2002 and 2004 but started to climb back again around 2005 and 2006. After 2006, the parent immigration volume increased steadily and reached its first peak between 2013 and 2014 and then a second peak between 2015 and 2016. This is followed by a significant decline after 2016. The case of India is slightly different to China. The peak of its parent immigration occurred between 2005 and 2006. After the peak, it has never returned to its highest level.



	1997/1998	1998/1999	1999/2000	2000/2001	2001/2002	2002/2003	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019
PRC	1689	1172	972	1003	985	323	316	583	1250	1168	940	1099	1264	1843	2177	1686	3165	2253	2709	1083	876	264
India	429	342	392	608	334	334	359	458	707	1246	695	540	501	402	567	342	663	525	621	204	267	78
South Korea	80	66	60	96	83	91	78	64	106	84	65	50	51	45	60	27	51	45	42	24	21	3
The Philippines	27	34	50	48	40	55	51	30	67	59	72	38	39	54	54	75	129	129	138	42	48	18
Fiji	256	262	338	604	396	250	262	394	420	180	356	460	276	339	351	261	297	297	306	84	51	24
Samoa	149	162	179	173	209	128	274	128	147	93	74	65	78	45	36	27	9	27	21	0	0	3
Tonga	168	215	161	136	158	116	400	145	111	69	76	71	51	39	33	24	12	21	18	9	3	3
South Africa	157	238	331	320	305	149	192	167	297	225	267	162	195	216	225	279	444	270	207	75	72	21
The US	22	28	22	28	38	14	28	17	20	28	23	19	18	18	15	18	39	18	30	9	12	12
The Uk	388	425	478	540	507	462	565	413	744	585	595	476	441	522	657	711	603	483	369	105	144	42

Figure2: Impact of New Zealand Immigration Policy Changes on Parent Immigration Among Top Ten Source Countries

Conclusion

There are several important points from this analysis that warrant highlighting. Firstly, although the Skilled Category is the major immigration route for New Zealand immigrant intake, the force of immigration under the Family Sponsorship Stream, especially immigration under the Parent Category, cannot be underestimated. When the neoliberal immigration policy prioritises skilled and business immigration and discourages dependents of skilled and business immigrants, including immigrants' old parents, what needs to be recognised is that the tap of family reunification in immigration is hard to stop. Family reunification is an inevitable aspect in the contemporary immigration arena because it is often constructed upon the rights of the legal insider/sponsor who has a legal tie to the immigrant-receiving country and also the moral claim of the insider/sponsor from the immigrant-sending country. Secondly, the New Zealand Government has tried hard to use policy adjustments to regulate and limit parent immigration into this country; however, the outcome has resulted in minimal changes in the immigration volume under this category until 2016 when the Parent Category was closed off to receive applications. As shown in Figure 2, both the introduction of the capped Parent Category in 2007 and the two-tier selection system in 2012 did little to reduce parent immigration. In other words, in the INZ context, only lifting the application threshold may not necessarily slow down the intake number of family immigration, unless some more straightforward strategies are applied, such as capping the annual intake number or even more drastic solutions like a temporarily close-off of the applications.

The research also shows that addressing the fiscal challenge that originated from population ageing has become a critical consideration in the making of the family reunification immigration policy in New Zealand. This challenge is also applied to most Western immigrant-receiving countries

that have social welfare systems providing support for the older population (Bedford & Liu, 2013). In New Zealand, the cost of this support is met through a mix of tax-payer funded contributions and superannuation schemes linked with employment or investment in forms of insurance. As the share of old residents in the population increases and its related health care and welfare provision grows, managing the flow of old people into the population through immigration policy-making becomes a relatively easy solution. This research shows that the policy orientation of family immigration in New Zealand has gone through a fundamental change throughout the years. This can be especially manifested through some radical change of the parent immigration policy. In the beginning, New Zealand allowed a certain scale of parent immigration based on respect for people's family lives. Later, the country started to actively regulate the proportion of family immigration through giving priority to the nuclear family members (i.e. spouse and dependent children) while capping the residence approval for other dependent family members, especially the older parents of adult immigrants. These changes reveal exactly what a neoliberal immigration regime is about – that is to focus on the economic gain from immigrants but overlook immigrants' personal and family needs. The outcome is that anything that would have a negative economic cost on New Zealand should be modified.

There are some adverse impacts of this neoliberal immigration regime on New Zealand society. First of all, the neoliberal policy orientation could be harmful to New Zealand's future immigrant intake and sustainability. Under the circumstance of globalisation, it is incontestable that New Zealand needs skilled and business immigrants to come with their human and financial capital to contribute to its economic growth. To not allow the immigrants' old parents to enter this country would put off many prospective immigrants' desire to come to New Zealand. Potentially, the most negative economic impact of continuously lifting the threshold for the application of the Parent

Category could be that the immigrants might go back to their original places, or somewhere else, to ensure family responsibilities are easier to manage. This will be a loss of human and financial capital for New Zealand.

Secondly, as pursuing a neoliberal immigration regime, a new form of racial discrimination towards immigrants may be produced. Unlike the old form of racial discrimination in which race and ethnicity is an explicit factor in selecting desirable immigrants, the new form of racial discrimination is related to immigrant economic class, personal success or failure in migration settlement, or cultural practices of immigrants that are not in line with the construction of modern cultural identity valued by the mainstream society (Lentin & Titley, 2011; Liu & Mills, 2006). This dimension consequently defines who are the desired immigrants and who are not. As demonstrated, income; namely, the economic class has become an inclusion or exclusion criteria in selecting immigrants' old parents. Clearly, in the New Zealand context, many lower-income immigrants who are more likely from developing countries from Asia-Pacific will have more financial difficulties to satisfy the income threshold to sponsor their old parents to come to New Zealand. Racial exclusion and inclusion in neoliberalism-led immigration policy are therefore manifested mainly through economic class, simply because the realignment of income has particular implications for race and ethnicity. This new form of racism is a reassembled product of race, ethnicity, social status, and economic class within a neoliberal social context.

Discussion

To contextualise the paper into a comparative perspective, it amplifies a striking of neoliberalism movement in contemporary international immigration globally. For example, Canada, Australia and the USA used to have a tradition of favouring family reunification including immigrants' older

parents in their immigration policies (Kofman, 2004). However, the recent immigration policy development in all these three countries aims to strike a balance between economic immigrants and non-economic immigrants, including family and refugees. In our neighbouring country, Australia, the current share of family immigration of the total immigration plan is about 32 per cent. This share comes from a significant drop from the historically high level of family immigration which comprised around 70 per cent of the total immigration intake (Larsen, 2013). Similar to New Zealand, capping of the parent visas was introduced by Australia in 1993, and consequently the numbers have been increasingly restricted with priority given to spouses and dependent children. In Canada, recent policy changes have also tried to tighten up family immigration by enforcing longer processing time (especially for parents) and a complicated application system (DeShaw, 2006). The USA's family immigration system is very different. It is based on per-country caps to allow quicker reunification with families, but there is a family preference system in which parents, spouses and unmarried minor children of US citizens are ranked at the top and have no limit of visa numbers for each category. Petitioners are essential, and must meet certain age and financial requirements, and must be financially responsible for their family member(s) upon arrival in the USA. Applications by other family members or sponsored by US permanent residents receive low preference (American Immigration Council, 2016).

In general, over the last two decades, the composition of the immigration programme in these "white settler" countries has shifted to favour skilled immigration over family immigration. The rationale for this shift has been to maximise economic gains which have become generally accepted as synonymous with skilled immigration. However, a number of studies have shown that both skilled/business and family reunification immigration have positive economic impact on host countries (Bonjour & Kraler, 2015; Larsen, 2013). Perhaps older parent immigrants may not bring

immediate economic gain for a host society, but they bring emotional anchor and important social and cultural capital for their adult children and/or grandchildren, which may translate into economic opportunities later. The presence of family can also stimulate labour market participation; thus, facilitates successful economic integration of immigrants (Olwig, 2011).Therefore, it can be argued that the prevailed representation of parent immigration as a product as well as producer as "deviant practices" (Bonjour & De Hart, 2013, p. 73) from the neoliberal immigration orientation is only based on belief rather than facts. To take a dollar-to-dollar cost-and-benefit approach to view immigrant' parent immigration as a financial burden to the host society lacks a long-term perspective.

Endnotes

1. The Labour Party or Labour is a social-democratic political party in New Zealand, and one of the two major parties in New Zealand politics. The other major party is the National Party.
2. The full explanation of a family's "centre of gravity" principle in New Zealand is if: 1) the principal parent applicant has no dependent children, and the number of a couple's adult children lawfully and permanently in New Zealand is equal to or greater than those lawfully and permanently in any other single country, including the country in which the principal applicant is lawfully and permanently resident. A family's centre of gravity is also in New Zealand if: 1) the principal applicant parent has dependent children, and the number of his or her adult children lawfully and permanently in New Zealand is equal to or greater than those lawfully and permanently in any other single country, including the country in which the principal applicant parent is lawfully and permanently resident, and the number of their dependent children is equal to or fewer than the number of their adult children who are lawfully and permanently in New Zealand. This principle was removed in 2012 for those who could meet one of the asset/income thresholds for entry under Tier 1 when the two-tier selection system was introduced.
3. The National Government came into power in 1991 and introduced an even opener policy to welcome immigrants from various regions. The National's 1991 policy changes primarily featured the introduction of

a revised Business Investment Category (BIC) to replace the previous Business Immigration Policy (BIP) and the encouragement of skilled immigration via a General Category (GC). The GC involved a points-based selection system. Points were awarded based on age, qualifications, work experience, sponsorship by family members or community groups, a job offer, and settlement and investment funds. Those who could obtain points around the upper 20s qualified for automatic permanent residence. Whether the applicant had a definite job offer or a plausible business development plan no longer counted. Settlement funds of NZ$100,000 also carried an extra point. The GC was divided into two sub-categories – the GSC and the General Investment Category (GIC). Applicants under the GSC were assessed on employability, age and settlement factors, while applicants under the GIC scored points on the basis of capital.

4. NZIS is an agency within the New Zealand Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) that is responsible for border control, issuing travel visas and managing immigration to New Zealand. It was later renamed as INZ.
5. The New Zealand Immigration Programme (NZIP) contained residence goals set by the New Zealand Government to meet New Zealand's ongoing skills requirements and humanitarian commitments. The programme was renamed as the New Zealand Residence Programme (NZRP) in July 2006.
6. The “one-child policy” was introduced by the PRC government in 1979 to combat that country’s overpopulation problem. The policy decrees that a couple should have only one child and inflicts penalties if a couple has a second child. This policy was abolished very recently in 2015.

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Chapter Four

“Forced” Family Separation and Intergenerational Dynamics: Multigenerational New Chinese Immigrant Families in New Zealand

Statement of Contribution Doctorate With Publications/Manuscripts

DRC 16

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUROA
UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND

GRADUATE RESEARCH SCHOOL

STATEMENT OF CONTRIBUTION
DOCTORATE WITH PUBLICATIONS/MANUSCRIPTS

We, the candidate and the candidate's Primary Supervisor, certify that all co-authors have consented to their work being included in the thesis and they have accepted the candidate's contribution as indicated below in the *Statement of Originality*.

Name of candidate:	Guanyu Ran
Name/title of Primary Supervisor:	Professor Michael Belgrave
In which chapter is the manuscript /published work:	Chapter Four

Please select one of the following three options:

(●) The manuscript/published work is published or in press

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Abstract

In New Zealand, due to the immigration policy change against family reunifications, many "forced" transnational immigrant families emerged between New Zealand and other immigration sending countries. Closely tied family members across generations now have limited choice but to live across different national, cultural, and linguistic localities. By taking the new Chinese immigrant families from the People's Republic of China (PRC) as the case in point, and based on 45 in-depth interviews with their multigenerational family members, this paper examines how immigrant families adapt to the New Zealand immigration regime which does not easily accommodate their cultural preference to live as multigenerational families. It also demonstrates the importance of family reunification for immigrant families in New Zealand, and the changing intergenerational power relations caused by the evolving process of migration and settlement of these families.

Introduction

After three decades of immigration, a substantial new Chinese immigrant[1] community has been established in New Zealand, evidenced by the presence of many multigenerational Chinese immigrant families that include the first-generational adult immigrants, their children, and older parents (Ho & Bedford, 2008; Liu, 2016). This group of Chinese immigrants are also renowned for their transnational connections and mobility: oftentimes characterised as a "returnee" phenomenon to the ancestral homeland, a process of step-migration to a third country, or frequent commuting between the home and host countries (Liu, 2011). This reality of transnationalism has become a more permanent feature of those immigrant lives following the gradual immigration policy change towards restricting family reunification (Bedford & Liu, 2013). This has effectively

resulted in the emergence of forced multilocation and multigenerational immigrant families whereby family members have limited choice but to live across different national, geographic, cultural, and linguistic localities (Liu, 2016).

This paper focuses on the second-largest immigrant group in New Zealand – that is the new Chinese immigrants from the People's Republic of China (PRC) to explore how important the family reunification is for this group of immigrants, how they adapted to the current New Zealand immigration regime that does not allow family reunification so easily, and what challenges these immigrant families face even after achieving family reunifications.

What follows will first provide some background information about the new Chinese immigrants in New Zealand, including their demography and immigration patterns. That part will be followed by a discussion of New Zealand's changing immigration policy of family reunification, and its impact on Chinese immigrant families. Both these parts serve as a contextual backdrop for the paper to help to understand the New Zealand social context where the researched subject and topic are located. The third section is a brief literature review on the research of transnational immigrant families, which provides a theoretical context for this paper in which a multigenerational perspective was embedded. Drawn from some preliminary results from a three-year research project, the last section will discuss the challenges that many multigenerational new Chinese immigrant families face, in particular their internal challenges resulting from the reconfiguration of intergenerational power relations alongside the migration processes. Through the New Zealand case, the paper can further advance the global theorisation of cross-generational dynamics in transnational family studies.

New Chinese Immigrants in New Zealand

After three decades of migration, the new Chinese immigrants from the PRC now make up a significant part of New Zealand's ethnic Chinese population as well as the total population. This has been witnessed by the latest national census: in 2018, 132,906 New Zealand residents were born in the PRC, which accounted for 53.39% of the total ethnic Chinese population (248,919) and 2.83% of the total population (4,699,755) in New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2019). Meanwhile, the recent data on the resident decisions by financial year from Immigration New Zealand (INZ) (https://www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/research-and-statistics/statistics) also reveals that in the period of 1997/1998–2018/2019, the PRC ranked as the second-largest immigrant source country for New Zealand, just after the United Kingdom (Immigration New Zealand, 2019a). Table 1 shows that during this period of time, the total number of residence approvals from the top ten source countries under the New Zealand Residence Programme (NZRP) was 692,830, of which 19.17% (132,846) were granted for immigrants from the PRC (Immigration New Zealand, 2019b).

Table 1: Approvals for Residence for the Top Ten Immigrant Source Countries by Nationality and Immigrant Stream/Category, 1997/98-2018/19 (Source: Immigration New Zealand, 2019b)

Nationality	Total Approval	Total Family Sponsorship	Family Sponsorship Sub-categories				Skilled	Business	International/humanitarian
			Partnership/ Spouse	Parent	Child	Other (Sibling, family quota, humanitarian, etc.)			
Asia									
China (PRC)	132,846	62,560	24,375	28,820	3,655	5,710	53,096	15,690	1,500
		47.09%	18.35%	21.69%	2.75%	4.30%	39.97%	11.81%	1.13%
India	108,087	35,294	20,213	10,614	1,731	2736	71,587	385	821
		32.65%	18.70%	9.82%	1.60%	2.53%	66.23%	0.36%	0.76%
South Korea	27,433	6,558	4,113	1,292	538	615	14,775	5,841	259
		23.91%	14.99%	4.71%	1.96%	2.24%	53.86%	21.29%	0.94%
Philippines	54,439	12,163	8,623	1,297	1,834	409	41,709	56	511
		22.34%	15.84%	2.38%	3.37%	0.74%	76.62%	0.10%	0.94%
Pacific									
Fiji	51,048	21,889	9,825	6,464	1,872	3,728	23,968	695	4,496
		42.88%	19.25%	12.66%	3.67%	7.30%	46.95%	1.36%	8.81%
Samoa	45,262	20,026	7,966	2,027	9,158	875	679	0	24,557
		44.24%	17.60%	4.48%	20.23%	1.93%	1.50%	0.00%	54.26%
Tonga	20,251	10,346	5,990	2,039	1,450	867	1,866	27	8,012
		51.09%	29.58%	10.07%	7.16%	4.28%	9.21%	0.13%	39.56%
Other countries									
United Kingdom	153,101	43,213	30,230	10,255	1,519	1,209	105,160	3,268	1,460
		28.23%	19.75%	6.70%	0.99%	0.79%	68.69%	2.13%	0.95%
South Africa	74,491	10,823	3,990	4,814	1,314	705	62,501	525	642
		14.53%	5.36%	6.46%	1.76%	0.95%	83.90%	0.70%	0.86%
United States	25,872	10,297	9,149	476	532	140	13,716	1,173	686
		39.80%	35.36%	1.84%	2.06%	0.54%	53.01%	4.53%	2.65%
Total top ten	692,830	233,169	124,474	68,098	23,603	16,994	389,057	27,660	42,944
% res. Approvals		33.65%	17.97%	9.83%	3.41%	2.54%	56.15%	3.99%	6.20%
Total NZ Approval	**826,872**								

*Note: The category of International Humanitarian include a number of immigration schemes, including 1995 Refugee Status, Refugee Family Support Tiers, Refugee Quota, Section 61, Section 35a, Pacific Access, Samoa Quota, and others.

The presence of the new Chinese immigrants in New Zealand is due to the changes in the social and political conditions and changing policies towards border control in both the immigrant sending country (i.e. China) and immigrant-receiving country (i.e. New Zealand). China's economic reform and open-door policies, starting from the early 1990s, changing political ideology, and relaxation of its strict control over the international movements of its citizens (Xiang, 2003), makes it possible for some Chinese to immigrate to New Zealand. In New Zealand, the introduction of an open immigration policy – the 1987 Immigration Act that abolished the "traditional origin" preference that favoured British immigrants – proactively channelled in skilled and business immigrants from the wider Asia-Pacific region, including immigrants from China[2] (Trlin, 1992).

The new Chinese immigrants have gone through diverse immigration routes to arrive in New Zealand. To show the distinct immigration routes of new Chinese immigrants, one must view their migration in a comparative framework. Table 1 shows the residence approval numbers for New Zealand's top ten immigrant source countries by nationality and migration stream/category from1997/98 to 2018/19 (Immigration New Zealand, 2019b). Within their respective immigrant population, South Africa, the Philippines, and the United Kingdom have the greatest percentages of residence approvals under the skilled category (83.90%, 76.62%, and 68.69%, respectively), while China has 39.97% approvals under this category. However, China has a high percentage of residence approvals under the business category (11.81%), which is much higher than the figure for the United Kingdom (2.13%) and South Africa (0.7%). This situation largely reflects the fact that China's growing economy has played an important role in bolstering its nationals' financial ability to obtain New Zealand permanent residence (Liu, 2018). China also has the greatest number of residence approvals under the Parent Category (21.69%) amongst all the top ten immigrant

source countries. The high percentage of the residence approvals under the Parent Category confirms a reality that family reunification plays a significant role in contemporary Chinese migration from China (Immigration New Zealand, 2019b).

The extant research suggests that the usual practice amongst this immigrant population is that once adult immigrants settle in New Zealand, they hope to sponsor their parents to immigrate to New Zealand for family reunification and to live with their parents, either in the same household or another close locality. As for the older parents, some come to retire, but many others come to support their adult children's career progression by providing care for their grandchildren. In return, the adult immigrant children assume responsibility for supporting their parents when they are unable to live on their own (Bedford & Liu, 2013; Liu, 2016). This is how multigenerational Chinese immigrant families and households have typically been formed and sustained. Although family migration and reunion are not always an ideal scenario for everyone (Ryan, 2008); for many new Chinese adult immigrants, a preferable arrangement is to bring their older parents to New Zealand as permanent residents for family reunification (Liu, 2018).

Changing Family Immigration Policy in New Zealand

Unfortunately, family reunification is increasingly difficult to achieve in New Zealand (Bedford & Liu, 2013). One major reason is related to immigration policy changes. The general trend is that New Zealand has increasingly prioritised "talent" (usually embodied in young and highly educated men and women) and discriminated against the entry of older immigrants under its immigration policy (Liu, 2016). This is part of a broad immigration policy pattern in the "New World" countries which border the Pacific Rim (including Australia, Canada, and the United States) (Ali, 2014; Bonjour & Kraler, 2015; Larsen, 2013)

Initially, when New Zealand started an "open-door" immigration policy in 1987, the economic perspective that tends to use immigration as a means to revitalise the country's economy and remedy the drain of human capital to overseas was well advanced. Another clear immigration policy objective was to strengthen families and communities (Burke, 1986). A formal Family Category which was applied to three situations (i.e. marriage to an New Zealand citizen or resident; a de facto or homosexual relationship; and the case of parents, dependent children, and single adult siblings and children) was established in the 1991 points-based policy which awarded points based on age, qualifications, work experience, sponsorship by family members or community groups, a job offer, and settlement and investment funds (Trlin, 1997). This inclusion of parents in the Family Category was quite social-liberal compared with other countries where only nuclear family members (i.e. spouse and child) are defined within family reunification immigration categories, such as Sweden and the Netherlands (Borevi, 2015; Robinson, 2013).

By the end of 1998, concerns over the increasing proportion of "social" category immigrants (including immigrants who granted residences under the Family Sponsorship Stream and International/Humanitarian categories) were raised, and a policy review was pursued. This review led the next significant change in immigration policy in October 2001 when a management entry policy was introduced. Within this managed entry policy, a Skilled/Business Stream was allocated 60% of the government's total target for residence approvals, while a Family Sponsorship Stream was allocated 30%, and an International/Humanitarian Stream 10%. It was the first time that New Zealand immigration started to regulate the "economic" and "social" streams of immigrants based on numerical terms (Bedford et al., 2005). The emphasis on "economic" immigration signalled a clear shift of immigration policy orientation from social-liberalism to neoliberalism, which focuses on the economic output from immigration (McMillan, 2005).

This reality can be further evidenced in the policy change of the Family Sponsorship Stream in 2007. One major change was that some specific sub-categories under the family stream (including the Parent Category, Sibling Category, and Adult Child[ren] Category) were capped with actual numbers, but others not (the Dependent child Category and Spouse Category). It meant that when the cap was reached, no further visas would be granted in that visa class in the programme year. The Parent Category was given an approximately 4,000 quota per year. In addition, a requirement of a minimum income for the sponsor (i.e. NZD$33,675 per year) and an increased length of time an immigrant sponsor would have to support their parents without access to social benefits (i.e. from two years to five years) was enforced (Bedford & Liu, 2013).

These policy changes were a deliberate attempt to prioritise the entry of immediate family members, especially overseas-born partners and dependent children while limiting the entry of other extended family members, especially the older parents of adult immigrants. The reason provided by the government was that older parents of immigrants cost more in health and medical provisions and also have a high tendency to apply for social welfare (Bedford & Liu, 2013).

Such a fiscal focus in constructing parent sponsorship immigration in New Zealand led to further policy change in the Parent Category in 2012. A two-tier selection system was introduced. The system created two quite different criteria for immigrant adults to sponsor their older parents to immigrate to New Zealand. Those who can meet a high financial threshold (i.e. NZD$65,000 per year) can sponsor their parents to apply for permanent residence under Tier 1, enabling priority assessment for their applications. Those who cannot meet that financial threshold must apply for permanent residence under Tier 2 with a much lower income threshold (i.e. NZD$33,675 per year), and receive a lower priority assessment resulting in a long wait for their application to be

processed. This immigration policy change was another deliberate attempt to limit entry for older parents of skilled immigrants (Bedford & Liu, 2013).

On 11 October 2016, INZ decided that the Parent Category in the Family Sponsorship Stream of the NZRP would be closed for at least two years from the date of announcement (Woodhouse, 2016). On 21 October 2019 after three years of the Parent Category being closed, the New Zealand Government finally announced that the Parent Category would be re-opened to accept applications from February 2020 with much higher financial requirements for sponsors. First of all, the two-tier system changed to a single system, with the number of people who can get the residence visa limited to 1,000 annually. Secondly, if one person sponsors one parent, the income threshold should be double the New Zealand median income, which is about NZD$106,080 per year. The income threshold for one sponsor to sponsor two parents is NZD$159,120. If a sponsor and his/her partner want to sponsor one parent, the income threshold is NZD$159,120. If a sponsor and his/her partner want to sponsor two parents, the income threshold is NZD$212,160 (Immigration New Zealand, 2019c).

This high financial threshold is very difficult to achieve for many sponsors. One feasible solution for the new Chinese immigrant families to maintain their familyhood is for the older parents to become frequent transnational travellers moving between China and New Zealand based on a three-year family Visitor Visa. The three-year Visitor Visa grants immigrants' parents multiple entries to New Zealand within three years. However, the visa only allows them to stay up to six months at a time, and with a maximum total stay of 18 months in three years (Immigration New Zealand, 2019a). Currently, this visitor visa scheme is the only feasible way for immigrants' older parents to come to New Zealand for a temporary family reunion.

Based on the discussion above, one can conclude that the gradual shift of the immigration policy towards the entry of immigrants' older parents has been from inclusive to exclusive. Previous policy intended to ensure a certain scale of parent immigration because of the consideration of family need. However, this approach has gone through a fundamental change under the government pursuit of a neoliberal immigration regime. The rationale of such a policy trend is purely economic because of the low labour market participation, high rates of benefit uptake, and high health costs of immigrants' older parents (Bedford & Liu, 2013). The policy trend reflects the fact that contemporary New Zealand has progressively pursued a neoliberal immigration framework in which skilled and business immigration is favoured, while social and family reunification immigration is discouraged (Simon-Kumar, 2015). The tightening-up of the policy of the Parent Category is a particular arena through which the arising of the neoliberalism-led immigration programme is evident.

The tightening-up of policy regarding the entry of immigrants' older parents imposes vital challenges to many immigrant families' reunification plans. This further forcibly drives many members of immigrant families in New Zealand to live separately across national borders – in this paper that is called "forced" family separation. This "forced" family separation is also one of the greatest challenges many new Chinese immigrants in New Zealand have to face (Liu, 2018; Tan, 2017).

Transnational Immigrant Families: A Brief Literature Review

Transnational immigrant families, also referred to as transnational families, are those families whose members are separated geographically but maintain close ties with frequent interactions across national borders (Lima, 2001; Shih, 2016). Following heightened scholarly attention paid

to transnational migration since the 1990s (Faist, 1998; Glick-Schiller et al., 1992; Portes, 1999), transnational families have also emerged as an important site for research (Bryceson, 2019; Bryceson & Vuorela, 2002). This field of research is now expansive and has developed in a number of directions. In general, from a macro and functionalist perspective, a large body of research has successfully built up an epistemological paradigm, which conceptualises a transnational family as a major social institution that can effectively bridge multifaceted transnational social, cultural, and political domains (Gutierrez, 2018; Lima, 2001). From a micro and interactionist perspective, a quite sizable and still growing body of literature makes major efforts to demystify the everyday practice of transnational families, including the rationale and working mechanism of their transitional movements, as well as associated impacts on the wellbeing of the family members involved (Benítez, 2012; Zontizi & Renolds, 2018). There is also a handful of recent studies also examined transnational migration decision-making in immigrant families (Liu, 2018; Yeoh et al., 2005). These studies illustrate how transnational migratory decisions are made not independently by individuals, but collectively and negotiated within the family.

The most recent studies intend to provide a multigenerational perspective to analyse the roles that different generations of immigrant families play in their domestic terrains. Transnational caregiving and -receiving across borders; namely, transnational care circulation has been the centre for discussions (Baldassar & Merla, 2014; Yarris, 2017). For the first-generation adult immigrants, research attentions have been given to their transnational caregiving practices towards their left-behind family members, including the children and older parents. It is evident that the adult immigrant generation always plays the role of dominant caregivers in transnational families. The reason is largely that they are a generation who is at peak-earning capacity gaining significant social and financial capital, and therefore, they naturally become the principal breadwinners for

the wellbeing and prosperity of their families (Wilding & Baldassar, 2009; Zentgraf & Chinchilla, 2012). While sending remittances back to the left-behind families is a critical manifestation of transnational caregiving (De Bruine et al., 2013; Zentgraf & Chinchilla, 2012), maintaining contacts with the left-behind family members is also a significant way for the adult immigrants to provide transnational caregiving. This is a pivotal way to mitigate the emotional costs of transnational separation (Benítez, 2012; Nedelcu & Wyss, 2016; Parreñas, 2005; Tamagno, 2003). In general, this body of literature reveals that the first-generation adult immigrants are constantly located at the frontier to handle, adjust, and adapt families' geographical separation, and accommodate the families' various needs (Haagsman & Mazzucato, 2014; Tu, 2019).

As for the child generation, within the context of transnational families, the major focus is on their transnational care arrangement (Battistella & Conaco, 1998; Best, 2014). This focus is embedded into four specific research areas around the child generation(s) of immigrants, including the left-behind children in situ (Graham et al., 2012; Lam & Yeoh, 2019), the children in the astronaut family (Waters, 2002, 2005), the parachute kid (Zhou, 1998), and the transnational engagement of immigrant child generations (Bartley & Spoonley, 2008; Wolf, 2002). Both the 1.5 and second generations of immigrant children have constituted a major cohort for scholarly investigations. Existing studies have touched upon the reasons triggering the phenomenon of left-behind children in situ (Graham et al., 2012; Shih, 2016; Zentgraf & Chinchilla, 2012; Zhou, 1998), impacts of family separation on their wellbeing (Dreby, 2010; Hondagneu-Sotelo & Avila, 1997; Ho et al., 2001; Shih, 2016; Waters, 2002), problematic features of their growing-up experience (Sun, 2014; Mok, 2015), and sense of identity and belonging (Huang & Yeoh, 2005; Levitt & Waters, 2002). Using the multigenerational perspective, some research has revealed that the practice of astronaut family is only a temporary strategy to achieve the short-term family goal, such as for children's

education. Once the accomplishment of the designated education goal for the children is achieved, the family's structure and transnational migratory trajectories change subsequently to fit new circumstance for their future family projects (Ho & Bedford, 2008; Liu, 2018; Waters, 2002). This is to say that an evolving feature of the transnational trajectories of the immigrant families can be only found through a multigenerational and longitudinal perspective. This also confirms one point made by some researchers that transnational family strategies might change over time due to the changing family structure, family life cycle, family member's individual aspirations, or the broader socio-economic and political context (Huang et al., 2008). There is also a handful of literature that paid attention on the transnational engagement of the child generation in the family's post-migration era. To be more specific, it is about how transnational the child generations are under the influence of their parents' deep transnational engagements. Overall, two major forms of transnational engagements have been identified and discussed in existing literature – they are actual transnational movement (Bartley, 2010; Bartley & Spoonley, 2008; Gutierrez, 2018) and emotional transnationalism (Wolf, 1997, 2002). Wolf argued that, situating in the post migration era, immigrant families constantly act as a container stimulating drastic intercultural interactions between different family generations (Wolf, 2002), and such interactions are mainly manifested by the cooperation and conflicts among different family generations who carry unique cultural and personal orientations, shaped by their life courses and experiences across national borders (Takeda, 2012).

As for the older parents of adult immigrants, they have received steadily growing attention in transnational family studies. There are three major themes emerging, including the left-behind older parents as transnational care receivers (De Silva, 2017), older parents as transnational family caregivers (Zickgraf, 2017), and their lived experience after family reunification in the host society

(King et al., 2014). This older generation are usually the receivers of transnational care provided by their immigrant adult child(ren), but they are also transnational caregivers. Given the reciprocal nature of human relationships, particularly in the family context, these older immigrants provide emotional, practical, even financial assistance to their immigrant adult children and grandchildren (Baldassar et al., 2007; Lie, 2010; Treas, 2008; Zickgraf, 2017). To better understand this two-way caregiving, Baldassar and Merla (2014) created the concept of transnational care circulation. The concept articulates multidirectional family care as the consequence of multifaceted human agency interactions among different transnational family members, such as the individual caregiving capacity and sense of family obligation (Baldassar & Merla, 2014; Yarris, 2017). There is also an increasing research interest in the practice of transnational grandparenting (King et al., 2014; Sigad & Eisikovits, 2013), and the older parent's life after the end of prolonged transnational family separation (Henderson, 2007; Ho & Chiang, 2017; King et al., 2014; Li, 2011; Treas & Mazumdar, 2002). Evidence suggests that family reunification after a prolonged separation could possibly lead to family power structure changes, even power struggles, which could subsequently result in tension and conflicts among families (Wong et al., 2006). To a great extent, this situation is derived from the changing human agency of family members in the host society context, particularly the lifted dependency of older parents on their adult immigrant children in the immigrant destination where they face significant challenges in the adaptation of different cultural, language, and social habitus (Haas & Fokkema, 2010; Wong et al., 2006). These changing family power relations, coupled with the loss of a previous comfort zone and social relationships in situ and the unfamiliar social and cultural environment of the host society could result in declined mental health for some older family members. Coping with loneliness and depression is a considerable concern (King et al., 2014).

This brief literature review suggests that transnational family practices can be understood as the consequences of intricate human agency interactions among different family members across national boundaries. Evidence firstly shows that the transnational family arrangement can greatly affect different family members' lifelong trajectories, individual wellbeing, and their cross-generational relations (Ho & Chiang, 2017; Lima, 2001; Parreñas, 2005; Waters, 2002). It also suggests a multigenerational dimension that exists in transnational migration and many transnational families, and points out its underpinning. Overall, the literature review above helps to draw out what has been known about transnational familyhood and care circulation. These empirical and theoretical insights were used to shape the analysis of the research materials in this paper.

Intergenerational Dynamics

Based on the preliminary findings from a three-year research project, this section will highlight two major interrelated findings regarding the multigenerational new Chinese immigrant families, including the importance to seek family reunification in New Zealand for these immigrant families, and generational differences, internal struggles, and power dynamics in their family relations.

Methodological Notes

In-depth interviews were employed in this research to collect empirical data. The interviews were undertaken individually with participants across three generations who are from both physically separated and unified new Chinese immigrant families in New Zealand between October 2017 to December 2019. All participants are over 16 years of age, and all the first-generation adult immigrants and their older parents are originally from China, while the younger generations (i.e.

1.5 generation or second-generation) are born either in China or New Zealand. In total, 45 interviews have been conducted across three generations, including 16 interviews with first-generation adult immigrants, 17 interviews with the older parent generation, and 12 interviews with the child generation. The research examines intergenerational relationships and family wellbeing, which might be sensitive topics to some immigrant family members; therefore, we invited participants across generations mostly from different families to conduct individual interviews, instead of doing household interviews with the concurrent presence of multiple members from the same family unit. Despite this approach of selecting participants, the intergenerational perspectives can also manifest through the interview questions, which were tailored to suit different generations.

Purposive sampling was carried out based on the social networks that the two authors have with the Chinese community in Auckland. After that, a snowballing technique was used for reaching more immigrant families. Since Auckland hosts about 69% of the Chinese population in New Zealand (Auckland Council, 2017), it was chosen to be the sampling location. At the participants' preferences, most interviews with the adult immigrants and older grandparents were conducted in Mandarin, while interviews with the 1.5 and second generations were conducted in English. The interview schedule includes questions about participants' personal, educational, and career trajectories, migration and settlement experiences, family relationship and maintenance, and identity and sense of belonging. All interviews were transcribed and translated by the authors for thematic analysis.

Longing for Family Reunification: Cultural Orientation, Morality, and Family Reality

As discussed before, a preferable scenario for many new PRC Chinese immigrant families in New Zealand is to achieve family reunification and build up multigenerational families which link all direct family members together. Overwhelmingly, interviewees across different generations, particularly the first-generation adult immigrants and their parents, expressed their yearning to build up close multigenerational families in New Zealand, either living in the same household or within close proximity but living separately. This can be explained by two leading reasons. The first reason is culturally orientated. Filial piety, especially filial care, is one major reason that motivates many new Chinese adult immigrants to sponsor their older parents to immigrate to New Zealand for family reunification. As one of the most influential traditional Chinese family values, filial piety remains significant in modern Chinese families (Yue & Ng, 1999), including Chinese immigrant families overseas (Ho & Chiang, 2017). This cultural value, required within the Confucian ethics, defines a hierarchical and respectful relationship shown towards one's parents and older relatives. It prescribes a child's absolute obedience and respect towards the parents. To provide physical and daily care for ageing parents is considered a key practice of filial piety, and co-residing with parents is proof of demonstrating commitment to providing filial care and support to ageing parents (Whyte, 2004). For example, Liu, a first-generation adult immigrant mentioned:

> *The major reason why I want to live together with my parents is to take care of them on a daily base to fulfil my filial duty. This is a Chinese tradition. I will teach this to my children as well so that they could take care of me when I am old.*

Wang, a second-generation, expressed a similar point of view:

I do think if my grandparents are getting older, we should live together so that we can take care of them. To me, only living together in a multigenerational household is a real home. I will educate my children to be responsible to their parents.

The above quotations illustrate that, even though taking care of ageing parents is more or less a universal moral responsibility for younger generations in the family context elsewhere, filial piety has been acting as a particular cultural and moral doctrine regulating the younger generation's attitude and responsibility towards the eldercare in Chinese families.

Besides, the interviews also reveal another dimension as to why many adult Chinese immigrant parents tend to fulfil their filial duties toward their older parents – that is to bring up the concept of filial piety to their children. Over half of the first-generation adult immigrants in the research mentioned that their actions of undertaking filial duties bear the fruit for the future – that is to be the role model to their children so that their children could learn to become filial sons/daughters in the future. Such a dimension shows that, in the Chinese immigrant families, filial care is not only of relevance to the first-generation adult migrants and their older parents but also of relevance to the younger generations.

The second reason the new Chinese immigrants desire to build close-knit multigenerational families is practical. The interviews reveal that family reunification provides convenience for these families to conduct their day-to-day life in which family members can rely on and offer help and support to each other. For example, for the older parents, to live with their adult children and grandchildren is an efficient way to cope with linguistic barriers to conduct their daily life because their adult children can be handy to provide translation. Another example is that when three generations of these immigrant families live together, it is convenient for adult immigrants to look

after their older parents. Reciprocally, the older parents can play a crucial role in housekeeping and caregiving towards their grandchildren when adult immigrant parents are busy working. Hong, a mother of two offered her point of view about this reciprocal family relation as a first-generation adult immigrant:

> *Sure, I would like to have my parents live together with me here in New Zealand. On the one hand, I can take care of them; on the other hand, they can help me take care of my child and manage some house chores. Sometimes, when my parents are not here, I cannot even work properly because I have to take care of my child fulltime.*

As Hong looks towards the livelihood for all the family stakeholders. For example, Qian mentioned:

> *In New Zealand, kids need to be picked up from schools at 3 o'clock if you don't want to send them to the after-school programme. Both my husband and I are full-time. When my parents are here, they can pick up Tom [Qian's son] from his school and cook dinner. We don't need to worry about whether we have food to eat. This takes a lot of pressure from us so that in the evening I still have some energy to study. I need to study to improve myself so that I can get a promotion and pay rise. It's important for my family, isn't it?*

As for many adult immigrants, they are in the critical life stage of climbing their professional career ladder and raising children. If the grandparents can look after the grandchildren, this can free up the adult parents from the daily parental duties and make them at ease, so that they can focus on their work and have more time to seek career advancement. This can thus secure a sound

livelihood to sustain the whole family's wellbeing and maintenance, not just financially, but critically for every aspect of their family lives.

For those families whose older parents are not able to come to New Zealand as permanent residents, they expressed their deep frustrations. For example, Liao, a grandmother mentioned:

> *Right after I finished the visa application preparation, the New Zealand government closed the parent application category for resident visa. It is very annoying… My husband passed away a few years ago, my only child is living in New Zealand, and now I am living alone by myself in Shanghai, what should I do?*

Tang, a first-generation immigrant mother revealed: "*I cannot really imagine what should I do if my parents could not move to New Zealand … Who can take care of them when their health deteriorates? I feel so lost every time when I think about the situation*".

For individual Chinese adult immigrants who are not able to bring their older parents to New Zealand, many of them unanimously expressed their "feeling of guilt". The sense of guilt is an important source of anxiety for them because they are constantly under tremendous pressure about the transnational care plan for their older parents. For example, Guo, a first generational adult immigrant mentioned:

> *I am very aware of my filial duty to my parents. But now we are forced to live apart from each other, and this really makes me feel very guilty. Well, not just feeling guilty. I feel pressured and worried. I am now even afraid to hear my phone ring in the evening. Because I think the call is perhaps from China to tell me my parents are unwell and need my attendance.*

As illustrated, to be not able to reunite with older parents poses one of the greatest challenges many new Chinese immigrants have to face. This challenge comes from external forces, mainly from the restrictive immigration policy which lifts the bar high for the entry of immigrants' older parents. Simultaneously, these immigrant families also encounter challenges from within the families; namely, the internal challenges.

Generational Differences, Internal Struggle, and Power Dynamics

Although family reunification is an ideal scenario for many new Chinese immigrant families, many unified new Chinese immigrant families in New Zealand also encounter some significant challenges generated internally within the families. Those challenges, to a great extent, are all catalysed by their transnational family experiences and further revealed to be related to the different life priorities and interests posed by different generations, the natural evolvement of family structures and dynamics, as well as distinct life experiences in different social and cultural contexts.

Firstly, some Chinese adult immigrants sponsored their older parents to immigrate to New Zealand, they later left their parents and embarked on renewed migratory trajectories to other countries or returned to China for better career or business development opportunities. It has been proved that New Zealand is a "stepping board" immigration country (Liu, 2015) which often offers immigrants a platform for short-to-medium term residence rather than long-term stays. The research partially testifies this fact. It should be also acknowledged that such a phenomenon provides a competing discourse to the importance of filial care provision and family reunification emphasised by many new Chinese immigrants and their families. Accordingly, some "left-behind" Chinese older parents in New Zealand face challenges of isolation, loneliness, language barriers,

cultural differences, and lack of mobility. The phenomenon also triggered some public suspicions against the immigrants' motivation to sponsor their older parents to New Zealand as permanent residents for family reunification, particularly the potential fiscal costs on the New Zealand social welfare system (Liu, 2016; Tan, 2016).

Secondly, the research found evidence of generational differences, and these differences were largely articulated through the discovery of how different generations of the Chinese immigrant families conceptualised their personal identities and the sense of belonging. For example, Lin, a grandmother who has been living together with her children and grandchildren in Auckland since 1998 clearly noticed the dissimilarities between her and her daughter and granddaughters:

> *I am just an immigrant from China. New Zealand is a great place to live, but not my home country. I am here just because of my child and grandchildren. My daughter was born in China but has been working and living here for many years. She likes here, maybe she thinks she belongs here too. My two grandchildren were both born and growing up here in New Zealand. They cannot even speak Chinese properly. I know, we are different.*

This generational difference of perceived personal identity and sense of belonging has resulted in the situation where Lin constantly feels that she cannot have a really close relationship with her daughter and granddaughters. Lin continuously expressed herself:

> *Basically, we think things differently, and we speak different languages… These make me feel like I am emotionally detached from them [my daughter and granddaughters], even*

we are living together in the same household. Sometimes, I feel lonely and feel I am excluded in the house.

As can be seen, the generational distinction of these multigenerational Chinese immigrant families is fundamentally about a dissimilarity of personal identities. The case above shows that Lin sees herself as an outsider living here in New Zealand, which is significantly different from her daughter, who has been found in a follow-up interview to possess a hyphenated identity, mixing Chinese and New Zealand cultural influences. The same case is also applied to Lin's grandchildren who are New Zealand born and think they are New Zealanders rather than Chinese. Under such a circumstance, to achieve an ideal closeness between Lin and her daughter and grandchildren becomes a mission impossible. More or less, this kind of distinction in identity-making frustrates her all the time and further undermines her close relationships with her daughter and grandchildren, especially when it comes that all family members live in the same household.

This generational difference in identity-making has also been identified from an interview with a participant who belongs to the grandchild generation. Tong, a 1.5 generation who immigrated to New Zealand with his parents eight years ago, stated:

I think I am different from my grandparents, maybe also my parents. I treat New Zealand as my home, and I think I am a kiwi Chinese although I was not born here. I immigrated here with my parents in 2010. After that, I finished my high school here in Auckland, and I am doing my tertiary education here also. I feel more attached to New Zealand than China now.

Tong's grandparents are living in China but come to New Zealand to visit them from time to time. Growing up, especially receiving an education here in New Zealand shapes his idea about who he is and where he belongs. His life transition from China to New Zealand during his early adolescent makes him realise the growing-up differences between him and his parents and grandparents. This phenomenon echoes an important concept adopted by migration scholars to investigate the changing identity of migrant children in the host society –"ethnic attrition" (Duncan & Trejo, 2015; Emeka, 2019). This concept indicates that the children of immigrants may cease to identify only or primarily with their country of origin when growing up in the host society, and instead construct their identities in ways that are influenced by multiple intersecting factors, such as their ethnicity and the sociocultural, economic, and political developments of both their original and hosting societies.

Apart from the emotional struggle, this research also notices that the roles and positioning of different generations in the new Chinese immigrant families are changing, which challenges the traditional Chinese family hierarchy. This consequently results in some intergenerational contradictions and power struggles within families. The research finds that while the grandparent generation is highly dependent, the adult immigrant generation is usually the backbone of their families placed at the frontline to deal with the family's livelihood. Such status indicates that the adult immigrant generation becomes more dominant and powerful than usual compared to many non-immigrant Chinese families, particularly their power in family decision-making process. Remembering that traditional filial piety permits the highest and most respectful position of the older parents in Chinese families. In many non-immigrant Chinese families, filial piety confers the older adults power to have more influence in the family decision-making whereby their opinions and interests should be highly respected and strictly followed (Whyte, 2004; Yue & Ng, 1999).

However, the research on new Chinese immigrant families unveils that the changing positioning of the adult immigrant generation confers on them the confidence to override their older parents' position in the families and family decision-making. Under such a circumstance, quite often, the older parents feel challenged; thus, some intergenerational tensions occur. For example, Huang, a grandmother who just moved out of her daughter's house, told us:

> *I am tired to be powerless in front of them [her daughter and son in law], I have no say in the family. They don't listen to me and we always fight with each other. So, I think I'd better move out by myself.*

Zhang, a grandfather also expressed his feelings and tried to rationalise the reasons for the changing power relations in his family:

> *I was usually very dominant in decision-making in my family. Everybody listened to me and did things accordingly. However, things have been changed after I moved to New Zealand. I am dependent on Yong [his son] for everyday life, and he pays everything and his wife is running the household. I feel I cannot criticise him like the way I did before. I have to constrain myself and be modest because I don't have any power in the house because I don't contribute much to the household economically. Therefore, I cannot push them around. I know that I have to adapt to the new situation. But you know, once you get used to something, it is hard to make a change.*

The quotes above reflect on the reality that the intergenerational power relations are being reconfigured in those reunited multigenerational immigrant families during the migration and

settlement processes mainly due to the changing financial arrangement as well as the human agency of different members within the family.

In addition, though it is not like the drastic change of power-relations between the adult immigrant generation and their older parents, the interviews also reveal some critical intergenerational gap between the grandparents and grandchildren. The gap is mainly attributed to the distinct life and educational experiences that both generations have lived in different social contexts and with linguistic barriers with each other; as a consequence, a sense of disconnection between these two generations occurs. Ding, a grandmother revealed her sorrow:

> *I can feel that sometimes Maggie [her granddaughter] gets really annoying towards me. She does not listen to me and just does her own things like I am not here. Well, I love her, don't get me wrong. She is a lovely girl. But with no efficient communication with her, she is just a beautiful girl who keeps a distance from me. I try to not put too many rules on her; otherwise, she will be even far away from us. This hurts me a lot but I have to keep this with myself.*

To mitigate this generational gap, the research finds that the adult immigrant generation quite often plays a role of middleman to "bridge" between their children and older parents. Chi, a father of two, mentioned:

> *Regardless of the language issues between them [the grandparents and grandchildren], they are very different in terms of lifestyle, cultural orientation, and so on…So, I often feel like I am caught in the middle between them. When they have troubles to understand*

each other, I have to become the middleman to mediate their misunderstandings and even some contradictions…it could be quite stressful sometimes.

This mediation role the first generational adult parents play once again confirms that they are the backbone of their families. They not only need to undertake the major financial and practical responsibilities for their family livelihood but also need to do the emotional work to keep up a healthy family environment whereby there is no relationship crisis among family members and everybody is happy.

Conclusion

Using the case of the new Chinese immigrant families in New Zealand, this paper brings the aspect of "forced" immigrant family separation into a sharp focus and discusses the importance of family reunification for the immigrant families under the context of a neoliberal immigration regime. From a multigenerational perspective, the paper also brings transnational migration and the intergenerational dynamics of immigrant families into close dialogue.

Firstly, the findings show that, for many adult Chinese immigrants, it is a moral duty to bring their older parents to New Zealand for family reunification. This is culturally grounded on the concept of filial piety. Filial piety associated with immigrant family reunification among these immigrant families also has a reciprocal dimension in which when the older parents receive filial care, they also make contributions to their families by providing free childcare for the younger generations and undertaking major housekeeping tasks. The efforts made by both the older parents and adult immigrant children are towards the ultimate goal of maintaining the livelihood for the multigenerational families. Therefore, it can be concluded that the underlying motivations for

family reunification and provision of filial care for the older parents are in a practical and normative dualism. This duality of pragmatic and normative motivations may not only co-exist in new Chinese immigrants' reasoning of family reunification but also be common for immigrant families from other cultural backgrounds.

Secondly, the research finds that there is a generational dimension in the filial morality pursued by these Chinese families. For the adult immigrant generation, filial morality can be internalised with feelings of guilt if they are not able to bring their older parents to New Zealand. For the grandchild generation, filial piety and in specific filial care is still of relevance to them. The younger generations learn about the importance of providing filial care for the older generations from their immigrant parents. Therefore, it is fair to say that filial piety still frames the relationship in these multigenerational Chinese immigrant families.

Last but not least, the findings reveal that multigenerational new Chinese immigrant families face both external and internal challenges arisen from the migration process and settlement, as well as the changing family structures and dynamics. Externally, New Zealand's increasingly restrictive family immigration policy causes many family members from new Chinese immigrant families to live separately. While the emotional cost for maintaining families across national borders is hard to measure, the financial burden and physical challenges the families endure with family separation are more obvious. Internally, these Chinese immigrant families have to deal with the emerging generational contradictions and differences too. Some family-specific factors, including family structure and formation, financial arrangements, different life experiences and sense of identity, and the transforming roles played by different family members through different life courses influence their family relations.

The research demonstrates the dynamics of the intergenerational relations among the new Chinese immigrant families. Thus, it provides an important reference to the research of transnational immigrant families. It also provides insights about the contemporary understanding of aged care for older immigrants – this is an emerging research area that intersects migration, family and gerontological studies. The research also challenges the traditional nuclear-structured transnational family research paradigm by advocating the application of multigenerational perspective in guiding transnational family research. By doing so, future transnational family research could go beyond the existing theoretical boundary to reach wider ranges of transnational family practices and more family members under different cultural contexts, particularly to those who emphasise extended family structures.

Endnotes

1. "New Chinese immigrant" in the New Zealand context is a term that usually refers to Chinese who emigrated to New Zealand after the introduction of the Immigration Act 1987, which abolished the "traditional origin" preference term that favoured British immigrants. Among the new Chinese immigrants, the three major sources are immigrants from Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the PRC. These three groups plus Chinese from other countries (e.g. Malaysia, Indonesia etc.) are all categorised as new Chinese immigrants in New Zealand. New Chinese immigrants are distinct from the earlier Chinese immigrants in New Zealand. The earliest Chinese immigrants to New Zealand were almost exclusively males, with little or no education, originating from rural Southern China, either directly or by way of other countries, and they immigrated primarily for the economic opportunities found in the gold mines in the Western world and the tin mines and plantations in Central America. The majority of the new Chinese immigrants are ethnically more diverse, as well as highly educated and possess specialised skills or financial capital, which lets them qualify and meet the entry criteria of New Zealand.
2. The two terms – "China" and "the PRC" refer to the same country in this paper. These two terms are used in the paper interchangeably.

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Chapter Five

Seasonal Parents/Grandparents

Statement of Contribution Doctorate With Publications/Manuscripts

DRC 16

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUROA
UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND

GRADUATE RESEARCH SCHOOL

STATEMENT OF CONTRIBUTION
DOCTORATE WITH PUBLICATIONS/MANUSCRIPTS

We, the candidate and the candidate's Primary Supervisor, certify that all co-authors have consented to their work being included in the thesis and they have accepted the candidate's contribution as indicated below in the *Statement of Originality*.

Name of candidate:	Guanyu Ran
Name/title of Primary Supervisor:	Professor Michael Belgrave
In which chapter is the manuscript /published work:	Chapter Five

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Abstract

Despite heightened scholarly attention paid to transnational immigrant families since the 1990s, a systematic analysis framework explaining the formation of these family experiences has been absent. Through exploring the formation of Chinese seasonal parents/grandparents in New Zealand – a transnational family experience featured by routinised transnational movements of older immigrant family members, this paper aims to introduce an analysis framework to systematically interrogate the factors shaping diverse transnational family experiences. The proposed analysis framework builds upon an inclusive paradigm, which allows the investigation of transnational family experience to trace multilevel impact factors behind its formation (i.e. micro-level family dynamics, meso-level living environment, and macro-level institutional foundations). Additionally, it also highlights the interactivity of those diverse impact factors within and across different levels, as well as, the spatial and temporal dimensions of transnational family lives.

Introduction

Despite heightened scholarly attention paid to transnational immigrant families (also referred to as transnational family) since the 1990s (Bryceson & Vuorela, 2002), a systematic analysis framework explaining the formation of these family experiences has been absent. In the current field, although some scholars intend to capture the intricate factors triggering diverse transnational family experiences, the existing research paradigm has been predominantly descriptive (Zhou, 1998; Ho et al., 2001). This is a paradigm that largely derives from the classic *Push-Pull* model of migration theory, which exclusively concentrates on identifying and listing impact factors propelling ongoing border-crossing behaviours of transnational family members from both hosting and sending contexts (Zhou, 1998; Ho et al., 2001). At first glance, this perspective seems

sufficient because of its apparent ability to incorporate almost all the major factors from both immigrant-sending and immigrant-receiving countries that shape transnational family experiences. Nevertheless, due to its overall descriptive nature, applying this perspective to explain transnational family experiences is limited and potentially misleading. Impact factors that are assumed to play a role in shaping transnational family experiences are largely enumerated in a relatively arbitrary manner without locating them in a systematic framework to specify their distinctive roles and interactions. This perspective also fails to capture the changing dynamics among these impact factors towards transnational family experiences over time.

Through exploring the formation of seasonal parents/grandparents within new Chinese immigrant families from the People's Republic of China (PRC) living in New Zealand – a transnational family experience characterised by routinised transnational movements of older immigrant family members – this paper aims to introduce an analysis framework to guide future investigations of transnational family experiences to mitigate the above research gap. This framework builds on an inclusive paradigm, which allows researchers to trace multilevel impact factors behind diverse transnational family experiences. These impact factors range from the micro-level family dynamics to meso-level living environments, and to macro-level social, cultural, and political institutions. Additionally, this framework also highlights the interactivity among different factors within and across different levels, as well as, the spatial and temporal dimensions of transnational family lives.

The phenomenon of seasonal parents/grandparents mentioned in this paper was discovered by a larger research project investigating the multigenerational dynamics of new Chinese immigrant families in New Zealand under the impact of transnational migration experience from 2017 to

2020. Although there is insufficient statistical data to estimate the scale of this transnational family practice in the New Zealand context, it prevails among the Chinese families involved in this research project. In general, these seasonal parents/grandparents are the older members of new Chinese immigrant families. They are the parents of the first-generation adult immigrants. Many of them are also the grandparents of the second or 1.5 generation immigrant descendants. Either granted with or without New Zealand residence visa or citizenship, they frequently travel between New Zealand and the PRC. This travel is not just an occasional family visit, but rather a routinised family arrangement manifested through the older members' frequent transnational movement, like once a year or at least every two years. Influenced by the hemisphere division of New Zealand (South) and the PRC (North), their frequent travels normally follow a seasonal pattern: staying in New Zealand during New Zealand's spring and summer and returning to the PRC during New Zealand's autumn and winter, which enables them to enjoy the most temperate seasons in both New Zealand and the PRC all through the year. During their stay in New Zealand, they spend most of their time helping their adult immigrant children with household chores, with some also taking care of grandchildren. Our interviews revealed that a smaller number of those seasonal parents/grandparents are still in the workforce in the PRC, but the majority of them are retired. The experience of seasonal parents/grandparents differs significantly from many other older adults' transnational family experience documented in existing literature. While other research reports either occasional family visits, or travel that is triggered by critical family events, such as childbirth and its associated childcare (Wyss & Nedelcu, 2019), the experience of seasonal parents/grandparents is more likely a deliberately planned transnational family routine.

In what follows, we first present a literature review mapping out major academic interpretations of diverse transnational family experiences, to establish a research boundary and theoretical

foundation for this paper. The second section provides contextual background for the empirical research: introducing the demographic profile of the PRC new Chinese immigrants living in New Zealand as well as pertinent New Zealand immigration policies. The third section presents the empirical data and analyses the phenomenon of Chinese seasonal parents/grandparents in New Zealand. Based on the empirical analysis, we introduce a systematic analysis framework to further future studies reasoning transnational family experiences.

Transnational Family Experiences: A Literature Review

Transnational families are the families whose members, both nuclear and extended, are separated geographically but maintain close ties with frequent interactions across national borders (Lima, 2001; Bryceson, 2019). Its growing practices worldwide have become an increasing challenge to the traditional concept of family that is typically non- or less- mobile and often associated with a steady place of residence.

As an inevitable outcome of the rapid development of transnational migration, transnational families have drawn substantial scholarly interest from various academic disciplines in recent decades (Waters, 2005; Baldassar et al., 2007). Among them, much of the scholarship has focused on the problematic aspect of "doing family" transnationally, particularly the impact of transnational family separation vis-à-vis the function of the family as the basic social unit for individual wellbeing and associated societal outcomes (Zentgraf & Chinchilla, 2012; De Silva, 2017; Liu, 2018; Bryceson, 2019).

Under this focus, myriad transnational family experiences have since been identified and further scrutinised by migration scholars: for instance, the East Asian *astronaut families* in the Trans-

Pacific region (Ho, 2002) and Salvadorian transnational families with the immigrant parents living in the US and left-behind children *in situ* (Abrego, 2009). It is worth mentioning, in this study, that we define transnational family experiences as the lived experience of family members under varying transnational family arrangements. Studying those family experiences carries significant implications for migration scholars and policy makers. On the one hand, it is essential for better understanding an increasingly globalised world where the impact of transnationalism has irreversibly expanded from the public to the private sphere (Fiałkowska, 2019). On the other hand, it can disclose the resilience and persistence of family formation along with institutional challenges, in particular the challenges that originate from rapid globalisation (Baldassar, 2014).

Existing literature suggests that there are various factors facilitating the formation of diverse transnational family experiences. From the institutional perspective, shifting global structures, such as the increasing population mobility and transportation infrastructure development, play a vital role in promoting the emergence of transnational family experiences. First, the rising trend of transnational migration since the 1990s gives direct rise to the practice of transnational families. Facilitated either by the rapid development of global labour market (Lima, 2001), inequalities in the socioeconomic development across nation states (Zhou, 1998), or escalated regional disasters and conflicts (Bryceson & Vuorela, 2002), this growing global mobility of population not only triggers transnational family formations, but also stimulates the normalisation of transnational familyhood. Second, the continuous development in international transportation and communication technologies and the accessibility towards these technologies are the other critical conditions of the emergence of transnational families worldwide (Portes, Guarnizo & Landolt, 1999). Compared to their counterparts in the early 20th century or earlier, separated immigrant family members are enabled by advanced technologies to communicate with and visit each other

(Faist, 2000). New technologies have fundamentally transformed the quality of transnational family life; immigrants are no longer deprived of information, emotional and financial exchanges among other family members (Nedelcu & Wyss, 2016). Third, immigration policy – particularly family immigration policies – also contributes significantly to the formation of transnational family experiences. While almost all major immigration destinations have tightened immigration policy to confine the size of their immigration intake in recent decades, transnational families surge mainly because of the increasing restrictions towards family reunifications (Liu, 2016). This scenario creates a forced dimension of family separation in transnational family experiences, particularly exemplified by the case of rising immigration restrictions of the older parents of adult immigrants in various regions (De Silva, 2017). Fourth, culturally embedded social practices from both sending and receiving countries also influence transnational family experiences. For example, in many Chinese transnational families, the traditional Confucian family value of filial piety has been evidenced to intensify the adult immigrants' feelings of guilt when they are unable to provide sufficient transnational care towards their older parents *in situ* (Ho & Chiang, 2017).

In addition to institutional level impacts, from the individual level, the internal dynamics within an immigrant family dominate the formation of transnational family experiences (Liu, 2016). Existing scholarship in transnational family studies has paid substantial attention to such factors since they are widely recognised as the major source triggering transnational mobility as well as constituting transnational daily routines at the individual family level (De Haas & Fokkema, 2010). First, the socioeconomic status of the family performs an important role in the formation of transnational family experiences. It explicates not only the reasons behind the family's decision to initiate transnational journeys, but also sets the tone for how family life will be maintained during the transnational period (Fiałkowska, 2019). Second, interpersonal/intergenerational relationships

underlined by different family structures function pivotally on mediating transnational family experiences in many ways (Bryceson & Vuorela 2002), for instance, care arrangements (Baldassar, 2014) and communication patterns during the separation (Nedelcu & Wyss, 2016). Particularly for those families with dependent members either in sending or receiving settings, mostly the children and elderly, the evidence suggests that a reliable and close-tied interpersonal/intergenerational relationship will more likely provide alternative solutions and resources to cope with family care challenges transnationally (Tu, 2019). This aspect of interpersonal dynamics contributes directly to the transnational family resilience to withstand the test of physical separation through building functional supporting networks with family members (Lie, 2010). And third, the unfolding family life cycle, including but not limited to marriage or cohabitation, birth of children, childrearing, and generational fission and death, could also trigger the alteration of transnational family arrangements (Bryceson, 2019). This is because changing family life cycles would provide pressing scenarios and impetuses to adjust the family role of members as well as family arrangements, to respond to shifting family dynamics and priorities (Bryceson, 2019).

Despite identifying this variety of factors, transnational family studies still lack a systematic analytic framework to guide investigations reasoning diverse transnational family experiences. As migration scholars we have, therefore, responded to a call to develop an analytic framework to facilitate future transnational family studies.

New Chinese Immigrants in New Zealand and Their Older Parents: A Demographic and Immigration Policy Profile

In the New Zealand context, “new Chinese immigrants” often refers to those Chinese who arrived in New Zealand from various regions (e.g. the PRC, Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia) after

the enforcement of the New Zealand's "open-door" immigration policy in 1987 (Liu 2018; Ran & Liu, 2020). This research only focuses on new Chinese immigrants from the PRC. After three decades of migration, new Chinese immigrants from the PRC make up significant parts of New Zealand's ethnic Chinese population as well as the total population: the most recent national census showed that in 2018, 132,906 New Zealand residents were born in the PRC, which made up 53.39% of the total ethnic Chinese population (248,919) and 2.83% of the total population in New Zealand (4,699,755) (Statistics New Zealand, 2019).

The prominent presence of new Chinese immigrants is attributed to the significant social, political, and economic developments in both the PRC as the sending country and New Zealand as the receiving country. On the one hand, the PRC's economic reform and open-door policies starting from the early 1980s, changing political ideology, and relaxation of the restriction towards its citizens' international movement, made it possible for many Chinese to immigrate to foreign countries (Xiang, 2003). On the other hand, apart from the introduction of an "open-door" immigration policy in 1987 that enables the New Zealand to absorb immigrants worldwide, the continuous social and economic developments in New Zealand society also proactively channel skilled and business immigrants from the wider Asian-Pacific region, including immigrants from the PRC (Trlin, 1992). Amongst all the Chinese immigrants who came to New Zealand after 1987, the PRC-born immigrants are the latest arrivals coming in large numbers after the mid-1990s. Other Chinese immigrants, from Hong Kong and Taiwan, started to arrive earlier in New Zealand in significant numbers in the early 1990s (Liu, 2018).

As New Zealand's second largest immigrant source, Table 1 shows that these new Chinese immigrants from the PRC have gone through diverse pathways to arrive in New Zealand

(Immigration New Zealand, 2019). Within the total 132,846 residence approvals for PRC immigrants in New Zealand from 1997/1998 to 2018/2019, 39.97% (53,096) of them were granted under the skilled immigrant category, with 11.81% (15,690) under the business category. The PRC also carries the largest number of residence approvals under the parent category of family sponsorship (28,820). It constitutes 21.69% of its own total immigrant population as well as 42.32% of the total parent residence approvals of the top 10 countries. The significant number and percentage under the parent category reinforce the importance of family reunification with older parents in these new Chinese immigrant families in New Zealand.

Table 1: Approvals for Residence of Top Ten Immigrant Source Countries by Nationality and Migrant Stream/Category, 1997/98-2018/19 (Source: Immigration New Zealand, 2019)

Nationality	Total Approval	Total Family Sponsorship	Family Sponsorship Sub-categories				Skilled	Business	International/humanitarian
			Partnership/ Spouse	Parent	Child	Other (Sibling, family quota, humanitarian, etc.)			
Asia									
China (PRC)	132,846	62,560	24,375	28,820	3,655	5,710	53,096	15,690	1,500
		47.09%	18.35%	21.69%	2.75%	4.30%	39.97%	11.81%	1.13%
India	108,087	35,294	20,213	10,614	1,731	2736	71,587	385	821
		32.65%	18.70%	9.82%	1.60%	2.53%	66.23%	0.36%	0.76%
South Korea	27,433	6,558	4,113	1,292	538	615	14,775	5,841	259
		23.91%	14.99%	4.71%	1.96%	2.24%	53.86%	21.29%	0.94%
Philippines	54,439	12,163	8,623	1,297	1,834	409	41,709	56	511
		22.34%	15.84%	2.38%	3.37%	0.74%	76.62%	0.10%	0.94%
Pacific									
Fiji	51,048	21,889	9,825	6,464	1,872	3,728	23,968	695	4,496
		42.88%	19.25%	12.66%	3.67%	7.30%	46.95%	1.36%	8.81%
Samoa	45,262	20,026	7,966	2,027	9,158	875	679	0	24,557
		44.24%	17.60%	4.48%	20.23%	1.93%	1.50%	0.00%	54.26%
Tonga	20,251	10,346	5,990	2,039	1,450	867	1,866	27	8,012
		51.09%	29.58%	10.07%	7.16%	4.28%	9.21%	0.13%	39.56%
Other countries									
United Kingdom	153,101	43,213	30,230	10,255	1,519	1,209	105,160	3,268	1,460
		28.23%	19.75%	6.70%	0.99%	0.79%	68.69%	2.13%	0.95%
South Africa	74,491	10,823	3,990	4,814	1,314	705	62,501	525	642
		14.53%	5.36%	6.46%	1.76%	0.95%	83.90%	0.70%	0.86%
United States	25,872	10,297	9,149	476	532	140	13,716	1,173	686
		39.80%	35.36%	1.84%	2.06%	0.54%	53.01%	4.53%	2.65%
Total top ten	692,830	233,169	124,474	68,098	23,603	16,994	389,057	27,660	42,944
% res. Approvals		33.65%	17.97%	9.83%	3.41%	2.54%	56.15%	3.99%	6.20%
Total NZ Approval	**826,872**								

*Note: The category of International Humanitarian include a number of immigration schemes, including 1995 Refugee Status, Refugee Family Support Tiers, Refugee Quota, Section 61, Section 35a, Pacific Access, Samoa Quota, and others.

This group of Chinese immigrants is also renowned for their transnational connections and mobility – often characterised as a "returnee" phenomenon to the ancestral homeland, a process of step-migration to a third country, or frequent commuting between the sending and receiving countries (Liu, 2018). This reality of transnationalism has become a more permanent feature of their immigrant lives, particularly their family lives, following the progressive New Zealand immigration policy reform in recent years in which the immigration of their older parents has been increasingly restricted. Typically, once adult new Chinese immigrants settle in New Zealand, they most likely sponsor their parents to immigrate to the country for family reunification, either cohabitating under the same roof or living within proximity (Liu, 2016). As for the parents, some come to retire, but many others come to support their adult immigrant children's daily life and career development, including but not limited to dealing with domestic chores and taking care of the grandchildren (Liu, 2016). In return, the adult immigrant children also provide necessary care and company to the daily life of older parents, or even assume responsibility for supporting their parents when they are unable to live on their own (Bedford & Liu, 2013). This closely interdependent family arrangement and relationship is not simply driven by intergenerational reciprocity, but also profoundly shaped by some traditional Chinese family values, such as, the emphasis on collective family wellbeing and filial piety (Liu, 2018). Nevertheless, due to the increasing restrictions towards the immigration of older parents, many transnational new Chinese immigrant families have been forced to emerge between New Zealand and the PRC when close-tied family members across generations have no choice but to live across different national, cultural and linguistic localities (Liu, 2016).

As for New Zealand immigration policy, despite its initial intention to recognise and strengthen family values (Burke, 1986), its enthusiasm for family related immigration has been decreasing

steadily over the past three decades (Bedford & Liu, 2013). This is particularly evident in the case of the older parents of adult immigrants. In past decades, there were several critical changes made in the parent category under the family sponsorship that tightened their entrance to New Zealand, including: 1) capping the annual quota of parent category in 2007 (Bedford & Liu, 2013); 2) introducing a two-tier system based on the applicant's financial status to process the parents' immigration application in 2012 (Bedford & Liu, 2013); 3) a temporary close-off application for parent category from October 2016 to February 2020 (Woodhouse, 2016); and 4) the re-opening of the parent category since February 2020 with much higher financial requirements for the adult immigrant-child sponsors and very limited annual quota for approvals (1,000 per year) (Immigration New Zealand, 2020c). In other words, achieving the residence visa for the parents of adult immigrants through the family sponsorship has become more and more difficult in New Zealand.

Under the current New Zealand immigration policy, apart from the Parent Category of the family sponsorship stream, there are only two other visa schemes permitting the parents of adult immigrants to come to New Zealand for family related immigration or visits: one is an investment immigration plan called Parent Retirement Resident Visa (Immigration New Zealand, 2020b), and another one is a short-term visitor visa called Parent and Grandparent Visitor Visa (Immigration New Zealand, 2020a). The former visa requires significant funding resources to support the application. According to Immigration New Zealand website, to apply for the Parent Retirement Resident Visa, by the time of application, the parent of adult immigrants needs to have a guaranteed annual income of NZ$60,000 or more and NZ$1 million or more to invest in New Zealand for at least four consecutive years, plus another NZ$500,000 or more savings in a bank account to guarantee the settlement. The latter visa – Parent and Grandparent Visitor Visa – grants the older

family member multiple entries to New Zealand without significant financial threshold, but only allows them to stay for up to six months at any given time and with a maximum total stay of 18 months every three years. Due to the substantial financial requirement, many immigrants are unable to bring their parents to New Zealand through the Parent Retirement Resident Visa. However, if they have to rely on the Parent and Grandparent Visitor Visa for family reunifications, all family reunifications will only be fragmented and temporary.

Methodology

Multi-sited in-depth interviews were conducted with 45 participants across different generations from new Chinese immigrant families in New Zealand and the PRC. The interviewees include 16 first-generation adult immigrants, 17 older parents of adult immigrants, and 12 children of adult immigrants. Purposive sampling was carried out based on existing social networks within the New Zealand Chinese community of the two authors, after which, the snowballing technique was applied to reach more participants. Auckland was selected as the major location for conducting data collection due to its high proportional representation of the new Chinese population in New Zealand.

Interviews were conducted in locations of each participant's choice (e.g. their home, café, or other public spaces like libraries and parks) and were between one and two hours long. At the participant's preference, most interviews with the first-generation adult immigrants and the older parents were conducted in Mandarin, while interviews with the children of immigrants (i.e. 1.5 and second generations) were in English. Topics discussed in the interviews included the participant's life trajectories, migration and settlement experiences, and family relationship and maintenance before and after migration. All the interviews were audio-recorded and later

transcribed for thematic analysis by using NVivo 12 software. All the names used in the following analysis are pseudonyms.

The Phenomenon of Seasonal Parents/Grandparents

Our investigation discovered that there are intricate factors behind the formation of seasonal parents/grandparents. In the following analysis, we will address these factors respectively through locating them into macro, micro, and meso levels. The macro-level factors are related to broader institutional impact factors, such as immigration policies and transnational infrastructures. The micro-level factors are concentrated on the domestic family dynamics across generations. The meso-level factors are focused on the community-level living environment where these families situate.

Macro-Level: Immigration Policy, Geospatial Location and Accessibility Towards Communication and Transportation Technologies

The New Zealand family immigration policy to restrict reunification of older family members has been suggested by our interviews as the major macro-level driving force giving rise to the phenomenon of seasonal parents/grandparents in these new Chinese immigrant families. This was particularly the case for those families whose older members haven't been granted residence visas. Han is a 65-year-old woman from Shanghai. Her only son immigrated to New Zealand in 2010. A few years after her husband passed away, she decided to move to New Zealand to live together with her son in her retirement. However, right before she sought to submit her immigration application in 2016, the New Zealand government closed new applications under the parent

category. By the time of the interview, she was one of these seasonal parents traveling frequently between New Zealand and the PRC in order to sustain her family life:

> *The major reason for me to constantly travel between New Zealand and China is related to my visa. Now, I only carry a family visitor visa, which is only valid for a few years and also has a very strict limit on the number of days I can stay in New Zealand for each visit…This is the only visa I can get now.*

Clearly, frequent travel between New Zealand and the PRC is not Han's preference. Being able to only hold a short-term family visitor visa, makes her frequent travels inevitable if she wants to maintain her retirement plan. These travels are the coping strategy that Han has adopted to sustain her family life; a response to the current New Zealand immigration policy. For many older members of immigrant families without residence visas like Han, the increasingly restrictive New Zealand immigration policy lays the legislative foundation driving their frequent transnational movements in and out of New Zealand, which informs their seasonal parents/grandparents experiences.

Nevertheless, these older parents' transnational movements would be less likely to follow a seasonal pattern without the influence from the climate differences between New Zealand and the PRC due to their geolocations. Mr. and Mrs. Wang have New Zealand permanent residence (PR) and live together with their daughter, son-in-law and two grandchildren in Auckland. Nonetheless, they still regularly travel between New Zealand and the PRC:

> *The winter in New Zealand is unbearable, like raining and windy everyday…so we travel back to China to enjoy the summertime there…we enjoy this arrangement so*

far, it is good for our health…Now we are living in the summer all the time if we keep traveling (laughter).

Li, a new Chinese immigrant living in North Shore, also confirmed with us her parents' same pattern of seasonal travel between New Zealand and the PRC:

I don't think my parents stay here in New Zealand in the winter is a good idea, definitely not good for their health… As long as they are ok to travel, they should go back to China during the New Zealand's winter, and that's what they normally do now.

Many older adults of new Chinese immigrant families take advantage of the seasonal differences between New Zealand and the PRC, choosing to routinely travel between these two countries to avoid possible inclement weather that could take a toll on their health. This seasonal travel can be understood as a rational choice made by transnational families to prioritise the quality of life of their older family members. For example, Mr. Wang mentioned in the interview, following this pattern, they would be "living in the summer all the time". Similar seasonal transnational patterns of immigrant family members caused by the geolocations of sending and receiving countries have also been noticed from studies with other immigrant groups across Northern-Southern hemispheres (Baldassar, 2014).

Moreover, our interviews also confirmed that the daily life of immigrant family members today has been fundamentally changed by technological developments that offer them "a multitude of direct and indirect ways of retaining family contact, support and caring relationships" (Brecyson, 2019, p 3) while members are separated by national borders. In our research, all the participants acknowledged that the well-developed and affordable international transportation between New

Zealand and the PRC laid the infrastructural foundation for the older family members' seasonal travel. In some of their words, traveling between New Zealand and the PRC is "just a matter of a ticket, very easy".

In addition, the rising use of new communication technology among this immigrant group also helps to maintain instantaneous communication among family members; thus, a sense of virtual home can be achieved. Tan is a seasonal grandmother and she shared some sights with us on this aspect:

> *I talked to my son and grandson on WeChat every day when I travelled back to China… If I worry about my garden (in New Zealand), I will have a video-call (on WeChat) to let them show me how they maintain it…That's why I feel ok to travel back to China every year since we can always communicate from afar.*

The WeChat that Tan mentioned is a smartphone app that integrates multipurpose messaging, video call, mobile payment, and various social networking services. It is extremely popular among new Chinese immigrant groups from the PRC and they use it daily to facilitate online communications among their families and friends. As Tan explained, when she traveled back to China, using WeChat not only allows her immediate communications with her family in New Zealand to fill the gap of family coherence remotely, but also provides her means to monitor family chores from afar, like maintaining the garden. As a result, applying the new communication technology considerably relieved her concern for the possible negative impact from being apart from the families, which further stimulates her seasonal travels between New Zealand and the PRC to become a seasonal grandparent.

Micro-Level: Family Dynamics

De Hass and Fokkema (2010) argue that the household is the most relevant aspect triggering migration decisions. Our study lends further weight to the idea that family dynamics within household is the fundamental micro-level factor shaping detailed transnational family experiences. The family dynamics here refer to not just patterns of relating and interaction between/among family members but also life courses and socioeconomic statuses of individual family members across generations.

First, cross-generational analysis suggests that seasonal parents/grandparents practices primarily take shape under the negotiation of family generations' distinctive life stages. Our interviews and observations with new Chinese immigrant families revealed that most of the first-generation adult immigrants are at their major life stage of childrearing and career development, and the 1.5 and second generations are either too young or at their major life stage of schooling. Their strong commitments towards their daily routine in the host society (i.e. New Zealand), driven by their life stages to a great extent, limit their capacity for frequent transnational movements (Wilding & Baldassar, 2009). Nevertheless, as we mentioned previously, most of the older adults in those families have retired, which enables them much more freedom compared to other generations. Under these circumstances, if any family-related transnational movements were required, the older family members would be the best candidate designated by the family as the "mobile" family member to perform transnational duties. However, it should be noted that the "mobile" role those older family members might play is not just dependent upon their life stage as retired "free" men and women. It is also largely affected by the older family members' health status as well as the financial capacity of the families. Sound health permits their physical ability to take on frequent

long-distance international travel, while good finances provide them the economic capital to afford international travels.

Second, evidenced largely by those Chinese families whose older members haven't been granted New Zealand residence visa, our study shows that the seasonal parents/grandparent phenomenon could be most likely a coping strategy in response to the challenge of family separation to maintain family coherence. Under this scenario, the phenomenon of seasonal parents/grandparents is essentially a manifestation of the close-tied multigenerational relationship, and the family regime becomes the fundamental impetus in facilitating these seasonal parents/grandparents. By family regime, we refer to the micro-level institution within family structures formed under certain historical and socioeconomic contexts that regulates family daily routines and interpersonal relationships. Brought to light by the interviews, the major family regime of this immigrant group has been demonstrated being constituted of two major aspects: a traditional Chinese family value called filial piety and multifaceted care reciprocities among generations. Zhou is a first-generation new Chinese immigrant who came to New Zealand five years ago. She gave us some insights about the importance of filial piety in the relationship between her and her parents:

> *In Chinese families, if you only take the financial responsibility for your parents instead of living close to them, you will still be treated as a deviant against filial piety… Even if my parents don't mind, my other families still won't agree with me (living afar from her parents).*

As one of the most influential Confucian family values, filial piety defines a hierarchical relationship between parents and children in families (Dai & Dimond, 1998). It is a demonstration of normative intergenerational solidarity addressing younger generations' obligations towards

their older members within the Chinese culture. Under this relationship, the children are expected to act with complete obedience and unlimited responsibility towards their parents and sometimes also other family seniors, for example, the unconditioned response to the care needs of parents (Ho & Chiang, 2017). Evidently, reflected by the above comments from Zhou, as well as many other interviews from this research, filial piety still exists firmly in many new Chinese immigrant families. Particularly for those immigrant families who face possible family separations between the older and younger generations, filial piety acts as "moral glue" reinforcing multigenerational connections mostly through the care arrangement for the older family members.

Apart from filial piety, multifaceted care reciprocities are another pivotal aspect of the family regime facilitating those families' multigenerational relationships. First, similar to many other transnational families from a variety of cultural contexts, the conventional care exchange among generations still exists in those new Chinese immigrant families, such as grandparents take care of grandchildren and adult immigrants provide care for their older family members when their health deteriorates. By means of participating in these care exchange activities, shared life experiences among different generations increase accordingly, which further strengthens their multigenerational relationship. Second, another finding from our study is that the care reciprocity in these new Chinese immigrant families is taking place through a financial connection between the first-generation adult immigrants and their older parents. Zhang settled in New Zealand after she finished her master's degree education in Auckland seven years ago and she explained how a financial connection has reinforced her relationship with her parents:

> *My parents paid the down-payment for my house here…This situation also enhanced my relation with my parents, since they have already spent almost all of their savings on me…they will for sure expect me to take care of them. I mean, I think I have to now.*

Han, the 65-year-old from Shanghai (mentioned previously) also gave us some insights about this aspect:

> *I sold my property in Shanghai and used that money to help my son purchase his house here (New Zealand)…I think all Chinese parents will do the same like me…my son is my biggest investment in my life…now I am old, I will let him take care of me.*

The financial connection among transnational family members, commonly referred as remittance, is a well-researched field in transnational family studies (Zentgraf & Chinchilla, 2012). Oftentimes portraited as a vital component of family budgeting to maintain the livelihood of left-behind family members *in situ*, it has been mostly featured as the money-flow from the immigration host country to sending country and from the immigrants to left-behind family members (Parreñas, 2005). Nevertheless, compared to the commonly referred remittance, our research with this immigrant group identified a very different family remittance pattern with distinctive money-flow directions and functions. First, just like Zhang and Han explained from the above interviews, the direction of the remittance sending in those families is reversed, with flows from the immigration sending country (i.e. the PRC) to the hosting country (i.e. New Zealand) and from other family members (mainly as the older parents of adult immigrants) to the immigrants. Second, instead of being used as the family budget to maintain livelihood, this "reversed" remittance carries more profound implications between the sender and receivers. At first glance, it appears as a significant financial contribution from the older parents to their immigrant children's adaptation to the host society.

Nonetheless, as a result, it has also been proven as a paramount means used by the older parents to facilitate their relationship as well as negotiate their eldercare plans with their immigrant children. Notably, in this research, this scenario prevails in those families whose first-generation adult immigrants are the only child of their parents.

Last, the seasonal parents/grandparents are also adopted by many new Chinese immigrant families as a deliberate family arrangement in conformity with their shifting intergenerational dynamics, specifically the growing differences and changing interdependency among generations. Ma, a first-generational new Chinese immigrant explained to us:

> *I helped my parents get their residence visa long ago, but we just couldn't live together without fighting …they like nagging…Living like this, not only I feel unhappy, so are my parents. So, I think their seasonal travels between New Zealand and the PRC are the best arrangement. Once we got bored with each other, they could just go back to China for a break.*

Gao, a grandmother mentioned:

> *Living together with my children is challenging…we are so different...Most importantly, I lost my independence and personal space…So I think it is a good idea to keep (seasonal) traveling like this every year.*

As mentioned previously, the traditional way of organising Chinese families is to build up close-tied multigenerational families whose multi-generations could live under the same roof or at least within proximity to facilitate their frequent interactions and care exchange activities. Nevertheless, this is not always the case nowadays, especially for Chinese immigrant families like Ma and Gao's.

Evidently, changes among generations spark changes of their intergenerational dynamics, which further challenges the traditional way of family life. This situation is particularly notable in these transnational families where its members are more likely to be exposed to different social experiences. First, as the above interviews demonstrated, different life experiences such as education and migration experiences, enlarge intergenerational gaps in those Chinese families on various aspects, for instance, lifestyles and values. This scenario could effectively engender tensions among generations during their long-term cohabitation. Second, the up-lifted individual agency of this Chinese group, mainly through socioeconomic development, also alters interdependency among generations within their family structures. Compared to their counterparts in traditional Chinese families, older Chinese adults especially appear to rely less on their offspring on a daily basis, explicitly in material terms, due to their accelerated accessibility to various social services and networks. Therefore, when all factors are taken into account, becoming a seasonal parent/grandparent grows into a perfect solution to reconcile the potential tension generated from the long-term multigenerational cohabitation while still being able to maintain the emotional closeness with their offspring. At this point, the seasonal parents/grandparents experience becomes an adaptation against the changes of family dynamics.

Meso-Level: Push-Pull between Living Environments of Sending and Receiving Countries

The interviews also revealed that, at the meso-level, the living environments in both sending and receiving countries play a significant role in the formation of the seasonal parents/grandparents phenomenon. Following a push-pull logic, various impact factors from the natural, social and cultural environments in both New Zealand and the PRC come into play propelling the older members' seasonal movement across national borders.

First of all, our participants regularly mentioned that New Zealand's natural environment often acts as a vital attraction stimulating the older parents' willingness to stay in New Zealand. Indeed, the environment contributes to their consideration of New Zealand as a preferable retirement destination. Huang is a seasonal grandmother and cheerfully shared with us how her expectation to stay in New Zealand has been motivated by the natural environment despite not having her residence visa:

> *I can still remember the first day when I arrived (in New Zealand), everything is so fresh and bright here, the air, the water, the flower…Can you imagine the retired life here?*

Comments similar to Huang's were plentiful in our interviews, which is in strong contrast with most of their narratives of the counterpart – the natural environment in the PRC – that oftentimes were described as "polluted", "deteriorated" or "crowded". Chen, a seasonal grandfather told us:

> *The living environment in the PRC is really tough for our elderly…I have respiratory issues, but the clean air there is scarce resource, whereas, in New Zealand, it (clean air) is everywhere.*

While facing the challenge of living in the PRC due to the deteriorated natural environment, New Zealand's reputable living condition apparently becomes more attractive to these older adults. Living together with their offspring in New Zealand, either temporarily or permanently, is a reasonable choice given their consideration of health issues. At this point, the older members' seasonal stay in New Zealand could be understood as a consequence of the interaction between the

strong “push” from the PRC’s deteriorating natural environment and the “pulling” force from the New Zealand’s better-off habitable environment.

Despite the good natural environment, living in New Zealand is still not that easy for this group of older adults. They face numerous social and cultural challenges during their stay. Li, a new Chinese first-generation adult immigrant living in East Auckland, complained to us about his parents’ life in New Zealand:

> *To be honest, it is impossible for them (his parents) to integrate into the New Zealand society…they don't like the food here, neither go to church, let alone the language barrier…They also don’t know how to drive…They have to rely on us for everything.*

Zheng also shared the similar life experience of her mother with us:

> *It is fine for her to stay here (in New Zealand) for a short period of time. If it is too long, she will definitely feel isolated and bored…Every time when we are busy with work, she just stays alone at home like sitting in prison.*

The language barrier, cultural gap and lifestyle difference are the three major challenges faced by many older adults of new Chinese immigrant families during their stay in New Zealand. This finding draws a parallel with other migration literature addressing older immigrants’ difficulties in adjusting to new societies (Wong et al., 2006). Those challenges, in the words of our participants, are almost “impossible” to mitigate by the older members themselves given their declined ability and motivation to learn new skills as well as to adopt to new environments at their late life stage. This situation, on the one hand, gradually builds up the older adults’ sense of helplessness, loneliness or even depression through daily frustrating encounters. On the other, it

also puts the older adults' individual agency in jeopardy within their family system due to their raised dependency on their adult immigrant children on a daily base.

Additionally, to those older adults who haven't been granted a residence visa, being institutionally excluded from the New Zealand medical care system is another difficulty. Zhu's experience about her father's last visit in New Zealand illustrates this point:

> *Last time when my father got sick in New Zealand, we had to fill a lot of documents for him in the clinic, about his personal information and previous health condition…Also, it was so expensive as he has no residence visa. We had to pay extra fees to cover the appointment with the doctor and medicine.*

As a welfare state, New Zealand provides universal medical care to its residents, including citizens and foreign passport holders with residence visas, but those holding Parent and Grandparent Visitor Visas are automatically excluded. This scenario could result in serious inconvenience and stress (e.g. the sense of insecurity) to the immigrant families if the older adults fall ill during their stay in New Zealand, as demonstrated by Zhu and her father's encounter, because they have to face more complicated admission processes and substantial medical costs.

At this point, the social and cultural challenges embedded in the living environment in New Zealand play a "push" role driving these older adults away. Contrarily, the familiar sociocultural environment, lifestyle and accessibility to social services back in the PRC begin to cultivate their desire to return, whereby their seasonal transnational movement towards the PRC gets reinforced. This aspect is highly pertinent to the discourse explaining the rising transnationalism among contemporary immigrant groups that the increasing transnational movement has been utilised by

immigrants as an adaptive strategy coping with social, cultural and institutional incorporation challenges in immigration destinations (Faist, 2000).

On the whole, the meso-level living environment traversing natural, social and cultural aspects across New Zealand and the PRC have been demonstrated to actively construct a dynamic system propelling these older adults' border-crossing movements. Under this system, becoming a seasonal parent/grandparent emerges as a result of the cost-benefit calculation on both the individual and collective wellbeing in these immigrant families.

Introducing an Analysis Framework Studying Transnational Family Experiences

As can be seen, the formation of transnational family experiences is rather intricate; we could regard it as the consequence of interactions among myriad impact factors. Based on the empirical study, here we introduce an analysis framework aiming to facilitate future investigations of transnational family experiences (see Figure 1). This framework presents an inclusive paradigm that can effectively identify multilevel impact factors (i.e. micro, meso and macro) behind diverse transnational family experiences. It also highlights the interactivity of these factors and the spatial and temporal dimensions of transnational family lives.

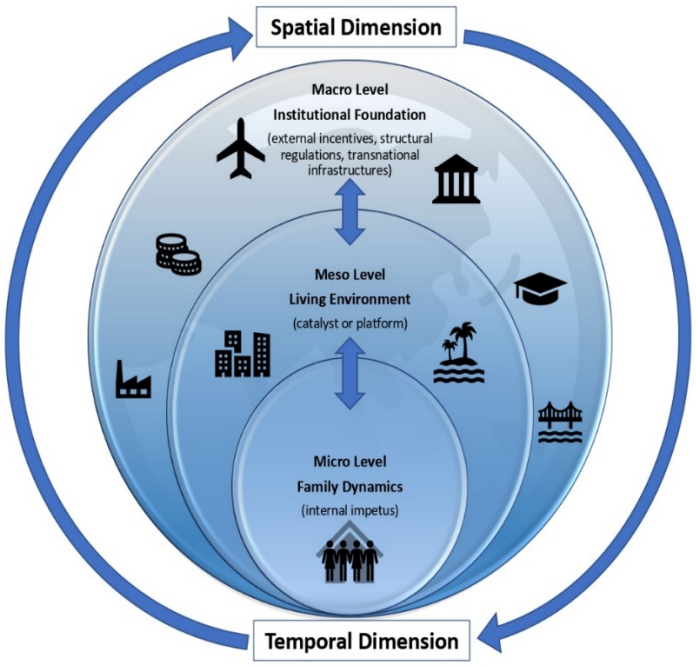

Figure 1: The Formation of Transnational Family Experiences

At the macro-level, many impact factors in relation to the broad social, political and cultural contexts of sending and receiving countries play crucial roles in constructing institutional-level foundations for the formation of transnational family experiences. These institutional-level foundations include external incentives (e.g. socioeconomic development opportunities), structural regulations (e.g. immigration policies), as well as transnational infrastructures (e.g. international transportation). The unbalanced socioeconomic development between the sending and receiving societies provides structural incentives driving families to adopt transnational strategy in search of individual and familial wellbeing. Those incentives encompass not only better job opportunities and incomes (Lima, 2001), but also more recently the growing trend of pursuing personal lifestyles (Liu, 2018). Global immigration policy contributes to the formation of transnational family experiences through regulating the mobility pattern of transnational family members (Wyss & Nedelcu, 2019). New Zealand immigration policy effectively engineers the

older family members of new Chinese immigrant families towards recurring transnational movement. It achieves this by providing them easy access to the short-term family visitor visa while confining their ability to approach long-term residence in New Zealand. New forms of transportation and communication introduced critical transnational infrastructure which has profoundly shaped transnational family experiences. This is because those developments could provide a multitude of direct and indirect interactions among family members to adequately manage family relationships and issues from afar (Bryceson, 2019).

At the micro-level, the dynamics within transnational families, including the characteristics of individual family members (e.g. life-stage and socio-economic status) and their intergenerational and interpersonal relationships, provide internal impetuses for the formation of diverse transnational family experiences. Those factors interact among family members across generations and determine why and how the family should incorporate with transnational regimes to maximise individual and family wellbeing. This has been evidenced by the case of seasonal parents/grandparents, where different life stages of various family members define who moves and who stays; the intergenerational relationship governs why and how family members move transnationally.

The meso-level living environment across sending and receiving contexts is also indispensable to understanding transnational family experiences. At this level, macro-level institutions, such as, cultural and social propensities in the host society, encounter micro-level individual agencies, for instance, the immigrant's ability to integrate into the new society. The consequences of those encounters, either clashed or incorporated, put forward extensive influences on transnational family experiences. As the case of seasonal parents/grandparents has shown, the hardship of

integrating into New Zealand society for many older Chinese and their demands for close-tie family life with other family members in New Zealand encourages their routinised transnational movements. Therefore, in this proposed analysis framework, we interpret the meso-level living environment as a mid-range platform that accommodates and facilitates interactions between the macro-level institutions across sending and receiving contexts and the micro-level internal family dynamics.

Apart from using the above scales to trace the impact factors behind the formation of transnational family experiences, this proposed analysis framework further underlines the interactivities among those factors. Ontologically, these interactivities are the interplays among individual agencies and social structures at various levels across transnational social spaces. Epistemologically, we consider those interactivities as the manifestation of cost-benefit calculations towards the subjective family wellbeing. In general, the smoother these interactions among the varying impact factors are, the fewer challenges that those transnational families are facing. In the case of seasonal parents/grandparents, this dimension has been largely exemplified firstly by the restrictive New Zealand family immigration policy against the demand for close-tied multigenerational family arrangement; and secondly by the human agency interactions among family members in these new Chinese immigrant families.

This analysis framework also highlights the spatial and temporal dimensions alongside transnational family arrangement. These two dimensions work throughout the micro-, meso- and macro-level impact factors, and contribute significantly to the uniqueness and dynamism of transnational family life. Spatially, the geographic distance among family members diversifies the way of traditional family life whereby the interdependency among family members is exercised

through collective conduct of life on a daily base within proximity. Even though family structures and relationships change all the time, apace with the process of broad socioeconomic developments (Mayer et al., 2012), this transnational family lifestyle has been fueling these family changes to a new height at various terrains, such as interpersonal relationships and daily family routines. In our case with these new Chinese immigrant families, the spatial dimension demonstrated vital influences on the formation of the older member's seasonal movement as well as their intimate relationship with their descendants.

Temporally, changes over time, including but not limited to changes of family life cycle and immigration policy regime, alter transnational family experiences by constantly redefining internal dynamics and external contexts of transnational families. It turns the experience of transnational families into a more dynamic process which encompasses ongoing adjustments of family strategies to suit family members within different life stages. For example, our empirical data shows that the changing health condition of the older family members and evolvement of New Zealand family immigration policy over time exert critical influences on either inhibiting or facilitating the older members' frequent transnational movement.

Conclusion

This paper builds on a study of seasonal parents/grandparents among new Chinese immigrant families in New Zealand to develop an analysis framework to guide future investigations of the factors shaping diverse transnational family experiences.

Empirically, the paper enriches the literature of transnational family studies by illuminating the very specific and routinised transnational movements of older immigrant family members. This

transnational family experience emerges from the time when the rising transnationalism of contemporary international migration encounters the drastic changes of their family dynamics (De Silva, 2017). By exploring the multilevel impact factors behind the formation of transnational families, this study also brings to light the intricate interactions among different individual agencies within family settings, as well as, between individual agencies and wide ranges of social structures (e.g. family, community and nation-state) during the process of transnational family making.

Theoretically, the proposed analysis framework puts forward a dialectical paradigm reasoning transnational family experiences. It specifies the impact factors at three levels: macro-level institutional foundations, meso-level living environments and micro-level family dynamics. It also demonstrates the different functions of impact factors at each level in constructing transnational family lives. More specifically, the macro-level is proposed as the major guiding institution and infrastructure; the meso-level is defined as the catalyst or platform for the interaction between the macro- and micro-level rationales; and the micro-level is regarded as the internal impetus within transnational families. Moreover, this analysis framework does not look into these factors separately; it brings a holistic perspective within and across levels to produce family-specific circumstances. Additionally, it also pays special attention to the geographic space and time related impacts on transnational families, which further promotes the uniqueness and dynamism of transnational family experiences.

Ager and Strang (2008) argue that the major challenge of developing any analysis framework to study social phenomena/issues is whether the framework can sufficiently accommodate “the diversity of assumptions and values of different settings while retaining some conceptual

coherence" (p. 185). Hence, we acknowledge that this analysis framework might carry inherent limitations as its development is largely based on merely the case of new Chinese immigrant families in New Zealand, which is just a snapshot of the worldwide transnational migration phenomenon. Nevertheless, by proposing this heuristic analysis framework, we seek to better understand the formation of transnational family experiences. It will hopefully also raise awareness to probe rationales behind diverse transnational family experiences in future transnational family studies.

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Chapter Six

Reverse Family Remittances

Statement of Contribution Doctorate With Publications/Manuscripts

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MASSEY UNIVERSITY
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UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND

GRADUATE RESEARCH SCHOOL

STATEMENT OF CONTRIBUTION
DOCTORATE WITH PUBLICATIONS/MANUSCRIPTS

We, the candidate and the candidate's Primary Supervisor, certify that all co-authors have consented to their work being included in the thesis and they have accepted the candidate's contribution as indicated below in the *Statement of Originality*.

Name of candidate:	Guanyu Ran
Name/title of Primary Supervisor:	Professor Michael Belgrave
In which chapter is the manuscript /published work:	Chapter Six

Please select one of the following three options:

○ The manuscript/published work is published or in press

- Please provide the full reference of the Research Output:

◉ The manuscript is currently under review for publication – please indicate:

- The name of the journal:
Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies

- The percentage of the manuscript/published work that was contributed by the candidate: 80%

- Describe the contribution that the candidate has made to the manuscript/published work:
The candidate undertook the major research on which the manuscript is based, including the fieldwork, literature review, data analysis and manuscript writing.

○ It is intended that the manuscript will be published, but it has not yet been submitted to a journal

Candidate's Signature:	Guanyu Ran
Date:	16/11/2020
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Date:	16/11/2020

This form should appear at the end of each thesis chapter/section/appendix submitted as a manuscript/

Abstract

Transnational family remittance normally indicates the transfer of money from immigrants to their left-behind families in the country of origin. However, a significant remittance pattern in many new Chinese immigrant families in New Zealand demonstrates a reverse money-flow, whereby family remittances are largely from older parents to their immigrant descendants living in the host-society. This paper explores the phenomenon of reverse remittance by demonstrating how socioculturally embedded intergenerational dynamics mediate the practice of remittance-sending in new Chinese immigrant families in New Zealand. It reveals that families' financial statuses and intergenerational relations play a vital role in shaping the formation of reverse remittance practices. Four major patterns of reverse remittance are identified: the medium of the gift, financial support, pooling financial resources for collective family life, and investment; each of which carries distinctive material, cultural, and relational implications. This study broadens the debate on how family remittances form socially and culturally and further reinforces the reciprocal feature of transnational family relations across generations in the age of globalisation.

Introduction

Family remittance is one of the most researched subjects in transnational family studies, particularly when investigating the impact of transnational migration towards the economic wellbeing of immigration-sending communities (Taylor, 1999). Under this focus, family remittances are widely considered a unidirectional money transfer from immigrants to their left-behind families to service family-related expenses (Carling, 2014; Singh et al., 2012). This pattern of money transfer within transnational families perfectly suits the assumption made by the 'new economics of labour migration' that the very reason for and successful consequence of

immigration is the accumulation of family surplus (Stark, 1978). Remittances generated by the immigrant family members are a major vehicle for this surplus accumulation and are a vital function in coping with insufficient household income as well as facilitating the broader economic development of sending countries (Taylor, 1999; Mobrand, 2012). According to the World Bank (2019b), the remittances that immigrants sent to their families in low- and middle-income countries reached a record $529 billion in 2018 and was on track to reach $550 billion by 2019. Remittances make up a significant part of the world economy; it is currently about the same level as the worldwide Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and more than three times larger than the global Official Development Assistance (ODA) (World Bank, 2019a).

In addition to these significant monetary transfers from immigrants to their families at home, a growing body of transnational family literature also investigates the increasing flows of resources from left-behind families to immigrants in immigration destinations (Marsters et al., 2006; Mazzucato, 2011). These reverse flows of resources are broadly defined by migration scholars as reverse remittances and comprise various forms, including money, food, clothing, or even services rendered by left-behind family members (Mazzucato, 2011; Yeboah et al., 2019). Even though the presence and the impact of reverse remittances are not yet as significant as conventional remittances, the growing scholarly explorations of reverse remittances have advanced the understanding of how family networks function in the context of transnational migration as well as how transnational families allocate/relocate family resources in the age of globalisation (Marsters et al., 2006; Mazzucato, 2011; Yeboah et al., 2019).

This paper is based on a larger research project conducted by the authors investigating the multigenerational dynamics of new Chinese immigrant families from the People's Republic of

China (PRC) in New Zealand. This project found that many new Chinese immigrant families living in New Zealand also practised reverse remittance wherein the left-behind older parents in the PRC play a critical role as a financial source, sending remittances to their immigrant descendants in New Zealand. However, compared with many other documented reverse remittances, their reverse remittance practices carry notable differences in two major aspects. First, instead of covering various forms of resource flows, the reverse remittance practices of these Chinese immigrant families are predominantly in the form of monetary transfer within the boundary of family. Second, compared with many documented monetary forms of reverse remittances which typically occur only during the family members' initial immigration period to cover their immigration costs, such as paying immigration brokers, flight tickets, immigration documentation, and initial accommodation expenses in the host society (Yeboah et al., 2019), the monetary reverse remittance practices of the new Chinese immigrant families in New Zealand were stretched from the initial immigration period to the post immigration period. Post immigration period here refers to the stage after immigrant family members have acquired legal long-term residence or citizenship in the host society.

Drawing on the remittance practice of new Chinese immigrant families in New Zealand, this paper explores how reverse family remittances are formed socially and culturally and further interact with the domestic dynamics of transnational families. While the growing literature on reverse remittance redefines transnational family remittances from a one-way resource flow from immigrants to their left-behind families into a bidirectional resource flow between them (Mazzucato, 2011; Yeboah et al., 2019), this paper contributes to the emerging body of literature on reverse remittances in transnational family studies by highlighting new emergent

intergenerational dynamics and revealing the extent to which these dynamics shape family money transfers across national borders.

In the following sections, we first review literature pertinent to transnational family remittance practices, and reverse remittance in particular, to establish a theoretical and conceptual foundation for this paper. The second and third sections provide background information on the new Chinese immigrants living in New Zealand and outline the overall research design and data collection process, respectively. The fourth section comprises the results of our empirical research and reports on the shared characteristics of families who practice reverse remittance and presents analysis of the different patterns of reverse remittance that occur under different family dynamics and conditions. The paper concludes with discussions and reflections on how this research could contribute to future understanding of the relationship between remittance practices and socioculturally informed intergenerational dynamics within transnational families.

Reverse Remittance: An Emerging Body of Scholarship in Transnational Family Studies

Transnational family studies have long used an economic-centric approach to examine remittances and assess the direct impact that immigrants' practices have on their families at home (Schans, 2009; Haagsman & Mazzucato, 2014). This approach often measures remittances in a quantitative manner and regards them as a vital external financial source of income that can enhance the welfare of households in immigration-sending communities (Taylor, 1999; Urama et al., 2019). This approach normally conceptualises the immigrant members of transnational families as major remittance senders and places them at the centre of the investigations; whereas the left-behind

families are often portrayed as passive recipients and major beneficiaries within family remittance relations (Schans, 2009; Abrego, 2009).

Nevertheless, in recent decades, more ethnographic and qualitative research has started to emerge in family remittance studies (Carling, 2014). Instead of using quantitative methods to account for the financial significance of family remittances, a qualitative, ethnographic approach often adopts immersive observations of family members and extensive face-to-face interactions and open interviews with remittance senders and recipients to generate a much more nuanced understanding of family remittances and the meaning such practices have for senders and receivers (Carling, 2014). This approach conceptualises family remittances as not just a monetary transfer from immigrants to their families to serve family needs, but also, as a critical social transaction within family structures consisting of material, emotional, and relational elements (Carling, 2014).

While this changing landscape of research enables a more in-depth exploration of family remittance, including how family remittances generate and sustain under different family dynamics, it also brings more scholarly attention to the left-behind families who are traditionally not the core of remittance investigations. This has been evidenced by an emerging body of literature where the ‘left-behind family members’ are considered a critical component of family remittance relations (Marsters et al., 2006; Mazzucato, 2011; Mobrand, 2012; Yeboah et al., 2019).

The reverse remittance discussed in this emerging body of literature goes beyond the traditional definition of remittance as monetary transfer across national borders. It includes both tangible financial and material resources (e.g. money, clothing, food, indigenous medicinal products), as well as intangible services rendered by left-behind families on behalf of immigrants, such as the

time and labour, contributed to their immigrant family members (e.g. taking care of immigrants' children and property in home countries) (Mazzucato, 2011; Yeboah et al., 2019).

Evidence from prior research suggests that reverse remittances exist actively in many transnational families, but its scale and significance to transnational families remains difficult to gauge for a few reasons. First, many of these reverse remittances are manifested through non-monetary forms, which make them hard to measure numerically. Second, even though some remittances are in a monetary form, they often happen through informal remittance channels that are impossible to be accurately traced, such as underground banking or direct hand-to-hand transfer from families to immigrants (Cai, 2017). Last, the scholarly attention towards adequately investigating reverse remittance practices remains limited due to its undue focus on conventional remittance practices (Mazzucato, 2011; Yeboah et al., 2019).

However, the scant emerging literature demonstrates that reverse remittances do play a vital role in facilitating the wellbeing of immigrants in host societies (Mazzucato, 2011). Essentially, reverse remittances represent a process of resource (re)allocation within transnational families that reflects as well as reproduces reciprocal family ties (Mobrand, 2012). It happens under various family scenarios reflecting distinctive family dynamics embedded within a wide range of socioeconomic and cultural contexts (Marsters et al., 2006; Yeboah et al., 2019). For instance, when family members' immigration is initiated as a product of the prevailing pattern of livelihood diversification, reverse remittances are most likely generated as initial investment or ongoing requitals to sustain the family's livelihood diversification strategy (Yeboah et al., 2019). Yet, reverse remittances also serve an altruistic purpose, reflecting an aspect of family relations that

indicate the care and love from left-behind families to their immigrant members in host societies (Marsters et al., 2006).

Although the economic scale and impact of reverse remittances are less than the conventional remittances sent by immigrants to their families, studying reverse remittances carries profound implications for the understanding of transnational family dynamics in an increasingly globalised world. First, the recognition of reverse remittances broadens the concept of family remittance from a one-way monetary transfer to a bidirectional flow of resources. This conceptual refinement to a great extent illuminates the strong reciprocity and resilience of family relationships across generations even under transnational family separations. Second, being able to acknowledge the significance of reverse remittances in transnational familyhood also brings certain attention to left-behind families and further transforms the traditional definition of left-behind families as passive actors within family remittance relations (Yeboah et al., 2019). Last but not least, through the window of reverse remittance, a more comprehensive understanding of transnational family dynamics related to cross-generational expectations, commitments, and priorities can be teased out.

New Chinese Immigrants in New Zealand: A Demographic Profile

In the New Zealand context, ‘new Chinese immigrants’ often refers to those Chinese who arrived in New Zealand after the enforcement of the New Zealand’s “open-door” immigration policy in 1987, including those from the PRC (Liu, 2018; Ran & Liu 2020). This research only focuses on new Chinese immigrants from the PRC. After three decades of immigration, new Chinese immigrants from the PRC make up a significant part of New Zealand’s ethnic Chinese population as well as the total population: the most recent national Census shows that in 2018, 132,906 New

Zealand residents were born in the PRC, which makes up 53.39% of the total ethnic Chinese population (248,919) and 2.83% of the total population in New Zealand (4,699,755) (Stats NZ, 2019).

The prominent presence of new Chinese immigrants is attributed to the significant social, political, and economic developments in both the PRC as the sending-country and New Zealand as the receiving-country. On the one hand, the PRC's economic reform and "open-door" policies starting from the early 1980s, changing political ideology, and relaxation of the restriction towards its citizens' international movement made it possible for many Chinese to immigrate to foreign countries (Xiang, 2003). On the other hand, in addition to the introduction of an "open-door" immigration policy in 1987 that enabled New Zealand to absorb worldwide immigrants, the continuous social and economic developments in New Zealand society also proactively channelled skilled and business immigrants from the wider Asian-Pacific region, including immigrants from the PRC (Trlin, 1992).

As New Zealand's second-largest immigrant group, the diverse immigration pathway of these new Chinese immigrants indicates their distinctive demographic and cultural characteristics. Firstly, this group of Chinese immigrants carries a strong economic and skill profile. According to Immigration New Zealand (INZ) (2019), of the total 132,846 residence approvals for PRC immigrants in New Zealand from 1997/1998 to 2018/2019, 39.97% (53,096) were granted under the skilled immigrant category with 11.81% (15,690) under the business category. Secondly, a cross-generational family connection, in particular the connection between the first-generation adult immigrants and their older parents, remains strong within this immigrant group. This can be evidenced by the INZ's (2019) data which demonstrates that the PRC carries the largest number

of residence approvals under the parent category of family sponsorship (28,820) compared to any other New Zealand immigration sources. It constitutes 21.69% of its total immigrant population as well as 42.32% of the total parent residence approvals of the top 10 New Zealand immigration source countries (Immigration New Zealand, 2019).

The new Chinese immigrant group's strong economic and family relational profile can also manifest through its transnational financial practices, as indicated in a large-scale online survey conducted from December 2008 to July 2009 appraising the transnationalism of the PRC immigrants living in New Zealand. Survey results show that among the PRC respondents who practised transnational financial transfers (n=219), 84% of them had engaged in a transfer where money flows mainly from the PRC to New Zealand (Liu, 2015). In addition, these PRC-to-New Zealand money transfers were principally sent by family members left behind in the PRC to their immigrant family members in New Zealand for family-related costs or investments, such as compensating living costs and purchasing family properties (Liu, 2015). Liu (2015) argues that this remittance pattern reflects the middle-class status of many new PRC immigrants in New Zealand and their families. These patterns contrast with many other immigrant groups in the New Zealand context, whose remittance practices are still largely about sending money back to their original countries (Devlin, 2015). Although Liu's (2015) work identified new patterns of remittance among Chinese immigrants, the motivations and dynamics of families that shape these reverse remittances remain unclear.

Although there is still not any particular data that could further illuminate the PRC immigrants' reverse remittance practice in New Zealand except the above survey, the latest immigration remittance data from the World Bank (2019b) could shed light on this rising trend with worldwide

PRC immigrants. While the inflow of immigration-related remittance to the PRC reached US$ 70.266 billion in 2019 (0.49% of its GDP 2019), the outflow of its immigration-related remittance also reached a new height of US$ 16.548 billion (0.12% of its GDP 2019) (World Bank, 2019b). Simply put, nowadays, the PRC immigrants are actively involved with remittance sending both in and out of the PRC.

Methodology

The data presented in this paper is informed by a larger research project conducted by the authors investigating the multigenerational dynamics of new Chinese immigrant families in New Zealand under a transnational context (from 2017 to 2020). Embedded within a multigenerational focus, multi-sited in-depth interviews were conducted with 45 participants across different generations from different new Chinese immigrant families in New Zealand and the PRC. The participants included 16 first-generation adult immigrants, 17 older parents of adult immigrants, and 12 children of adult immigrants. Purposive sampling was carried out based on existing social networks within the New Zealand Chinese community of the two authors, after which, the snowballing technique was applied to reach more participants. Six interviews were conducted in the PRC (two in Chongqing, two in Shanghai, one in Chengdu, and one in Xi'an) with the remaining 39 interviews carried out in Auckland, the city that accommodates the largest Chinese population in New Zealand (Auckland Council, 2017).

Interviews were conducted in locations of each participant's choice (e.g. their home, café, or other public spaces like libraries and parks) and were between one and two hours long. At the participant's preference, most interviews with first-generation adult immigrants and the older parents were conducted in Mandarin, while interviews with the children of immigrants (i.e. 1.5

and second generations) were in English. Topics discussed in the interviews included the participant's life trajectories, immigration and settlement experiences, and family relationship and maintenance before and after immigration. The data on reverse remittances presented in this paper is largely based on participants' responses to a few particular questions from the interviews related to 1) family property ownership; 2) individual income sources; 3) intergenerational relations and support; 4) eldercare plans for older family members; and 5) future family plans across generations. All the interviews were audio-recorded and later transcribed for thematic analysis using NVivo 12 software. All the names used in the following analysis are pseudonyms.

Shared Family Characteristics

Among the 45 participants, 35 of them (14 first-generation adult immigrants, 15 older parents of adult immigrants, and six children of adult immigrants) reported that monetary reverse remittances exist in their families. By analysing their families' socioeconomic profiles, this study reveals a number of shared characteristics, which can shed light on what contributes to their reverse remittance practices.

First, most of these participants' families appeared to be financially comfortable, especially the older family members. Although this research did not specifically gather information on the participant's family's financial status, the qualitative data from the interviews suggests strongly that the majority of these families occupy a middle-class or even higher economic status. This is largely manifested through not only their living conditions (e.g. very common home-ownership in the urban area – 34 out of the 35 participants living in the household owned by themselves or their immediate family members) but also their everyday life experiences (e.g. reportedly stable sources of income and financial support and affluent lifestyles, such as participating in frequent domestic

and international recreational travels). Most participants who were older parents of first-generation adult immigrants indicated that besides owning properties in the PRC, they also have considerable savings in the bank and sufficient government pensions for their daily lives. These verbal reports from participants largely echoed the finding from Liu's (2015) online survey discussed above that confirmed the pervasive middle-class status of many new PRC immigrant families in New Zealand.

Second, among the 35 families with reverse remittance experiences, 28 families' first-generation adult immigrants are the only-child of their parents. The PRC's one-child policy was implemented in 1979 in response to its overgrown population (Tu, 2019). Under this policy, married couples in the PRC were only allowed to have one child with the exception of some families from rural areas or ethnic minority groups (Tu, 2019). Even though it has been recently replaced by a 'two-children' policy (all couples who were previously allowed to have only one child now can have at most two children instead) from October 2015, this population policy has resulted in more than 150 million only-children in the PRC, which constitutes more than 7.6% of its total population (Tu, 2019). Many of the PRC first-generation adult immigrants in New Zealand are from this particular demographic cohort (Liu, 2018; Ran & Liu, 2020).

Third, all the first-generation adult immigrants of these families have already settled in New Zealand instead of taking New Zealand as a temporary immigration destination. By settling in New Zealand, here we imply three-fold meanings. First of all, it suggests that all of them have already achieved New Zealand long-term residence visas or citizenship. Second, most of them have already started their own nuclear families in New Zealand marked by important life courses, such as marriage and childrearing. Third, most of them have finished the transition from tertiary

education students to professionals working in a wide range of industries in New Zealand's mainstream society, for instance, banks, pharmaceutical companies, and government and non-government organisations.

Taking into account these families' shared characteristics under the Chinese family culture context, it would seem that these PRC immigrant families' financial status and socioculturally informed intergenerational relations play a vital role in shaping the formation of their reverse remittance practices. First, their comfortable family financial status, particularly the financial status of the older family members, laid the economic foundation for their reverse remittance sending pattern. Second, the intergenerational relation of these families influenced by traditional Chinese family culture promotes their reverse remittance practices after the adult children immigrate to New Zealand. In many new PRC immigrant families, a close-tied multigenerational relation still determines their family relationship and living arrangement (Ran, 2020; Ran & Liu, 2020). Within this family dynamic, the adult immigrant children commonly become the backbone of the extended family structure when the parents get older, not only financially but also practically in that the younger generation would most likely take primary responsibility for the provision of care to their older parents (Liu, 2018; Ran & Liu, 2020). Nonetheless, the immigration of the adult children to New Zealand to a large extent indicates the shift of the family backbone and accordingly the family gravitate to New Zealand, particularly with those families whose adult children are the only-child of their older parents. Therefore, the reverse remittances that lead the family money to flow towards the new family centre which becomes a rather logical family financial practice, especially when the backbones of those families (i.e. the younger adult generation) are in great financial demand for building up their foothold in New Zealand as new immigrants.

Major Patterns of Reverse Remittances

This section addresses the different social and relational implications that these reverse remittances carry under different family dynamics in these PRC immigrant families. In general, there are four major patterns of reverse remittances under different family dynamics, namely, 1) medium of the gift, 2) financial support, 3) pooling financial resources for collective family life, and 4) investment. Each pattern of reverse remittances indicates distinctive functions, meanings, and expectations within different families. While some happen under a reciprocal context among family members across generations, others demonstrate more altruistic considerations or are self-interested in orientation. Although we present these categories here as discreet patterns, there are numerous overlaps between them and participants engaged in practices at different times in their lives.

Medium of the Gift

Money has been long used as a preferred medium of gift-giving in many Asian cultures, especially for critical life events, such as weddings, giving birth, graduations, and birthdays (Singh, 2007). When money is gifted in family contexts, such gifts go beyond their financial significance and bear subtle social and relational implications. For instance, the amount of money gifted could mirror the closeness of the relationship among family members as well as the financial condition of the household (Singh et al., 2012). Our interviews showed that for many new PRC immigrant families in New Zealand, reverse remittances are very commonly sent as monetary gifts. Lin is a second-generation Chinese immigrant living in the Auckland region who told us:

Every year, my grandparents send me money as the gift for different scenarios, like my birthday or Chinese New Year. It is not very much every time, like a few hundred dollars… To be honest, we are not that close since we live apart from each other for most of our lives. But I really appreciate them doing this all the time, and it makes me feel like at least they still love me as part of their family.

Many first-generation adult immigrants in these PRC families also shared similar experiences. Yang immigrated to New Zealand four years ago as a skilled immigrant. Even though she has a full-time job with a very well-paid salary, she said that her parents back in the PRC still kept sending her money as a gift:

Until now, although I am totally independent and able to take care of myself and my own small family, my parents still give me money (as a gift) from time to time, for example, when they come to visit us in New Zealand, or when we go back to China to visit them… I think many Chinese immigrants' parents are all like this, to them, giving us money is a way to express their love…Actually, believe or not, I think if I refuse to take the money, my parents will definitely feel offended and unhappy for some reasons.

Sent either regularly (e.g. birthday and festival gifts) or occasionally (e.g. when visiting each other), money played a vital role in signifying the care and love of older family members towards their immigrant descendants. As indicated by Lin, even though the transnational separation between him and his grandparents has estranged their relationship, the gifted money from his grandparents constantly reminded Lin that his grandparents would always treat him as inseparable family members and love him. At this point, this pattern of reverse remittance functions very similarly to many other transnational family interactions, such as visiting, mailing, or phone calls,

in that it stimulates the emotional attachment among family members to help sustain family relationships across generations and national borders (Carling, 2014).

This kind of reverse remittances can also be regarded as a financialised gesture that reflects intimate relationships between senders and receivers (Cliggett, 2003; Singh et al., 2012), particularly for many separated transnational family members who constantly face challenges to maintain the closeness with other family members. This is perhaps reflected in Yang's declaration that if she refuses to take the monetary gift from her parents, they would most likely feel "offended and unhappy". To some extent, her potential refusal could easily be misunderstood by her parents as a rejection of their desire to sustain a close parent-child relationship in a transnational family setting.

Reverse remittances in the form of a monetary gift are sent by many new PRC immigrant families to demonstrate care from older family members to their immigrant descendants. It plays a major role in facilitating their interactions and accordingly promotes their intergenerational relationships while facing transnational separations. This type of reverse remittance is not primarily based on the needs of receivers (i.e. immigrant descendants) but rather the goodwill and desire of senders (i.e. older parents). Therefore, its social value outweighs its financial significance in these transnational families.

Financial Support

Family remittances from immigration-receiving to -sending societies have been consistently regarded as important financial support to the livelihood and wellbeing of transnational families, especially for the left-behind family members in the country of origin (World Bank, 2019). Our

case with new PRC immigrant families in New Zealand attests equally to the value of reverse family remittances. Nevertheless, the major beneficiaries of reverse remittances are the immigrant family members. The financial challenge of establishing a new life in the host society (i.e. New Zealand) is the primary reason triggering reverse remittances. Han is a 65-year-old woman from Shanghai. In order to support her only son who immigrated to New Zealand a few years ago, she sold one of her properties and sent him the proceeds to help him purchase a house in Auckland. She offered us these insights:

> *I know how difficult it is for my son to start a new life in a foreign county (New Zealand)…He works so hard, but his salary is just enough to cover his family's daily cost, not even mentioning they have a child now, which will cost much more than before…Since we live apart from each other most of the time, I think sending money to him maybe the best way to help…Now he bought a house in New Zealand (by using her financial support), so he can focus more on his career and family…I think most Chinese parents will do the same as me…especially for the only-child.*

Apart from older parents like Han, Zhang, a first-generation immigrant who settled in New Zealand seven years ago after finishing her Master's degree education in Auckland, also talked about the financial support she received from her family back in the PRC:

> *My parents paid the down payment for my house here… A lot of Kiwis don't understand why many Chinese immigrants here (New Zealand) can afford these expensive houses…I try to explain to them that this is because we get the financial support from our parents, some even from grandparents…Maybe because most of us (new PRC immigrants) are the only-children of our parents, so our parents' money will eventually become ours I*

suppose?…As a new immigrant, without their financial support, you probably cannot imagine how long it will take you to find your foothold here (New Zealand).”

Juxtaposing the experiences of Han and Zhang, it is evident that the reverse remittances in their families are essentially intergenerational support from parents to their adult immigrant children. Because of their constant transnational separations, money has been adopted as the most appropriate and effective means to deliver help across national borders.

While a family’s financial capacity to offer support is important, there are also other familial dynamics at work. The conversations with Han and Zhang also revealed that financial help is largely attributed to a strong sense of obligation from older parents towards their adult immigrant children and this is accompanied by a strong sense of entitlement by adult immigrant children.

From the perspective of older parents, the privation faced by many of their adult immigrant children in New Zealand greatly strengthens their sense of obligation to offer the necessary help. On the one hand, this strengthened sense of obligation could be easily understood through the lens of generativity, a concept coined by psychoanalyst Erikson (1950) to denote the concern and action taken by middle-aged parents to guide and establish their next generations. Within this theoretical point of view, parents may proactively perceive themselves as family providers rather than receivers and act accordingly towards younger generations (Slater, 2003; Cheng et al., 2015). On the other hand, culturally, their strong sense of obligation towards their children, even after their children have all become independent adults, could also be related to the prevailing pattern of the Chinese family doctrine – guan 管 (Chao, 1994; Tu, 2019). Literally, guan indicates a hierarchical and moral relationship between parents and children (Chao, 1994). Under this relationship, parents

are supposed to ‘govern’ their children and further be responsible for their children’s behaviours and wellbeing (Tu, 2019). In our New Zealand case, when adult PRC immigrant children face settlement challenges, parents are more likely to follow the moral imperative derived from guan and put themselves into the position of alleviating those challenges. This aspect could be easily detected from the conversation with Han, where she has demonstrated her deeply internalised responsibility towards helping her son cope with financial challenges even after he settled in New Zealand. What’s more, she even regarded that “most Chinese parents will do the same” when their children are in need of help under similar circumstances.

From the perspective of adult immigrant children, their sense of entitlement to ask for help from their parents, especially financial help, also plays a critical role in precipitating this transnational family financial support in many new PRC immigrant families. As mentioned previously, our research found that most of the families with reverse remittance practices are actually those whose first-generation adult immigrants are the only-child of their parents. Compared with families with more than one child, the parent-child relationships in one-child families are normally closer (Tu, 2019). This degree of closeness then becomes a contributing factor to the PRC adult immigrants’ sense of entitlement to their parents’ financial help, simply because they are the sole beneficiary of their parent’s wealth. This pattern of child-parent relationship was echoed by the family experiences of many other participants of this research.

Sending reverse remittances as financial support in many PRC immigrant families in New Zealand is mainly attributed to both the parents’ willingness and capacity to help as well as the adult children’s expectation of help from their parents. Our research indicated that, except for a few cases where financial support from parents was designed to be used primarily as a living allowance

to cover the immigrant descendants' daily costs, most of the financial support offered was used as critical funding contributing to the adult immigrant children's purchase of property in New Zealand. This significant financial support does not only ease the financial pressure for immigrant children's daily expenses, it also facilitates their settlement and economic integration in the immigration destination through home-ownership.

Pooling Financial Resources for Collective Family Life

The preceding sections have suggested that sending reverse remittances as a gift or as more substantive financial support to immigrant descendants is a form of both altruism and obligation. Our research also showed that sending reverse remittances is a way to pool or combine family members' financial resources to enable older parents to embrace collective family life. In other words, it enables older parents to live together with their immigrant children in the immigration destination. This denotes a very different kind of reciprocal intergenerational dynamism in these new PRC immigrant families in New Zealand. Wang is an only-child of her parents and immigrated to New Zealand 10 years ago because of a job opportunity from a multi-national corporation headquartered in Auckland. Not long after she settled in New Zealand with her husband and two daughters, her parents also immigrated to New Zealand under her immigration sponsorship and joined her family. When we talked about her living arrangement with her parents, she shared some insights with us:

> *There is a little bit [of] everything in terms of the reason why we are living together. I know it is important to take care of my parents when they are getting older, but this is not the primary reason for my case…When I was considering buying the house where we are living now, my parents told me they would sell their own apartment back in China and use that*

money as pooling to support me. I understood that means they would join me living in New Zealand if they had to do so because they would have nowhere to live after they sell their apartment…I am not really a big fan of living together with parents to be honest…In the end, I said yes to them because I think pooling to live together might be the most practical way for my family. Firstly, I need their support, both financially for buying the house and practically for taking care of my daughters when my husband and I work fulltime. Secondly, I can take care of them (her parents) without travelling between New Zealand and China.

As can be seen, combining financial resources to enable collective family life is, to some extent, a form of financial support. However, the difference between pooling resources and the more direct and unidirectional financial support from older parents to adult immigrant children is that pooling resources reflects a more apparent reciprocal relationship between remittance senders (i.e. older parents) and receivers (i.e. adult immigrant children). As Wang said, her acceptance of the remittance from her parents also means her acceptance of the cohabitation arrangement between her and her parents even though she is not in favour of it. Nonetheless, within this reciprocal relationship, Wang could get both financial and practical support from her parents, while her parents could achieve their goal of living together with their only daughter.

In a sense, this reciprocal form of reverse remittance is adopted by older family members as a financialised means to negotiate their favoured family arrangements with their adult immigrant children. The interview with Liu, whose only son immigrated to New Zealand a few years ago, also confirmed this aspect:

I gave all my savings to my son so that he can buy his house here in Auckland…It is a lot, about one and a half million RMB [around NZ$330,000] So, I told him (his son), from now

on, I will rely on him and move in living together with him because I have no elsewhere to go now… I know it is difficult to apply for the residence visa for older parents in New Zealand now, but I think my son will have to take care of it. That's his business, not mine.

Pooling financial resources as a form of reverse remittance heightens adult children's financial capacity to negotiate post-immigration settlement challenges, particularly the challenge of home-ownership. More importantly, it also plays a vital role in legitimising the older parents' appeal to organise a close-tied multigenerational household with their immigrant children despite facing numerous challenges to do so. These challenges include but are not limited to 1) the adult immigrant children's reticence about living with their older parents, 2) the complexity of dealing with the intergenerational relationships when different generations live together long term, 3) the financial pressure the adult children need to undertake because their older parents are not entitled to any social welfare during the first five years after obtaining residence (Ran & Liu, 2020), and 4) the increasingly restrictive family immigration policy for older parents of adult immigrants in New Zealand.

To better understand this form of reverse remittance and the motivations behind it, it is helpful to reflect on the prevalence of multigenerational household practices in the PRC underpinned by the Chinese traditional family culture as well as the consideration of practical needs in the family life. First of all, multigenerational households are a time-honoured family practice in Chinese society and have fundamentally shaped many older parents' understanding of the concept of family (Liu, 2018; Ran & Liu, 2020). The importance of multigenerational living is evident in our interviews with many older parents often using phrases such as: "it is just our Chinese people's tradition", to justify their desire to maintain and enhance close ties with their immigrant descendants through a

multigenerational household. Second, multigenerational living is related to the most influential Confucian family value in these families – filial piety. Filial piety defines a hierarchical relationship between parents and their children (Dai & Dimond, 1998). It is a demonstration of culturally normative intergenerational solidarity addressing younger generations' obligations towards their older family members. Under this relationship, children are expected to act with complete obedience and unlimited responsibility towards their parents, including parents' care needs (Ho & Chiang, 2017). Living together with older parents to provide eldercare when the parents get older is an important practice of filial piety, especially for those only-children. Third, multigenerational living also provides convenience for families to conduct their daily lives (Ran & Liu, 2020). For example, when multiple generations live together, while it is convenient for adult immigrants to provide daily care for their older parents; the older parents can also play a crucial role in housekeeping and caregiving towards their grandchildren when adult immigrants are busy working.

In summary, these new forms of reverse remittance that involve the pooling of financial resources to enable collective family life, illustrate a reciprocal intergenerational dynamic between older parents and their adult immigrant children. While it helps substantially to enhance the adult immigrant children's financial capacity to deal with many post-immigration settlement challenges, it is also a paramount financial investment for the older parents that justifies their appeal for co-habitation with their adult immigrant children.

Investment

Although it was not a very common practice among our participants, a small number of participants described reverse remittances that involved the transfer of financial resources by older family

members in the PRC to New Zealand as their own financial investment. These investments were mainly used to obtain financial returns, which mostly went straight into the real estate market in New Zealand, especially for purchasing residential properties. But they also stimulated multigenerational transnational family ties. Guo immigrated to New Zealand seven years ago after she finished her postgraduate education in Australia. After she settled in New Zealand, she experienced both marriage and divorce. Now, she is a single mother living together with her daughter in West Auckland. Although her parents were still living in the PRC at the time of the interview, she told us her parents had already purchased a residential property in West Auckland, a house in which she and her daughter were living. After we indicated an interest in understanding why her parents chose to invest in this property in New Zealand, she explained:

> *Chinese people like investing [in] properties I guess (laugh)…It is also because recently the Chinese economic growth starts to slow down, so does its real estate market. Under this circumstance, my parents started to look for alternative overseas investment opportunities…Most importantly, I think it is because I am here in New Zealand…While their money is secured by the property investment here (New Zealand), it also provides convenience for me and my daughter (to live in the house bought by her parents). This actually makes my life so much easier as a single mother, especially financially.*

Guo's interpretation of why her parents chose to invest in the property in New Zealand illustrates a complex rationale. First, her comment that "Chinese people like investing [in] properties" echoes a long-established land-based investment pattern of the Chinese population worldwide (Harris, 2018). More specifically, when it comes to investment, the Chinese prefer investing in houses instead of other forms of investments. This is because, on the one hand, property investment can

usually provide stable and promising financial benefits over time; on the other hand, the formation of this investment pattern among the Chinese group is also largely attributed to its traditional culture that emphasises the importance of property-ownership and its relation to the family security and prosperity (Malone, 2016).

Second, her parents' investment in New Zealand is also a diversification investment strategy for better financial returns when facing China's slowing economic growth. Since 2019, despite the PRC's economy still expanding faster than any other major economy, its growth rate has been continuously kept at the slowest pace in nearly three decades (Bradsher, 2019). Another research participant whose parents also invested in properties in New Zealand also told us, "the real estate market in China is pretty much saturated now. So, my parents thought it would be great to invest [in] properties in New Zealand instead for more prosperous returns in the future".

Last but not least, Guo's immigration to New Zealand is actually the major force driving her parents' investment flow in New Zealand. While her parents' money is secured by the property investment, more importantly, it also can provide her and her daughter an opportunity to live in a stable home. This aspect makes her parents' reverse remittance investment look less self-interested since it significantly facilitates Guo's wellbeing as a new immigrant in New Zealand through relieving her financial pressure. From this point of view, reverse remittances sent as an investment share, are to some extent similar to reverse remittance sent purely as financial support because they both function to ameliorate the challenges of adult children's immigrant lives. Nevertheless, what is different between these two forms of reverse remittance is the legal ownership of the property - the properties purchased as the parents' investment remains under the ownership of the older parents, but properties purchased with parents' financial support are under the ownership of

the adult immigrants. These different ownership models imply who will directly benefit and who will not, and subsequently result in subtle differences in power relations among generations.

The formation of investment-based reverse remittance in these new PRC immigrant families is mediated by complicated rationales ranging from the Chinese group's cultural propensity to the global economy, and to intergenerational relations and impact. Despite the older parents' attempt to pursue greater financial returns, it is clear that their adult children's immigration plays a far more influential role in determining this reverse remittance pattern in their families, especially for determining the destination of the investment remittance sending. Importantly, this form of resource transfer brings multiple benefits; it generates economic benefits at the same time as facilitating family wellbeing and intergenerational relations. This investment behaviour, again, reflects the higher socioeconomic statuses of many new PRC immigrant families in New Zealand as well as the capital accumulation habitus and process that often takes place within middle-class Chinese immigrant families (Ong, 1992).

Discussion and Conclusion

Existing literature has successfully brought to light the significance of reverse remittances in many transnational families (Mazzucato, 2011; Mobrand, 2012; Yeboah et al., 2019). Our case with the new PRC immigrant families in New Zealand furthers the exploration of the elements that underpin its formation, as well as, its different patterns that indicate diverse material, cultural, and relational dynamics within different families, by demonstrating how socioculturally informed intergenerational dynamics mediate the practice of reverse remittance-sending in given transnational family contexts.

The present study suggests that families' financial statuses and socioculturally informed intergenerational relations play a crucial role in shaping reverse remittance practices. The identification and re-emphasis of family-focused dynamics as a key feature of family remittance practices helps overcome the epistemological pitfall arising from the economic-centric approach to family remittance studies. Such an approach constructs family remittances as critical financial insurance for the livelihood of transnational family members in the country of origin (Taylor, 1999). Hence, family remittances are often taken for granted as a financial resource that merely flows from more economically developed societies to those less developed in order to serve family-related development purposes (Taylor, 1999). While this approach goes some way to explaining the economic underpinnings of remittance practices, it does little to explain the sociocultural aspects. More importantly, it can also lead to a misperception whereby the socioeconomic disparity between the immigration-sending and -receiving societies should be taken as a key reference to inform the rationale of the formation and the influence of transnational family remittances. Nonetheless, as we illustrated, even though New Zealand is economically developed when compared with the average of the PRC, the family remittance flow of the PRC immigrant families we interviewed runs counter to traditional remittance patterns, that is, from the more developed country to the developing country. Therefore, to better understand transnational family remittances, future investigations should extend beyond a narrow focus on economic advantages and, instead, also explore the sociocultural aspects and family dynamics that actively mediate family remittance practices.

The research has shown that these reverse remittances take place under four major patterns, namely, the medium of the gift, financial support, pooling financial resources for collective family, and investment. Each pattern carries distinctive material, cultural, and relational implications in

different families. For instance, some are sent primarily as a financialised gesture to demonstrate care and love as well as intergenerational solidarity from older family members to their immigrant descendants (e.g. medium of the gift or financial support); some illustrate the relocation of family financial resources or a strategy for reconfiguring the family's financial capital accumulation to adapt to changing global economic circumstances alongside its members' immigration courses (e.g. pooling financial resources for collective family or investment). Nonetheless, as discussed previously, these patterns are not mutually exclusive of each other; one pattern can co-exist with or even evolve into another pattern, in line with specific family dynamics and circumstances. With these implications, reverse remittance practices are able to reflect various interpersonal interactions, and further contributes to the understandings of the ongoing development of the multigenerational relationship of dependence and hierarchy in transnational family contexts.

This qualitative exploration of family remittance also sheds light on the resilience and ongoing commitments to time-honoured practices and customs of families in an increasingly globalised world. Globalisation has led to the dispersion of family members across the globe which has imposed unprecedented challenges to many time-honoured family traditions. For example, with our PRC case, the major family tradition is to maintain a closely-tied multigenerational family. However, due to transnational migration, separation among family members across generations becomes a major challenge to retain their multigenerational families. In order to cope with this challenge, families themselves demonstrated great resilience by actively orchestrating their response to restore their preferred way of family life. This resilience was evident in the present study, in which participants adopted reverse remittances practices as a powerful means to break through the barrier of national borders to maintain their multigenerational relation and family tradition.

This paper deepens the debate on how family remittances take shape from family-level interactions among individual family members, social institutions, and cultural norms. It seeks to move beyond explanations centred on unidirectional transnational family money transfer across borders to better understand the social, cultural, and family-specific motivations for and meanings behind family remittance practices. Statistically, although the scale of reverse remittances within the globe still cannot compete with regular remittances sent by immigrants from the Global North to the Global South, such transfers have vital social and cultural significance to transnational families and, indeed, the scholars who study this field. In many existing studies, left-behind family members of immigrants are portrayed as vulnerable, passive, and powerless as remittance receivers. But our research illuminates the active engagement of the left-behind family members within transnational family settings. Beyond its economic significance, reverse remittances are also important social transactions involving complex emotional and relational familial dynamics, which further elucidate individual positions, priorities, and commitments within transnational families.

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Chapter Seven

Conclusion

This thesis explored the relationship between people's experiences of transnational migration and their multigenerational family dynamics. More specifically, through engaging with individual life stories and opinions of 45 participants across generations from new PRC immigrant families living in New Zealand, this thesis sought to understand how those families with closely-tied multiple generations coped with dislocation and relocation during the process of transnational migration. The thesis also investigated how transnational migration experiences contributed to new emergent domestic dynamics, including the development of new strategies and practices to maintain family traditions, interests and coherence across national borders, as well as shifting intergenerational relations.

In this concluding chapter, I relate the key findings from the previous chapters to the research questions outlined in Chapter One to consider the broad contributions of this research and provide implications towards future research in the field of transnational family studies. The research questions asked: how significant is transnationalism in the everyday lives of PRC multigenerational immigrant families; how multigenerational families maintain their family lives across national borders; and, how transnational experiences transform their multigenerational dynamics, family practices and cultural norms. Although the research interviews were carried out before the emergence of COVID-19, I conclude with some comments on the implications of this research for transnational immigrant families in a world rendered largely immobile by the novel coronavirus. Subsequently, future research directions exploring how transnational families might live and maintain their familial wellbeing in the COVID-19 world are also identified.

Transnationalism and PRC Immigrant Families in New Zealand

The participants' experiences consistently demonstrated that transnationalism had already become an integral part of many PRC immigrant families' everyday lives. This was manifested

through family members' frequent international travels to visit each other, as well as the well-organised transnational mobilisation and exchange of information and resources within their families, such as their diligent online communications (see Chapter Five) and reverse remittance-sending (see Chapter Six). In most cases, these transnational practices at family-level were initiated as merely a temporary coping strategy for maintaining family coherence and function when the members started to live separately from each other across national borders. As time went by, when the members realised that being constantly apart from each other either voluntarily or forcibly might become a more permanent feature of their family lives, these family-level transnational practices then evolved from just a temporary coping strategy to a new norm of family maintenance. In practice, this actively shaped many aspects of their everyday family lives, including how they interacted with each other and how they set up plans for leisure activities and care arrangements. In this regard, this research demonstrated that transnationalism was internalised by immigrant families as a new way of family-making in an increasingly globalised world. Compared to those Chinese immigrant families settled in New Zealand prior to 1987 who also practiced some degrees of transnational family maintenance, this new form of transnationalism materialized as even more frequent and carefully planned transnational travels, as well as the utilization of new technologies to aid family maintenance.

Furthermore, this research revealed that this way of transnational living was a double-edged sword, which posed both challenges and opportunities for families. On the one hand, this increasingly “normalised” transnational way of family life eroded more commonly held ideas of family and family-making. Traditionally, the definition of family has often been associated with members who live within geographic proximity and have frequent face-to-face interactions (Dempsey & Lindsay, 2014). However, the transnational family way enlarges the geographic distance among family members and impedes the frequency of face-to-face

interactions in their day-to-day lives. For PRC families who have long traditions of practicing cross-generational childrearing (i.e. grandparents play a major role in caretaking grandchildren) and family-centred eldercare (Ran & Liu, 2020; Lin et al., 2014), this practice of family maintenance across different geographic, sociocultural and political localities disrupts how their families were defined and supposed to work. The research showed that these new transnational practices introduced crucial challenges and dilemmas for the members across generations in terms of managing their family lives, especially when it came to critical family events and values that traditionally requires stable physical co-presence of family members within proximity, such as conducting filial care for older family members (Ho & Chiang, 2017).

On the other hand, the transnational way of family living also provided families opportunities to better navigate their collective lives and domestic relationships in the age of migration. More specifically, when family members routinely lived separately across national borders, being "transnational" became the only and most effective way to sustain their emotional as well as material connections. At this point, a broader participation of family members in transnational migration processes became a family-level counter-strategy to mitigate the challenge of family maintenance from a distance, especially when those family members were facing prolonged separation. This aspect becomes even more relevant at the time of research when more immigrant-receiving destinations have started to tighten up their family immigration policies (as discussed in Chapter Two), making family reunification more difficult to achieve for many immigrants worldwide (Bedford & Liu, 2013; Larsen, 2013; Ali, 2014; Bonjour & Kraler, 2015). This finding further testifies to the resilience of family. As a basic social unit, family is able to fast adopt new methods to better navigate the collective interests of family members when facing rapid domestic and societal changes. Here, the domestic changes particularly refer to the changing intergenerational dynamics largely driven by the evolving life stages of different family members across generations, and the societal changes specifically refer to the

intensified globalisation process where human migrations are largely accelerated and local economies are greatly integrated into a globalised system.

The empirical findings from this research clearly illustrated that those PRC immigrant family members' engagements with various transnational family practices allowed the younger generations (i.e. the first-generation adult immigrants and their children) to be able to better pursue their preferred personal developments and lifestyles in a wider society across the globe without sacrificing their close relationships with the left-behind family members, and older family members in particular. For the older generation (i.e. the parents of the first-generation adult immigrant), being able to be involved in these transnational family practices also granted them chances to negotiate their favoured family arrangements with their younger generations who are highly spatially mobile, including negotiating their preferred eldercare arrangements. These familial dynamics sometimes materialised through the phenomenon of seasonal parents/grandparent (Chapter Five) and reverse remittance-sending (Chapter Six).

Despite their heightened transnational family practices, new PRC immigrant families' lived experiences of managing family lives varied. Through an exploration of the phenomenon of seasonal parents/grandparents (see Chapter Five), I have argued that diversification of transnational family experiences is largely attributed to the interaction of various impact factors associated with both the internal dynamics of immigrant families themselves and external contexts where those families are closely related. In other words, it is the intersection of broader socioeconomic developments, policy contexts and familial practices in which these new ways of "doing family" emerge. With this in mind, I further proposed a micro-meso-macro level analysis framework to help future research better identify multilevel impact factors that contribute to the formation of various transnational family experiences.

With regard to impact factors, for those PRC immigrants who would like to bring their older parents to New Zealand for the purpose of family reunification, this research confirmed that New Zealand's evolving family immigration policy has significantly adverse impacts on family configurations and future family plans. As I discussed in Chapter Three, due to the restrictive family immigration policy reform in recent decades, it was evident that bringing family members to New Zealand was becoming increasingly difficult for immigrants, especially when those family members were older parents of adult immigrants. Despite considerable empirical research that demonstrates the critical contributions that older parents make to the immigration destination, such as providing an emotional anchor and practical help for immigrant descendants (Lie, 2010; Ran & Liu, 2020), diversifying sociocultural capital for the host society (Cain et al., 2020), and providing financial resources through reverse remittances (see Chapter Six), this research made it clear that New Zealand's prevailing neoliberal immigration regime still regarded older people as potential financial burdens and was reluctant about their immigration.

My participants' lived experiences further indicated that the family immigration policy was a direct cause of many PRC immigrant families' transnational separations. I discussed this aspect in Chapter Four and framed it as a "forced" dimension of transnational family separation. Given the PRC immigrant group's leading position in the Parent Category residence approval in New Zealand since the 1990s (Immigration New Zealand, 2019), the ongoing tightening of policy certainly posed considerable challenges to this immigrant group's cultural preference to live as multigenerational families in New Zealand society. Subsequently, it also triggered grievances among the PRC immigrant community towards the current New Zealand immigration governance (Ran & Liu, 2020).

With these findings, this research brought to light the shifting dynamics between family immigration and the neoliberal immigration policy regime in New Zealand. As discussed in Chapter Three, New Zealand's immigration policy since the late 1980s has always been fundamentally neoliberal. In practice, this policy orientation connotes that when New Zealand considers its immigration intakes, it always takes an "economic" lens to frame its immigration regulation based on a rational cost-benefit analysis of what immigration might bring to this country. At the onset of its immigration reform, with the purpose of facilitating a steady immigration intake to stimulate the growth of New Zealand economy, family immigration needs were greatly accommodated, including the immigration of aged parents of adult immigrants (Trlin, 1992). Nevertheless, over time the immigration intake of New Zealand continued to grow steadily, sometimes much higher than the planned quota, and family immigration became a less important factor to stabilise New Zealand's immigration intake to accelerate its economy (Cunliffe, 2007). Additionally, evidence also indicated that older parents of adult immigrants had much higher levels of welfare dependency and demand for health and medical provisions than any other immigrants admitted under the skilled and business categories (Cunliffe, 2007; Department of Labour, 2009). In other words, older immigrants were more likely to become a financial burden rather than a source of economic gain for New Zealand society. Subsequently, the bar for family immigrations, particularly for the older family members, started to rise in New Zealand. The shifting dynamism between family immigration and immigration policy elucidated that the neoliberal trend of immigration policy in New Zealand has not changed since the reform of the late 1980s. Even when the criteria towards different immigrant categories was changed from time to time, a contribution to the economic growth of New Zealand society remained as the priority for policy makers and the underlying premise of policy alterations. However, it is also worth pointing out that the development of New Zealand's family immigration policy is not only determined by the

neoliberal ideology, but also shaped by other factors such as the country's changing party politics regarding immigration policy and perceptions towards social welfare. Additionally, the impacts of the ongoing development of New Zealand's family immigration policy towards different immigrant groups are also accordingly moderated by the agencies of these immigrant groups, for instance, their financial capacities and skills.

Nevertheless, my research also unveiled that New Zealand's neoliberal immigration policy regime did not respond well to its growing immigrant populations' sociocultural preferences. This insufficient policy response becomes particularly problematic after temporary immigrants are granted immigration visas (i.e. Residence and Permanent Residence) or citizenship. Once immigrants secure their legal status to live in New Zealand, they should enjoy the same civil rights as those who were born in the country. However, restrictions from immigration policy towards certain of their preferred sociocultural practices remain strong. For instance, the capacity to live as and with whom they choose, including older relatives in multigenerational households. It is fair to say that to some extent, these remaining immigration policy restrictions could potentially perpetuate a new form of social discrimination, wherein the population with immigrant backgrounds are deemed to live in New Zealand as second-class citizens who can only enjoy limited civil rights. The New Zealand government embraces a "wellbeing approach" to governance (The Treasury, 2020) and consistently claims to value positive ageing, acknowledging the contribution that older populations make to society (Ministry of Social Development, 2001). The persistence of the current family immigration policy that denies the value of family reunification could surely cast a shadow on its international reputation and domestic commitment.

Maintaining Families Across National Borders

My research demonstrated that many families whose members live apart between the PRC and New Zealand employed two major practices to maintain familial connections from a distance: travelling frequently to visit each other, and utilising newly-developed ICT (e.g. smartphone app Wechat) to facilitate daily communications. These visits and online communications greatly promoted family interactions as well as the sense of co-presence for those often-separated family members, and ultimately contributed to family coherence and wellbeing during the separation. These examples are perhaps the most pragmatic ways of maintaining family in the context of transnational families (see also Baldassar, 2008, 2014; Wilding & Baldassar, 2009; Benítez, 2012; Marlowe, 2020). Given communication and transportation technologies are increasingly affordable and accessible (Nedelcu & Wyss, 2016; Bryceson, 2019), I argue that this way of transnational family maintenance will be increasingly common among immigrant groups from a wide range of socioeconomic backgrounds around the world. Indeed, a growing body of literature in the field of transnational immigration and immigrant families (e.g. digital diaspora) has already started to pay significant attention to the ways in which ICTs change the everyday lives of transnational immigrants by helping them forge multistranded connections between host and sending societies (Brinkerhoff, 2009; Benítez, 2012; Nedelcu & Wyss, 2016).

Among various transnational activities carried out, this research identified an emerging transnational pattern of older people in immigrant families—many of the older parents of first-generation adult immigrants were highly mobile as they actively engaged in family-related transnational movements. Classically, transnational family studies have largely emphasised the transnational movement of younger generations, either the first-generation adult immigrants or their children, led by their personal aspirations as well as family expectations and obligations (Kelly & Lusis, 2006; Wilding & Baldassar, 2009; Sun, 2014). Compared with the older generation, these younger generations usually possess greater social, financial and physical

capital, which enables their transnational movements. But my research revealed that frequent transnational movements were also carried out by the older generation in immigrant families. Older family members in many of my participants' families frequently and routinely moved back and forth between the PRC and New Zealand. I reported on this phenomenon in Chapter Five and named it seasonal parents/grandparents given this transnational practice always reflected a seasonal pattern. These trips were not random. Rather, they were well-organised and carefully planned family arrangements. That said, these older-generation-led transnational family practices were shaped by complicated external and internal impact factors. Foremost, these practices were shaped by immigration policy and the geographic locations of the immigrant-sending and -receiving societies. Perhaps more importantly however is that their practices reflected culturally informed multigenerational dynamics of families, wherein the older generation was leveraging transnational movements to balance their family commitments and their individual interests, as well as negotiate power relations among family members.

Consequently, with the identification of the seasonal parents/grandparent phenomenon, this research enriched the field of circulatory transnational migration (Ip, 2011). The concept originally sought to capture the emerging feature of contemporary immigrants' increasingly flexible and frequent transnational movements between the homeland and various host societies and was predominantly applied to younger immigrants of working age (Ip, 2011; Liu, 2018). Extending this work by identifying the frequent transnational movement of the older generation in those PRC immigrant families broke through the age boundary and further broadened the application of circulatory transnational migration in the field of transnational migration studies.

In addition to travel and online communication that fostered direct interactions among family members that helped maintain family life, my research also uncovered other critical

sociocultural influences on PRC immigrants' navigation of their family lives during the transnational migration process. Two leading aspects were highlighted in the research: the first was filial piety, a traditional Chinese family value; and the second centred on family finance, particularly the remittances sent by the older generation to their immigrant descendants in the destination country.

I explored the concept of filial piety in all three empirical chapters (Chapters Four, Five, and Six) as I deemed it a crucial cultural element contributing to PRC immigrant families' daily lives, especially in regulating intergenerational dynamics, family configurations and eldercare arrangements. As mentioned previously, filial piety is a time-honored Confucius value pertinent to multigenerational family relationships. While it fundamentally defines the intergenerational hierarchy within families in Chinese society, it also has profound influences on Chinese families overseas (Dai & Dimond, 1998; Tu, 2019). I have argued that the significance of filial piety becomes more evident when the younger generations' migration has a direct impact on older generations' anticipated family arrangement and eldercare plans. Under such circumstances, filial piety functions as a crucial symbolic means of legitimising the older generation's preferred family arrangements, and adds weight to their negotiation of family arrangements with their younger generations. My research found that older family members' most preferred family arrangements were to live together or within close proximity to their younger family members in the immigration destination and enjoy the family-based eldercare.

Nevertheless, the evidence also showed that meeting these preferences was sometimes challenging in transnational family settings, even though many younger generations, including first-generation adult immigrants and their children, explicitly expressed that they would also like to centre filial piety as their guiding principle of negotiating intergenerational familial

relationships. This was because the ongoing development of their intergenerational differences, particularly differences in lifestyles and career development trajectories, could easily result in the younger generations' reticence about living together with their older family members. Additionally, there were also many other external factors posing considerable challenges to their family plans, for instance, the increasingly restrictive family immigration policy towards the older parents of adult immigrants in New Zealand and associated financial pressures to implement those family plans. In many cases, when those preferences failed to be realised, emotional discord or even conflict arose among different generations. Accordingly, under this scenario, many younger generations in those families, especially the first-generational adult immigrants, indicated that they were prone to enormous pressures as well as a strong sense of guilt towards their older family members.

Remittance-sending was shown to be another important aspect of transnational family maintenance of PRC immigrants. However, the remittance practices were different from many other immigrant groups whose remittances are usually sent by the younger generations located in the immigrant-receiving country to other family members located in the immigrant-sending society (Abrego, 2009; Carling, 2014). In the context of this research, the major remittance senders were mostly the older parents of the first-generation adult immigrants, and their remittances mainly flew from the home country (i.e. the PRC) to the immigration destination (i.e. New Zealand). I investigated this remittance practice in Chapter Six with special attention paid to the underpinnings of its formation as well as its different patterns under different family contexts. I argued that families' financial status and their socioculturally informed intergenerational dynamics played a major role in supporting their reverse remittance-sending. Those reverse remittances were in fact critical cross-generational financial supports that facilitated the younger generations' immigration to and settlement in New Zealand. More importantly, my research also attested that those reverse remittance were generated

strategically in many families wherein the older family members adopted them as an effective means to facilitate the connection with their immigrant descendants and further strengthen their intergenerational relationship. This was particularly the case for those families whose older family members lived separately from their immigrant descendants for a prolonged time across national borders, and their separation had started to lead to a decrease in intergenerational closeness. In this context, money was adopted as a bargaining chip to reinforce the multigenerational family structure and coherence in PRC immigrant families.

Despite the growing influence of reverse remittance on family-making processes in the transnational migration context, New Zealand society lacks statistical data to further inform understandings of immigrant reverse remittance practices. Hence, in order to gauge its significance towards both immigrant groups and New Zealand society, additional research investigating immigrant families' reverse remittance practices, especially its actual numerical scale, is warranted.

Shifting Multigenerational Dynamics

I have attested that family members' transnational migration experiences accelerated changes to the way they performed family life. With the PRC case, the changes of their families were mainly related to their shifting multigenerational dynamics, including their amplified intergenerational differences as well as altered intergenerational dependency status. This reflection of the changes of family resonated with the idea that family-making is a dynamic process wherein, when the families' living environment and social context start to shift, families would carry out multilevel changes (Georgas, 2006; Kâğıtçıbaşı, 2017). These multilevel changes involve almost every aspect of family life, such as the family's overall cultural orientation, living arrangement, way of configuration, the level of fertility, and even the way it cultivates offspring (Mayer et al., 2012; Kâğıtçıbaşı, 2017).

Apart from some common intergenerational differences that almost every family has, such as differences in value systems and lifestyles, this research found that in many new PRC immigrant families, the differences in personal identity and the sense of belonging among generations were exceptionally notable. As I explored in Chapter Four, their distinctive life experiences in both immigrant-sending and -receiving countries underpinned their major differences in identity and the sense of belonging. Typically, the older parents of the first-generation adult immigrants would like to perceive themselves as an outsider of New Zealand society and simply an "attachment" to their immigrant descendants, regardless whether their families lived together as a multigenerational household in New Zealand or apart in PRC and New Zealand. For many first-generation adult immigrants, they consistently experienced a mixed identity with both Chinese and New Zealand influences and often thought they had attachments towards both the PRC and New Zealand societies. When it came to the children of the first-generation adult immigrants, many of their major life experiences, including their education, occurred in New Zealand. Therefore, regardless of where they were born, most firmly indicated that they were proud "Kiwis".

This research further revealed that, many family members, especially older parents of the first-generation adult immigrant, were concerned whether or not these increased differences would potentially disrupt their multigenerational family coherence. When I investigated the older family members' seasonal travels in Chapter Five, one of the emerging rationales behind their travel was that the older family members were using their trips to curate short-term separations from their immigrant descendants. They intended to take advantage of these separations in order to reconcile the potential tension generated from long-term multigenerational cohabitation and growing intergenerational differences.

My research also demonstrated that transnational migration experiences also effectively altered the dependency status among generations in those PRC immigrant families. This alteration of dependency was largely manifested through how changed family arrangements boosted the older family members' dependence towards their younger members in their everyday family lives. Transnational migration means different things to different generations. For many younger generations, including the first-generation adult immigrants and their children, transnational migration mostly implied new opportunities, aspirations and longing lifestyles. In contrast, for most of my older generation participants, transnational migration carried less stellar status in their descriptions but was instead the only choice available to them that sustained their connections and relationships with their immigrant descendants. In reality, being involved with transnational migration processes frequently posed myriad challenges for the older generation and caused them to rely heavily on their younger generations' assistances to cope, for instance, when dealing with immigration applications, arranging travel, and coping with language and sociocultural differences. Consequently, compared to many non-immigrant Chinese families, the older members in those PRC immigrant families gradually became the most dependent family members.

To a great extent, being involved with the family's transnational migration process hinders older family members' agency. I discussed the altered agentic capacity of older family members in different empirical chapters (such as Chapter Four). In most Chinese families, filial piety ensures that older parents are considered the most dominant and powerful members when it comes to important family decision-making. With the changing dependency status in PRC immigrant families, younger generations had become more powerful and hence more confident to override older members' decisions when it came to critical family decision-making. Accordingly, intergenerational contradictions and power struggles were also frequently experienced in those families, and reported upon in my research. This was also one of the

reasons why some older family members would like to provide financial support to their immigrant descendants as they would like to use this financial means to re-balance their already shifted intergenerational power relationship in their families, as discussed in Chapter Six.

The Emergence of COVID-19 and Transnational Families

Towards the end of my research, an unprecedented pandemic, COVID-19, emerged and abruptly dragged the world into unchartered territory. Fear of the spread of the virus and a determination to contain its threat triggered rigid border regulations worldwide, putting a sudden halt to transnational activities and globalisation processes. It has also brought forward some bitter fruits to many transnational families. Living in the pre-COVID-19 era, family separation across national borders was one of the major challenges faced by many transnational families. Nonetheless, with open borders and accessible means of international transportation, many transnational families were able to creatively incorporate various transnational activities to cope with their family separations and further maintain their family coherence and relationships from afar. With the emergence of COVID-19, however, closed or strictly controlled borders in both immigrant-sending and -receiving countries started to posit powerful external constraints for transnational families. In New Zealand, this is especially the case. The New Zealand government closed its border to all foreign nationals on 14th March 2020, and borders have remained closed since, with only a few exemptions for diplomatic, official, humanitarian, and other selected purposes (Liu & Ran, 2020). Throughout this thesis I have argued that PRC families are flexible in responding to the needs of straddling two worlds and maintaining familial connections across borders. But COVID-19 has challenged the agility of transnational families even further. It has turned their highly flexible and mobile family arrangements into largely inflexible and immobile arrangements.

The current COVID-19 situation disrupts, and will continue to disrupt, many transnational families' everyday lives. Despite facing constant health threats from COVID-19 itself, more importantly for many families whose members live separately between the PRC and New Zealand, the COVID-19 situation also inevitably causes worsening family separations. Compared with the usual family separation that participants demonstrated they were well equipped to manage, COVID-19-led separations are much more challenging. This is because, first, it is difficult to predict when this pandemic will end, meaning there is no certain timeline for the reopening of rigid border controls, which causes a significant degree of uncertainty with regard to how best to respond in the interim. Second, the transnational infrastructures that transnational families heavily rely upon to sustain their family maintenance have been severely disordered, for example, the drastically declined international travel industry.

Nevertheless, the resilience of my participants' families also suggests that even under this particular COVID-19 scenario, transnational families will most likely initiate new strategies and methods to mitigate the challenges for their transnational family maintenance. Although my research clearly demonstrated that "being transnational" was key for this PRC immigrant group's effective family maintenance across national borders, their way of transnational family maintenance was not limited to international travel. Instead, their methods of family maintenance are built on multistranded transnational engagements, both physically and virtually. In other words, even if they cannot travel to visit each other, they can still apply other ways of promoting family members' interactions from a distance, such as using ICTs to facilitate online communications or sending gifts through international post services. That is to say, as the capacity to travel to maintain familial connections decreases, other forms of communication may increase. The question is not simply asking whether or not families can continuously maintain themselves transnationally, instead the question should be whether or

not new or alternative methods can sufficiently resolve the challenges posed by unpredictable family separations.

As I mentioned above, it is still uncertain how long the pandemic will last and what the longer-term impacts this pandemic might bring to society. Hence, at this moment, we cannot simply assume that our everyday life will return to normal any time soon. Will strictly-enforced border controls continue even after the pandemic ends, as was seen in the United States after the 9/11 terrorist attack with permanently-tightened immigration and visa regulations? Will international travel return to pre-COVID-19 levels with readily-available flights that are relatively affordable? The outbreak of COVID-19 was also accompanied with an increase in reports of racism (Liu & Ran, 2020). Therefore, catalysed by COVID-19 experiences, questions are now being raised about whether the political ideas of nationalism and isolationism will be heightened and lead to increasing levels of xenophobia worldwide, with accompanying sentiments against globalisation processes. While the answers to these questions are crucial to the future development of human society, perhaps more importantly for the research topic, they will also determine how transnational families may function in a world impacted by COVID-19.

With these critical challenges in mind, my research illuminated a number of future research topics worth exploring to better understand how transnational families navigate their wellbeing and family lives in the world with COVID-19. First of all, what are the major challenges that transnational families face in the era of COVID-19, including the challenges towards their family relationships, maintenance, and support systems, and how might they cope with these challenges? Second, my research has already testified that transnational family experiences stimulate family change in various ways, including intergenerational differences and a state of interdependence among family members. With this in mind, will the COVID-19-led family

separations further accelerate such transnational family change and if so, in what ways? Third, given the pandemic has already triggered worldwide rigid border controls, how will those pandemic-driven border controls and immigration policies evolve over time, and what are the impacts of those border controls and immigration policies for transnational families and immigrant populations. And relatedly, what will the attitude of the host society be towards immigration in a post-COVID-19 world? These research topics are not just limited in the New Zealand context, but rather everywhere in the world where there are transnational families. Given transnational families are crucial contributors of the global economy and social development, even in the middle of a pandemic, their challenges and demands should be well recognised.

Concluding Remarks

This thesis contributes to the burgeoning literature on transnational family studies through closely examining the specific case of new PRC immigrant families in New Zealand. Theoretically, it develops a fresh family perspective to study transnational migration. Through examining families' shifting domestic dynamics across generations in the context of family migration, this research provides an in-depth insight of the nexus between immigration policy, family change and transnational migration experiences. It promotes the analysis of the formation of diverse transnational family experiences by effectively intersecting multistranded factors, namely, individual transnational migratory trajectories, intergenerational dynamics, immigration policy regimes, and the broader socioeconomic developments in both sending and receiving contexts. Empirically, this research targets the largest non-European immigrant group in New Zealand. Through studying their individual and collective family wellbeing throughout the transnational migration process, it offers a timely and critical reference for New Zealand's social policy developments towards immigrant groups as well as efforts to facilitate

immigrant integration, social cohesion, and understanding of cultural diversity. While this PRC case poses intriguing perspectives and culturally-specific scenarios to study immigrant families in New Zealand society, more importantly, it also contributes to the broad theorisation of transnational family formation and maintenance in the increasingly globalised world.

In my introductory chapter, I reflected upon a flight I took from Guangzhou to Auckland in 2017. Since then, my mind has been consumed with the experiences, motivations, and challenges faced by many PRC immigrant families that have somehow found diverse ways to preserve their family lives across national borders. When the rapid development of globalisation started to provide a wide range of opportunities for individuals to move around the world and to pursue their preferred lifestyles and development trajectories, it also generated critical challenges for families, including family separation. These challenges had crucial influences on reshaping the detailed structures, arrangements or even livelihoods of many individual families. They also played a vital role in shifting broader family values and cultural practices worldwide for different ethnic and cultural groups, for instance, their intergenerational relations, attitudes and practices towards eldercare and childrearing.

Nevertheless, in the face of those challenges, my participants' family experiences demonstrated that families are resilient. To manage those challenges and uphold their family wellbeing and interests, family members across different generations spared no effort to maintain their families' structural integrity and emotional coherence, even though critical physical distances and institutional barriers constantly intervened. It is for this reason that I entitled my thesis, "Family Finds a Way". Despite all of the challenges they faced, are facing, and might face in the foreseeable future, families will always find a way of doing family life.

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Appendix 1.1 Interview Questions for First-Generation Adult Immigrant

Semi-Structured Interview Outline

(First-generation adult immigrant)

Code:

Interviewee:

Interviewer:

Time:

Interview location:

Interview language:

Remarks:

* “Family members” in the following questions means “multigenerational immediate family members”

SECTION ONE: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

1. Gender: 2. Place of birth (country and city):

3. Age group:

16-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65&plus

4. Marital status: 5. Current resident location:

6. Which language can you speak?

7. Citizenship and immigration status:

A. Which citizenship (s) do you hold?

B. If you still have Chinese citizenship, 1) what immigration status do you hold now; 2) do you intend to take any other citizenship in the future? Why?

8. If applicable:

A. The year of first landing in New Zealand:

B. The year of achieving New Zealand permanent residency:

C. The year of achieving New Zealand citizenship:

D. Are you the principal immigrant in your family? If not, who is?

9. If applicable, migration category:

Skilled	**Business**	**Family spouse**	**Family parent**	**Family children**	**Others**

10. What is your highest education qualification (including major)? Where did you get that? Who supported your education?

11. How about your current occupation and previous working experiences?

12. What's your annual income? (NZ $)

No income	1-5,000	5,001-10,000	10,001-15,000	15,001-20,000	20,001-25,000	25,001-30,000
30,001-35,000	35,001-40,000	40,001-50,000	50,001-70,000	70,001-100,000	100,001 or more	

13. Do you own any property here in New Zealand? If yes, when you purchased it, anyone supported you from your family?

SECTION TWO: MULTIGENERATIONAL FAMILY MAINTENANCE AND RELATION IN TRANSNATIONAL FAMILY SETTING

1. Why did you immigrate to New Zealand and who initiated the idea? Did your family members support your immigration idea?

2. Now, do you go back to China often? How often and for what purpose? Are there any other ways for you to connect with China?

<u>Pre-immigration to New Zealand</u>

3. Can you tell me your family situation before the immigration (e.g. do you live together with your parents)? How do you think about this situation?

4. Were there any significant challenges for you or your family? Please elaborate it.

<u>After-immigration to New Zealand</u>

5. What's your current family arrangement (e.g. do your live with your parents)? What makes such an arrangement?

6. How's your current family relation under this arrangement?

A. Family activities (what and how often);

B. The ways of communication (how and how often)/mutual help (emotional, practical or financial) among family members.

7. Do you feel any gaps (e.g. life style, value system and religion) between you and your other family members? If yes, what are these gaps and what caused them?

8. Is there any language issue in your family in terms of the communication among different family members? If yes, what is the issue? Please elaborate it.

9. In general, is there any significant challenge under the current family arrangement? If yes, what are they? Please elaborate it.

SECTION THREE: GENERATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

1. Who are you (e.g. Chinese or New Zealander), and where do you feel you belong (e.g. China, New Zealand, or both, or what else)? Is that different from your other family members? What do you think attributes to such a difference?

2. What's your plan to take care of your ageing parents (do you think you can fulfill your filial obligations to your parents)? What's your expectation from your child(ren) in terms of your eldercare?

3. How's your perspective towards childrearing and child education? Why?

4. Do you still practice any Chinese cultural norms? For example, do you still celebrate Chinese New Year/Dragon boat Festival? If yes, what are the norms? If not, why?

SECTION FOUR: WRAPPING UP

1. Do you have any plan for yourself and your family for the future (e.g. personal career change, family arrangement and where to live)? Why do you have this plan? Do you think such plan will affect other members in your family?

2. Any other comments or questions

Appendix 1.2 Interview Questions for the Parent of First-Generation Adult Immigrant

Semi-Structured Interview Outline

(Parent of first-generation adult immigrant)

Code:

Interviewee:

Interviewer:

Time:

Interview location:

Interview language:

Remarks:

* "Family members" in the following questions means "multigenerational immediate family members"

SECTION ONE: INTERVIEWEE INFORMATION

1. Gender: 2. Place of birth (country and city):

3. Age group:

16-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65&plus

4. Marital status: 5. Current resident location:

6. Which language can you speak?

7. Citizenship and immigration status:

A. Which citizenship (s) do you hold?

B. If you still have Chinese citizenship, 1) what immigration status do you hold now; 2) do you intend to take any other citizenship in the future? Why?

8. If applicable:

A. The year of first landing in New Zealand:

B. The year of achieving New Zealand permanent residency:

C. The year of achieving New Zealand citizenship:

D. Are you the principal immigrant in your family? If not, who is?

9. If applicable, migration category:

Skilled	Business	Family spouse	Family parent	Family children	Others

10. What is your highest education qualification (including major)? Where did you get that?

11. How about your current occupation and previous working experiences?

12. What's your annual income? (NZ $)

No income	1-5,000	5,001-10,000	10,001-15,000	15,001-20,000	20,001-25,000	25,001-30,000
30,001-35,000	35,001-40,000	40,001-50,000	50,001-70,000	70,001-100,000	100,001 or more	

13. What is your housing tenure type? Why do you choose this? Is there anyone from your family helped you to achieve it?

SECTION TWO: MULTIGENERATIONAL FAMILY MAINTENANCE AND RELATION IN TRANSNATIONAL FAMILY SETTING

1. If applicable

Scenario 1 (for the parents who haven't immigrated to New Zealand yet) how do you think about the idea of immigrating to New Zealand?

Scenario 2 (for the parents who have immigrated to New Zealand) why did you immigrate to New Zealand and who initiated the idea? Do you think it is a good idea?

2. Now, do you go back to China often? How often and for what purpose? Are there any other ways for you to connect with China?

Pre-immigration to New Zealand

3. Can you tell me your family situation before the immigration (e.g. do you live together with your children)? How do you think about this situation?

4. Were there any significant challenges for you or your family? Please elaborate it.

After-immigration to New Zealand

5. What's your current family arrangement (e.g. do your live with your children)? What makes such an arrangement?

6. How's your current family relation?

A. Family activities (what and how often);

B. The ways of communication (how and how often)/mutual help (emotional, practical or financial) among family members.

7. Do you feel any gaps (e.g. life style, value system and religion) between you and your other family members? If yes, what are these gaps and what caused them?

8. Is there any language issue in your family in terms of the communication among different family members? If yes, what is the issue? Please elaborate it.

9. In general, is there any significant challenge under the current family arrangement? If yes, what are they? Please elaborate it.

SECTION THREE: GENERATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

1. Who are you (e.g. Chinese or New Zealander), and where do you feel you belong (e.g. China, New Zealand, or both, or what else)? Is that different from your other family members? What do you think attributes to such a difference?

2. What's your plan for the future when you are not able to take care of yourself (including the expectation of filial piety from your children)?

3. How's your perspective towards childrearing and child education? Why?

4**.** Do you still practice any Chinese cultural norms? For example, do you still celebrate Chinese New Year/Dragon boat Festival? If yes, what are the norms? If not, why?

SECTION FOUR: WRAPPING UP

1. Do you have any plan for yourself and your family for the future (e.g. family arrangement and where to live)? Why do you have this plan? Do you think such plan will affect other members in your family?

2. Any other comments or questions

Appendix 1.3 Interview Questions for the Child of First-Generation Adult Immigrant

Semi-Structured Interview Outline

(Child of first-generation adult immigrant)

Code:

Interviewee:

Interviewer:

Time:

Interview location:

Interview language:

Remarks:

* "Family members" in the following questions means "multigenerational immediate family members"

SECTION ONE: INTERVIEWEE INFORMATION

1. Gender: 2. Place of birth (country and city):

3. Age group:

16-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65&plus

4. Marital status: 5. Current resident location:

6. Which language can you speak?

7. Citizenship and immigration status:

A. Which citizenship (s) do you hold?

B. If you still have Chinese citizenship, 1) what immigration status do you hold now; 2) do you intend to take any other citizenship in the future? Why?

8. If applicable:

A. The year of first landing in New Zealand:

B. The year of achieving New Zealand permanent residency:

C. The year of achieving New Zealand citizenship:

D. Are you the principal immigrant in your family? If not, who is?

9. If applicable, migration category:

Skilled	Business	Family spouse	Family parent	Family children	Others

10. What is your highest education qualification (including major)? Where did you get that? Who supported your education?

11. How about your current occupation and previous working experiences?

12. What's your annual income? (NZ $)

No income	1-5,000	5,001-10,000	10,001-15,000	15,001-20,000	20,001-25,000	25,001-30,000
30,001-35,000	35,001-40,000	40,001-50,000	50,001-70,000	70,001-100,000	100,001 or more	

13. Do you own any property here in New Zealand? If yes, when you purchased it, anyone supported you from your family?

SECTION TWO: MULTIGENERATIONAL FAMILY MAINTENANCE AND RELATION IN TRANSNATIONAL FAMILY SETTING

1. (For 1.5 generation) how did you make your way to New Zealand? Who initiated the idea?

2. Now, do you go (back) to China often? How often and for what purpose? Are there any other ways for you to connect with China?

(For 1.5 generation) pre-immigration to New Zealand

3. Can you tell me about your family before the immigration (e.g. family arrangement and relationship)?

4. Were there any significant challenges for you or your family?

After-immigration to New Zealand

5. What's your current family arrangement? What makes such an arrangement?

6. How's your current family relation under this arrangement?

A. Family activities (what and how often);

B. The ways of communication (how and how often)/mutual help (emotional, practical or financial) among family members.

7. Do you feel any gaps (e.g. life style, value system and religion) between you and your other family members? If yes, what are these gaps and what caused them?

8. Is there any language issue in your family in terms of the communication among different family members? If yes, what is the issue? Please elaborate it.

9. In general, is there any significant challenge under the current family arrangement? If yes, what are they? Please elaborate it.

SECTION THREE: GENERATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

1. Who are you (e.g. Chinese or New Zealander), and where do you feel you belong (e.g. China, New Zealand, or both, or what else)? Is that different from your other family members? What do you think attributes to such a difference?

2. Have you ever thought about taking care of your parents when they are getting old (do you think you can fulfill your filial obligations towards your parents)?

3. How's your perspective towards childrearing and child education? Why?

4**.** Do you still practice any Chinese cultural norms? For example, do you still celebrate Chinese New Year/Dragon boat Festival? If yes, what are the norms? If not, why?

SECTION FOUR: WRAPPING UP

1. Do you have any plan for yourself for the future (e.g. personal career change, family arrangement and where to live)? Why do you have this plan? Do you think such plan will affect other members in your family?

2. Any other comments or questions

Appendix 2 Interviewees Profile

Generation profile	No.	Name (pseudonym)	Age group	Gender	Citizenship and immigration status	Immigration pathway	Interview site	Place of origins	Home ownership		Notes
									NZ	CN	
First-generation adult immigrants	1	Li	35-44	M	NZ citizen	Skilled	Central Auckland	Guangdong, PRC	✓		Only-child
(No. 16)	2	Dong	30-34	F	PRC citizen/NZ PR	Skilled	Auckland City centre	Chongqing, PRC	✓		Only-child
	3	Fei	30-34	M	PRC citizen/NZ PR	Skilled	Central Auckland	Heilongjiang, PRC		✓	Only-child
	4	Tu	35-44	F	NZ citizen	Skilled	North Shore, Auckland	Shanghai, PRC	✓		Only-child
	5	Zhang	55-64	F	NZ citizen	Spouse	Albany, Auckland	Shaanxi, PRC	✓		
	6	Lin	35-44	F	PRC citizen/NZ PR	Skilled	Albany, Auckland	Beijing, PRC	✓		Only-child
	7	Wen	35-44	F	PRC citizen/NZ PR	Spouse	Eastern Auckland	Beijing, PRC	✓		Only-child
	8	Lu	35-44	F	PRC citizen/NZ PR	Skilled	Eastern Auckland	Liaoning, PRC	✓		Only-child
	9	Liu	35-44	F	PRC citizen/NZ PR	Skilled	Eastern Auckland	Liaoning, PRC	✓		
	10	Zheng	35-44	M	PRC citizen/NZ PR	Spouse	North Shore, Auckland	Liaoning, PRC	✓		
	11	Tao	30-34	F	PRC citizen/NZ PR	Skilled	Chongqing, PRC	Chongqing, PRC	✓		Only-child
	12	Cai	30-34	F	PRC citizen/NZ PR	Skilled	Western Auckland	Hubei, PRC	✓		Only-child
	13	Wang	55-64	F	PRC citizen/NZ PR	Business	Central Auckland	Henan, PRC	✓		
	14	Tan	45-54	F	PRC citizen/NZ PR	Business	Albany, Auckland	Guangdong, PRC	✓		
	15	Liu	35-44	F	PRC citizen/NZ PR	Skilled	Shanghai, PRC	Shanghai, PRC	✓		Only-child
	16	Zhang	35-44	F	PRC citizen/NZ PR	Skilled	Albany, Auckland	Shaanxi, PRC	✓		Only-child

Parents of first-generation adult immigrants	1	Chang	65&plus	F	PRC citizen/NZ PR	Parent	North Shore, Auckland	Fujian, PRC			Parent of Only-child
(No. 17)	2	Lian	65&plus	F	PRC citizen/NZ PR	Parent	North Shore, Auckland	Beijing, PRC		✓	
	3	Zheng	65&plus	M	PRC citizen/NZ PR	Parent	North Shore, Auckland	Shanghai, PRC			Parent of Only-child
	4	Feng	65&plus	F	PRC citizen/NZ PR	Parent	North Shore, Auckland	Shanghai, PRC			Parent of Only-child
	5	Li	65&plus	F	PRC citizen/NZ family visitor	N/A	Sichuan, PRC	Sichuan, PRC		✓	Parent of Only-child
	6	Yan	65&plus	M	PRC citizen/NZ PR	Parent	North Shore, Auckland	Fujian, PRC		✓	Parent of Only-child
	7	Li	55-64	F	PRC citizen/NZ PR	Parent	Chongqing, PRC	Chongqing, PRC		✓	Parent of Only-child
	8	Wen	65&plus	F	PRC citizen/NZ family visitor	N/A	Shanghai, PRC	Shanghai, PRC		✓	Parent of Only-child
	9	Dong	65&plus	M	PRC citizen/NZ PR	Parent	North Shore, Auckland	Shanghai, PRC		✓	Parent of Only-child
	10	Zhang	65&plus	F	PRC citizen/NZ family visitor	N/A	North Shore, Auckland	Shanghai, PRC		✓	Parent of Only-child
	11	Gong	65&plus	F	PRC citizen/NZ PR	Parent	Albany, Auckland	Beijing, PRC		✓	Parent of Only-child
	12	Ran	65&plus	F	PRC citizen/NZ PR	Parent	Albany, Auckland	Hubei, PRC			Parent of Only-child
	13	Wang	65&plus	F	PRC citizen/NZ PR	Parent	Central Auckland	Guangdong, PRC		✓	
	14	Tan	65&plus	M	PRC citizen/NZ PR	Parent	Central Auckland	Guangdong, PRC		✓	
	15	Liu	65&plus	M	PRC citizen/NZ PR	Parent	Eastern Auckland	Liaoning, PRC			Parent of Only-child
	16	Guo	55-64	F	PRC citizen/NZ family visitor	N/A	Eastern Auckland	Sichuan, PRC		✓	Parent of Only-child
	17	Hu	55-64	M	PRC citizen/NZ family visitor	N/A	Shaanxi, PRC	Shaanxi, PRC		✓	Parent of Only-child

Children of first-generation adult immigrants	1	Tim	25-29	M	PRC citizen/NZ PR	Dependent child	Albany, Auckland	Tianjin, PRC			
(No. 12)	2	Charlie	30-35	M	NZ citizen	NZ born	Central Auckland	Auckland, NZ	✓		
	3	Dean	20-24	M	NZ citizen	Dependent child	Albany, Auckland	Hebei, PRC			Child of only-Child
	4	Peng	20-24	M	PRC citizen/NZ PR	Dependent child	Western Auckland	Liaoning, PRC			Child of only-Child
	5	Kelvin	20-24	M	NZ citizen	NZ born	Eastern Auckland	Auckland, NZ			
	6	Sebrina	20-24	F	NZ citizen	NZ born	Eastern Auckland	Auckland, NZ			
	7	Cindy	20-24	F	NZ citizen	NZ born	Auckland city	Palmerston North, NZ			
	8	Michael	20-24	M	NZ citizen	NZ born	Auckland city	Auckland, NZ			
	9	Judy	25-29	F	NZ citizen	NZ born	North Shore, Auckland	Auckland, NZ			
	10	Philipps	25-29	M	NZ citizen	Dependent Child	North Shore, Auckland	Hainan, PRC			Child of only-Child
	11	Selena	20-24	F	NZ citizen	NZ born	North Shore, Auckland	Auckland, NZ			
	12	Cecilia	20-24	F	NZ citizen	NZ born	North Shore, Auckland	Auckland, NZ			

Appendix 3 Human Ethics Approval

Date: 18 January 2018

Dear Guanyu Ran

Re: Ethics Notification - **4000018863** - **The Making of A Virtual Home: Multigenerational Chinese Migrant Families in New Zealand**

Thank you for your notification which you have assessed as Low Risk.

Your project has been recorded in our system which is reported in the Annual Report of the Massey University Human Ethics Committee.

The low risk notification for this project is valid for a maximum of three years.

If situations subsequently occur which cause you to reconsider your ethical analysis, please go to http://rims.massey.ac.nz and register the changes in order that they be assessed as safe to proceed.

Please note that travel undertaken by students must be approved by the supervisor and the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor and be in accordance with the Policy and Procedures for Course-Related Student Travel Overseas. In addition, the supervisor must advise the University's Insurance Officer.

A reminder to include the following statement on all public documents:
"This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named in this document are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you want to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Dr Brian Finch, Director - Ethics, telephone 06 3569099 ext 86015, email humanethics@massey.ac.nz. "

Please note, if a sponsoring organisation, funding authority or a journal in which you wish to publish requires evidence of committee approval (with an approval number), you will have to complete the application form again, answering "yes" to the publication question to provide more information for one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. You should also note that such an approval can only be provided prior to the commencement of the research.

Yours sincerely

Research Ethics Office, Research and Enterprise
Massey University, Private Bag 11 222, Palmerston North, 4442, New Zealand **T** 06 350 5573; 06 350 5575 **F** 06 355 7973
E humanethics@massey.ac.nz **W** http://humanethics.massey.ac.nz

Human Ethics Low Risk notification

Dr Brian Finch
Chair. Human Ethics Chairs' Committee and Director (Research Ethics)

Research Ethics Office, Research and Enterprise
Massey University, Private Bag 11 222, Palmerston North, 4442, New Zealand **T** 06 350 5573; 06 350 5575 **F** 06 355 7973
E humanethics@massey.ac.nz **W** http://humanethics.massey.ac.nz

Appendix 4 Participant Information Sheet

Participant Information Sheet

- Family Finds a Way: Experiences of Multigenerational Transnational New Chinese Immigrant Families in New Zealand

About the principal investigator

Hi, I am Guanyu Jason Ran, a Ph.D. candidate from Massey University, New Zealand. I am now conducting a research project about new Chinese transnational immigrant families in New Zealand.

What this research is about?

This research is designed to explore how transnational migration and its associated issues, such as the increasingly tightened immigration policy, shape the dynamics of new Chinese multigenerational immigrant families in New Zealand. The dynamics of the family relationship among different generations, as well as the coping mechanisms for relocation and dislocation, will be in the focus of this research.

Who can participate in this research?

Since this research adopted a three-generation framework, the participants of this research will be classified into the following three categories, namely, the first-generation adult immigrants, their children and older parents.

Any family members from the multigenerational Chinese immigrant families, which can meet all the following conditions, can participate in this research:

A. You or your immediate family members are originally from the People's Republic of China (PRC);

B. You are the New Zealand Resident, Permanent Resident or citizen, or your immediate family members are New Zealand Residents, Permanent Residents or citizens;

C. Your family came to New Zealand after 1987;

D. You are at least 16 years old.

What is the approximate number of the participants involved in this research?

Approximately 45 people will be interviewed for this research. Each generation includes about 15 interviewees.

What will be done if I take part in this research?

You will be interviewed on issues relating to your migration or on-going migration processes and family arrangement and relation. Each interview will take approximately 60 minutes, and the interview venue could be any place that is convenient for you.

Your permission will be sought for:

A. The interview will be audio-recorded. However, if you feel uncomfortable with the recording, I will take written notes instead;

B. You will be re-contacted in case the need for clarification arises. However, you do not have to agree if you do not wish so.

Please note that the quotes from your interview may be published in a publication or presentation arising from this research. However, you will NOT be identified in any publication.

How will my privacy and the confidentiality of the research record be protected?

Only the principal investigator has your identifiable information, i.e., your names and contact information. This information is used to schedule interviews and meeting, and will not be released to any other person. Identifiable information will never be used in a publication or presentation. All your identifiable information and research data will be coded (i.e. only identified with a code number) at the earliest possible stage of the research.

Your identifiable information will not be recorded and will not appear in the transcript. Quotes from the interview published will not identify you. All research data will be stored in a password–protected computer for 1 year after the project is completed in 2020. However, after the data collected has been analysed, all of your identifiable information, including any hard copies, will be deleted from all the PI's records.

What are the possible discomforts and risks for participants?

Some participants may find that the questions asked evoke some emotional and/or psychological discomfort. Should this happen, you can pause for a break or stop participation at any time. Please note that you so do not have to answer any questions that you do not wish to.

What are the possible benefits to others and me?

There is no direct benefit to you and/or your family members by participating in this research. The knowledge gained may benefit the policy-making in the future.

Can I and/or my family members refuse to participate in this research?

Yes, you all can. The decision to participate is voluntary and completely up to you. Any participants also can withdraw at any time without giving any reasons, by informing the investigator and all their information collected will be discarded.

If you have any question or problem, please contact the principal investigator or the research supervisor:

Mr. Guanyu Ran (PI)
Tel: 0064 210428602
Email: ranguanyu@gmail.com

Dr. Liangni Sally Liu (Supervisor)
Tel: 0064 4140800 extn 43699
Email: l.liu2@massey.ac.nz

Appendix 5 Participant Consent Form

Participant Consent Form

- Family Finds a Way: Experiences of Multigenerational Transnational New Chinese Immigrant Families in New Zealand

By signing this form, I acknowledge that:

- I have been informed about the research project and understand the nature of the study. I have had the opportunity to ask the researcher questions about the project and they have been answered to my satisfaction.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I can withdraw from the study at any time.
- I agree/don't agree to be audio recorded. I understand that I can ask for the audio recording to be switched off at any time. (**please circle one option**)
- The access to the interview record will be limited to the research investigator, and relevant academic colleagues and researchers whom he might collaborate with as part of the research process.
- My identifiable information will be anonymous. Any summary interview content, or direct quotations from the interview, that are made available through academic publication or other academic outlets will be anonymised so that I cannot be identified, and care will be taken to ensure that other information in the interview that could identify myself is not revealed.
- I agree to take part in this research under the conditions outlined in the Participant Information Sheet.

Participant Signature **Researcher Signature**

Date **Date**