

COTA Over 50s' Postgraduate Research Awards

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Filial responsibilities and expectations: A cross-cultural perspective,
comparing Anglo-and Chinese-Australians

Abstract

Australia's older population has become more diversified in terms of country of origin and ethnicity. The number of overseas-born older Australians will increase from 17.8 percent in 1996 to 22.5 percent by 2011 (Lawson, Barbaro, & Goulding, 2003).

Essentially, by 2051, people with Asian cultural backgrounds will represent a large part of Australia's older population. This new wave of migrant groups will eventually replace the current trend of older people from European backgrounds (Andrews, 2002). The Commonwealth Government has therefore recognised challenges and opportunities offered by this trend as a National Research Priority (DEST, 2002).

As a result of modernisation and Westernisation, questions have been raised as to the relevance of the value of filial piety in East and South-east Asian societies (e.g. Chow, 2004). While studies have been primarily conducted in countries where the traditional value of filial piety is deeply engrained (e.g. Korea, China, Singapore and Hong Kong), the present study looks at the concept of filial piety and its prevalence of those living abroad, that is, exploring the value of filial piety within the context of migration.

The research presented here is part of a large-scale quantitative study that looked at ageing well, filial piety, acculturation, and psychological well-being. Because cross-cultural research on value orientations of migrants has been very limited, the focus of this research was to assess the values and meanings associated with filial piety within the context of Australia. This paper examines similarities and differences between Chinese-

Australians and Anglo-Australians with respect to various aspects of filial responsibilities towards older adults and filial expectations they have of younger adults. This study comprised a total of 268 participants, which consisted of 152 Anglo-Australians and 116 Chinese-Australians. Questionnaires were available in Chinese and in English. Participants were recruited from various parts of Australia, mainly from South Australia, where the research was conducted.

The findings of this study revealed that Chinese-Australians and Anglo-Australians shared different ideas about their responsibilities towards older adults and their expectations in old age. Certain aspects of parental care and support were more prominent in the Chinese group than the Anglo group. Looking after, giving financial assistance, respecting older adults, and pleasing and making older adults happy were particularly salient for Chinese-Australians. Although there appears to be a shift in filial piety (filial behaviours and beliefs) in various parts of the world, there is indication that the tradition of filial piety is still quite relevant, even within the Australian context.

The intention of this research is to increase knowledge and understanding of the issues affecting the Chinese community of Australia, recognising within group differences. By considering their value orientations, it offers an indication of the extent to which filial piety is supported and hence, an understanding towards potential use of formal and informal services. This research has potential for wider application across a range of diverse communities to assess the values and meanings of old age within the context of Australia.

Intro

Australia's older population has become more diversified in terms of country of origin and ethnicity. The Asian community is a large and fast growing cultural minority in Australia. Although older people from Poland, Italy, Germany, Greece and the Netherlands currently make up the largest group of overseas born Australians (Bryant, 2002), other emerging groups is projected to take the place of the current group. In 10 years, it is projected that the older Chinese population will be included in the top five groups, taking the place of Polish older people (Bryant, 2002). By 2026, it is projected that the Vietnamese will be in the top five, taking the place of the Dutch. Furthermore, older people from the Philippines, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Lebanon will also significantly represent the older population of Australia (Bryant, 2002). Essentially, by 2051, people with Asian cultural backgrounds will represent a large part of the older population. This new wave of migrant groups will eventually replace the current trend of older people from European backgrounds (Andrews, 2002). In 2001, the Census revealed that just over a quarter (26%) of Australia's population had at least one overseas-born parent (ABS, 2007).

According to a recent report by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care, the number of overseas-born older Australians will increase from 17.8 percent in 1996 to 22.5 percent by 2011 (Lawson et al., 2003). This means that one in five older Australians will be from a non-English speaking, overseas backgrounds (Andrews, 2002). In 2011, Victoria is projected to have the most diverse older population, almost a third

(30.8%) of its older population being immigrants from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD). This is followed by the Australian Capital Territory (26.6%), the Northern Territory (25.9%), New South Wales (24.2%), Western Australia (20.7%), South Australia (20.6%), Queensland (11.6%) and Tasmania (7.9%) (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2001). Further, over the next 15 years, it is expected that there will be a substantial 66 percent increase in the size of this group within the Australian community, almost three times the rate of growth for people of the same age who were Australian-born (Lawson et al., 2003).

The ageing of Australia's population will continue and this ageing trend will have a significant impact on society as a whole. Demands for long-term care will also increase because people are generally living longer. Improved standards of living and health conditions contribute to higher life expectancies, 80.8 years for men and 84.6 years for women (Lawson et al., 2003). However, increasing levels of frailty and disability also accompany this. Long-term care costs in Australia are expected to increase between 1997 (\$3.15b) and 2031 (\$6.72b), an increment of 113.3 percent (Madge, 2000 in Lawson et al., 2003). Current demographic trends demand not only greater need for social, medical and health services but also culturally appropriate aged care services. The Commonwealth Government has therefore recognised challenges and opportunities offered by this trend as a National Research Priority (DEST, 2002).

Immigrating to a foreign country is a life-changing event. Migration involves uprooting oneself from a life they have always known, to a country that has a different set of values

and cultural systems (Kim, 1997). In particular, older immigrants who experience the shift from one country to another need to adjust to different set of values, lifestyles and customs (Mackinnon, Gien, & Durst, 1996). Migrants may also experience issues regarding role adjustment, availability and use of services, separation, language barriers, possible loss of income and social network (Baltas & Steptoe, 2000). As a consequence, migrants in particular have higher risk of dependency and isolation, thereby increasing their vulnerability in old age (Treas & Mazumdar, 2002). Because migrants vary in their migration experience, they therefore encounter various levels of difficulties and settlement issues. Further, immigrating to a culture that significantly deviates from one's cultural background can challenge the manner in which many things are understood.

The Chinese heritage follows the Confucian philosophy. The essence of Confucianism is harmony, along with loyalty to the family and selflessness of oneself (Chen, 2001). Filial piety is an English translation of what is otherwise known as *xiao* (Chow, 2004), which essentially means respecting and caring for one's parents (Mak & Chan, 1995). Chow (2004) asserts that 'the value demands respect from the young towards the old, to such an extent that an obligation is laid on the former to support the latter' (p. S21). Although the tradition of filial piety in East and Southeast Asian societies is declining, filial piety 'remains to be the most important value in regulating the behavior of children towards their elderly parents and relatives' (Chow, 2004, p. S21). The 'right' of older adults to be taken care of and the 'duty' of adult children to deliver care to their ageing parents (Stein et al., 1998) depend largely on societal expectations and 'socialization to a cultural standard of what is socially responsible behaviour' (Cicirelli, 1993, p. 144).

There is evidence to suggest that filial piety differs across cultures. Ng, Loong, Liu, and Weatherall's (2000) cross-cultural study in New Zealand looked at filial obligations of young people when it comes to looking after older parents and grandparents.

Comparisons were made between the Chinese and European families across two generations. Overall, participants revealed that 'social contact' and 'respect' to be a broadly shared obligation. However, Chinese were higher on obedience and financial support than Europeans. On the whole, Chinese also scored higher on most other obligations (Ng, Loong, Liu, & Weatherall, 2000).

Filial piety not only differed across cultures but they also differed within cultures. Older Chinese in Australia reported the need for traditional filial values such as familial support and respect but at the same time, the need for financial and physical independence from family members was also important in order for them to maintain a good quality of life (Tsang, Liamputtong, & Pierson, 2004). As society and the structure of the family undergo continual change, the values and meanings associated with filial piety becomes rather ambiguous (Sung, 1997).

Filial piety has undergone considerable change and the meanings attached to the traditional notion of looking after one's parents have also shifted. Sung (1997) reported that although the son was traditionally obligated to look after his parents by living with them, an arrangement that was common within the Korean culture, this is no longer the requirement. Filial responsibilities are now applied to adult children regardless of gender

and there are an increase number of parents living independently of their children (Sung, 1997). Factors that facilitated this change include rapid economic growth and more women joining the workforce (Chen, 2001). This also means that more and more elderly people are being looked after by formal health services than their own family members (Chen, 2001).

Other studies have reported that one still retains their own cultural values despite living in a different cultural setting and social changes. (Seelbach & Die, 1988) study revealed that Vietnamese immigrants to America over the age of 57 reported strong sense of filial norms and family cohesiveness. This particular group of older Vietnamese-Americans held on to the notion of filial obligations and believed that their children should provide care and shelter for the elderly even though younger Vietnamese-Americans were observed to be less willing to look after the next generation of older people than their parents. However, when it comes to financial matters, older Vietnamese-Americans believed that it was the government's duty to look after the aged in the area of finance. Older migrants therefore face unique challenges in relation to their traditional values. Values from one's country of origin may conflict with the dominant Western culture in which they now live. Therefore, whether filial piety is still relevant in the modern world has been the subject of recent debate (Chow, 2006).

Formal care and home support services are usually the accepted form of support network in Western societies for the elderly. Placements into aged care facilities are more widely accepted in Western countries (De Vaus, 1996). Asians are less likely to utilise nursing

homes than their Western counterparts. Despite prevailing commitment within the Asian communities in Australia to support and care for older members of the family, some believe that this is likely to decrease over time with the influence of 'Westernization' (Hanan & Lieu, 1991). When living in the dominant Western culture, its level of influence is greater. For example, an American study observed that younger Vietnamese-Americans were less willing to look after the next generation of older people than their parents (Seelbach & Die, 1988). This again is attributed to change in family norms and influence of living in the dominant individualist values. Migrants who are ageing are usually confronted with issues of cultural conflict as well as issues of old age. Unfortunately, little is known about Australia's general older population as potential care recipients and factors that influence their future care plans (i.e. familial obligations and responsibilities). There is lesser insight into the needs and issues of minority groups, specifically the Chinese community of Australia (Martin, 1998).

Given the increasing number of migrants from Asia into Australia, more attention has been given to culturally appropriate services to meet the potential demands on services for this particular group. However, the infrastructure to support traditional ways of life is mainly inadequate for overseas Chinese communities which present various challenges (Liu, Ng, Weatherall, & Loong, 2000). As detailed in the Commonwealth's National Strategy for an Ageing Australia, people's cultural and linguistic backgrounds are crucial elements to be considered in determining appropriate healthy ageing strategies (Andrews, 2001). Remarkably however, few studies have looked at the perceptions and value orientations of migrants. Hence, there is an increasing need for research investigating

future care expectations and the prevalence of filial piety within the context of migration. Thus, the present study hopes to contribute to a better understanding of the issues related to the needs and expectations of Australia's diverse ageing population. In particular, the focus of the research is to assess the values and meanings associated with filial piety within the context of Australia.

The PhD research project consists of two studies. The first study is a qualitative study involving 21 participants over the age of 55. Anglo-and Chinese-Australians were asked about their experiences and expectations of ageing, and their thoughts about ageing well and future care through semi-structured interviews. Themes were identified through Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. The current paper presents results from the second study, which is part of a large-scale quantitative study that looked at ageing well, filial piety, acculturation, and psychological well-being. This paper examines cultural variations with regards to filial responsibilities and expectations of Anglo-Australians and Chinese-Australians over the age of 55. It is particularly concerned with comparing the views and characteristics of Anglo-Australians and Chinese-Australians on various aspects of filial responsibilities and filial expectations.

Method

Selection Criteria. To be eligible, participants must be over the age of 55, community-dwelling, living in Australia, able to fully comprehend and complete with the study requirements (i.e. self-perceived ability to answer the questionnaires), and is either a

Chinese-Australian or an Anglo-Australian (definitions provided to participants). With much difficulty and careful consideration, the two groups were defined for the purposes of the research as follows: *Chinese-Australians* were defined as those who considered themselves to be Chinese. Their country of origin, for example, included China, Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong etc. This included people born in Asia to one or both Chinese parents, who migrated to Australia and those born in Australia to at least one Chinese parent. *Anglo-Australians* were defined as those from Western background (of English descent). Their country of origin, for example, included England, Ireland, and Scotland etc. This included people either born overseas to one or both Western parents, who migrated to Australia and those born in Australia to at least one Western parent, or have lived in Australia most of their lives.

Participants. The second study comprised a total of 268 participants. Participants were recruited from various parts of Australia. Majority (n= 117, 44.7%) of the sample group were from South Australia, where the research was conducted. The sample group consisted of 152 Anglo-Australians and 116 Chinese-Australians, which constituted 56.7% and 43.3% of the sample respectively. Within the Chinese-Australian group, there were 68 (58.6%) English-speaking and 48 (41.4%) Chinese-speaking Chinese-Australian participants. The Anglo-Australian group was slightly older than the Chinese-Australian group ($t(263) = 2.287, p < .05$). The average age of Anglo-Australians was 67.1 years (age ranged between 55 and 96, $SD = 8.553$) and Chinese-Australians were 64.7 years (age ranged between 45 and 86, $SD = 8.411$). The sample consisted of more female (n= 149, 56.7%) than male (n= 114, 43.3%) participants. The Anglo-Australian group

consisted of 90 females (60%) and 60 males (40%), and the Chinese-Australian group consisted of 59 females (52.2%) and 54 males (47.8%).

Majority (76.9%) of the participants were married or in defacto relationships. Thirty (11.8%) were widowed, 25 (9.8%) divorced and 4 (1.6%) were either single or never married. Participants had up to six children. Seventeen (7.1%) of the participants did not have children, 29 (12.1%) had one child, 88 (36.5%) had two children, 70 (29%) had three children, 25 (10.4%) had four children, 11 (4.6%) had five and one (0.4%) participant had six children. Overall, half of the sample indicated that they live with their spouse or partner. More than half (58.1%) of the Anglo-Australian sample indicated that they were living with their spouse or partner compared to 39.5% of Chinese-Australians. More Anglo-Australians (23.6%) live alone compared to 9.5% of their Chinese-Australian counterparts. Majority (n=110, 44.5%) of the participants were not working. Fifty-five participants were engaged in full-time employment, of which 22 (15.8%) were Anglo-Australians, 33 (30.6%) were Chinese-Australians. More Anglo-Australians (24.5%) were engaged in volunteer work compared to Chinese-Australians (6.5%). Majority (66%) of participants indicated their activity level as 'moderately active', 24.8% indicated 'very active' and 9.2% were 'rarely active'.

The sample group consisted of 149 migrants, which constituted 58.9% of the total sample. Almost a third (n= 45) of Anglo-Australians had migrated to Australia compared to 92.9% (n= 104) of Chinese-Australians. The biggest number of English-speaking Chinese-Australians originated from Malaysia (n= 27) and Hong Kong (n= 18). Majority

of the Chinese-speaking Chinese-Australians did not indicate their country of origin. Migrants had come to Australia through various circumstances and with different reasons. Overall, majority (32%) of the sample group migrated with young children. Anglo-Australians had predominantly migrated with young children (n= 14, 31.1%) and with their parents (n= 12, 26.7%). Similarly, majority (n= 21, 35%) of the English-speaking Chinese-Australians had also migrated with young children, 14 (23.3%) had migrated on their own and 12 (20%) had migrated to be with their children. Over half (51.3%) of the Chinese-speaking Chinese-Australians had migrated to be with their children in Australia and 11 (28.2%) had come with young children. Migrants had arrived in Australia between 1933 and 2007. Length of residency ranged from 2 years up to 72 years. Age of arrival in Australia ranged between 1 and 84 years. Anglo-Australians arrived in Australia at a much younger age. Twelve Anglo-Australians arrived in Australia between the ages of 1 to 15 years. English-speaking Chinese-Australians arrived in Australia from 15 years of age and the Chinese-speaking Chinese-Australians migrated from 19 years of age.

Materials. Participants completed a battery of questionnaires that looked at ageing well, filial piety, acculturation, and psychological well-being. For the purposes of this paper, only relevant questionnaires will be listed.

Demographics. Participants were asked basic demographic information. It asked typical questions such as education, perceived health status, their level of activity, and questions about their migration. Questions about migration were not set out to be intrusive, asking

standard questions for example, year of migration, age upon arrival and which migration stream they have come under.

Filial Piety Scale. The current study employed an adapted version of the ‘Filial Obligations and Expectations Questionnaire’ (Liu et al., 2000; Ng et al., 2000) in order to look at general value orientations around future care and responsibilities. Items were reflective of responsibilities and expectations of future care.

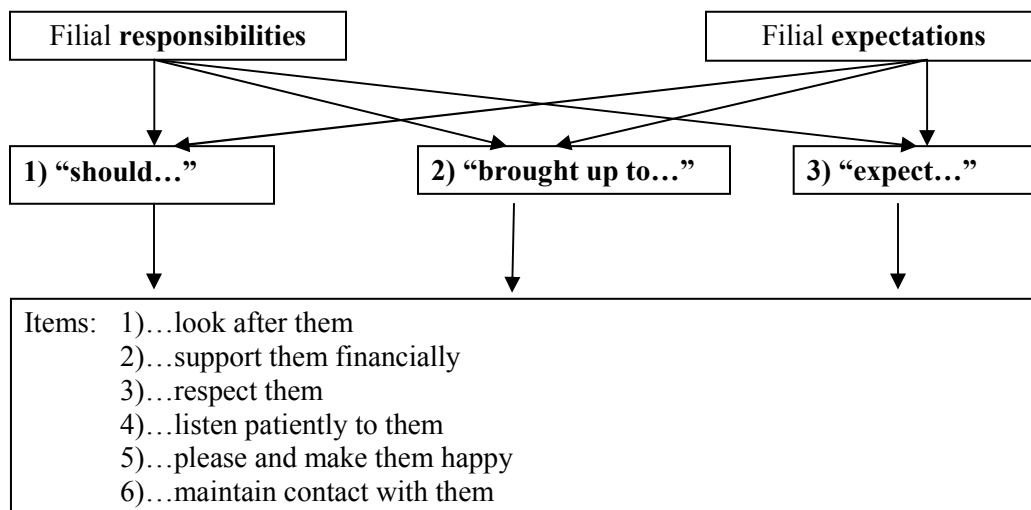


Figure 1: Filial Piety Scale

‘Filial responsibilities’ and ‘Filial expectations’ comprised of three subscales each (Figure 1). The subscales referred to participants’ thoughts and perceptions of whether they believed that they “should...”, “brought up to...”, and “expect...” The first section, ‘Filial obligations/responsibilities young adults have toward older adults’ comprised of the following three subscales: 1) ‘Adult children/young adults should have the responsibility to...’ 2) ‘Have been brought up to have the obligations/responsibilities to...’ 3) ‘Expect that you will (or you already have to)...’ The second section referred to

'Filial expectations of older adults', which comprised of the following subscales: 1) 'It is an expectation of older adults that adult children/young adults should...' 2) 'Have been brought up to expect...' 3) 'In your old age, would you expect...'

For each of the three subscales, there were six adjoining items, which made a total of 36 questions. For example, 1) "...look after them, 2) "...support them financially", 3) "...respect them", 4) "...listen patiently to them", 5) "...please and make them happy", and 6) "...maintain contact with them". Participants were, for example, asked about their expectations in later life: "In your old age, would you expect..." to be completed by the following adjoined sentences: 1) "...to be looked after by younger adults", 2) "...financial assistance from young adults", 3) "...young adults to respect you because your age, 4) "...young adults to listen patiently to you, 5) "...young adults to please and make you happy, 6) "...young adults to retain contact with you". Each item was measured using a five point Likert scale: 1= strongly disagree, 5= strongly agree. The 36 itemed questionnaire has high reliability (Cronbach's alpha= 0.954), which means the scale has good estimates for internal consistency.

Participants were also asked about their '*opinion on children caring for their elderly parents*' (Ogawa & Retherford, 1993), coded as: 1= Good custom, 2= Natural duty as children, 3= Unavoidable due to inadequacy of public facilities and old age pensions, 4= Not a good custom, 5= Do not know, 6= Other and 7= No answer

Data collection. Eight hundred and seventy-three questionnaire packages were distributed across Australia to various organizations, local groups, support workers, community leaders and to individual themselves. Questionnaires were available in Chinese and in English. Both Anglo-Australians and Chinese-Australians were given the same battery of questionnaires with the exception that the Chinese-Australian group was also given an additional scale to complete, the modified Suinn-Lew Self-Identity Acculturation Scale (SL-Asia Scale) (Suinn, Ahuna, & Khoo, 1992; Suinn, Rickard-Figueroa, Lew, & Vigil, 1987).

Participants were ensured confidentiality and anonymity. They were assigned a code number instead. Participation was completely voluntary and participants were not paid. Participants had the right to withdraw from the study at any time and they were able to contact someone who was not directly involved with the study to address any grievances. Chinese speaking participants were assigned a contact person who not only spoke the language but was carefully selected for anonymity and confidentiality reasons.

Results

Filial obligations/responsibilities towards older adults

Filial obligations and responsibilities look at whether one agrees that young adults should have the responsibility towards older adults, whether they have been brought up to have obligations and responsibilities towards older adults, and their expectations towards older

adults. Means, standard deviations and t-value for ‘Filial obligations and responsibilities young adults have toward older adults’ are shown in Tables 1, 2 and 3.

‘Adult children/young adults should have the responsibility to...’

	Anglo-Australians M (SD)	Chinese-Australians M (SD)	t-value
1. . . . look after older adults	2.99 (.930)	3.96 (.864)	-8.588***
2. . . . financially assist older adults	2.63 (.855)	3.82 (.830)	-11.100***
3. . . . respect older adults because of their age	3.81 (.927)	4.16 (.804)	-3.171**
4. . . . listen patiently to older adults	3.73 (.894)	3.88 (.720)	ns
5. . . . please older adults and make them happy	3.12 (.958)	3.56 (.879)	-3.716***
6. . . . retain contact with older adults	4.21 (.688)	4.36 (.631)	ns

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$, non-significant (ns)

Table 1: Means, standard deviations and t-value for whether ‘Adult children/young adults should have the responsibility to...’

When participants were asked about responsibilities of adult children/young adults, there were significant differences between the two groups. As shown in Table 1, Chinese-Australians rated significantly greater than Anglo-Australians that adult children/young adults should have the responsibility to ‘look after older adults’ ($t(259) = -8.588, p < .001$), ‘financially assist older adults’ ($t(253) = -11.100, p < .001$), ‘respect older adults because of their age’ ($t(260) = -3.171, p < .01$), and ‘please older adults and make them happy’ ($t(255) = -3.716, p < .001$). However, there were no significant differences between the two groups when it comes to whether adult children/young adults should have the responsibility to ‘listen patiently to older adults’ ($p = .134$) and ‘retain contact with older adults’ ($p = .061$).

‘Have been brought up to have the obligations/responsibilities to...’

	Anglo-Australians M (SD)	Chinese-Australians M (SD)	t-value
1. . . . look after older adults	3.41 (1.087)	4.20 (.746)	-7.025***
2. . . . financially assist older adults	2.84 (.993)	4.03 (.822)	-10.481***
3. . . . respect older adults because of their age	4.05 (.749)	4.35 (.696)	-3.327***
4. . . . listen patiently to older adults	3.93 (.745)	4.06 (.705)	ns
5. . . . please older adults and make them happy	3.56 (.903)	3.89 (.797)	-3.130**
6. . . . retain contact with older adults	4.15 (.693)	4.31 (.701)	ns

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$, non-significant (ns)

Table 2: Means, standard deviations and t-value for whether they ‘Have been brought up to have the obligations/responsibilities to...’

Table 2 shows that when participants were asked about whether they have been brought up to have filial responsibilities towards older adults, there were significant differences between the two groups. Chinese-Australians rated significantly greater than their Anglo-Australian counterparts that they have been brought up to have the responsibilities to ‘look after older adults’ ($t(256) = -7.025, p < .001$), ‘financially assist older adults’ ($t(251) = -10.481, p < .001$), ‘respect older adults because of their age’ ($t(244) = -3.327, p < .001$), and ‘please older adults and make them happy’ ($t(247) = -3.130, p < .01$). However, there were no differences in upbringing between the two groups when it comes to ‘listen patiently to older adults’ ($p = .187$) and ‘retain contact with older adults’ ($p = .076$).

‘Expect that you will (or you already have to)...’

	Anglo-Australians M (SD)	Chinese-Australians M (SD)	t-value
1. . . . look after older adults	3.50 (1.081)	4.04 (.890)	-4.328***
2. . . . financially assist older adults	2.85 (.991)	3.89 (.809)	-9.190***
3. . . . respect older adults because of their age	3.96 (.766)	4.15 (.804)	-1.980*
4. . . . listen patiently to older adults	4.03 (.674)	4.02 (.723)	ns
5. . . . please older adults and make them happy	3.60 (.941)	3.80 (.840)	ns
6. . . . retain contact with older adults	4.19 (.645)	4.16 (.751)	ns

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$, non-significant (ns)

Table 3: Means, standard deviations and t-value for ‘Expect that you will (or you already have to)...’

As shown in Table 3, Chinese-Australians again rated significantly higher than Anglo-Australians on their expectations towards caring for older adults. Mean comparisons showed that Chinese-Australians felt more obliged to ‘look after older adults’ ($t(254) = -4.328, p < .001$), ‘financially assist older adults’ ($t(248) = -9.190, p < .001$), and ‘respect older adults because of their age’ ($t(255) = -1.980, p < .05$). Mean comparisons also showed no differences between the two groups. Anglo-Australians ($M = 4.03, SD = .674$) and Chinese-Australians ($M = 4.02, SD = .723$) did not differ on ‘listen patiently to older adults’, $p = .920$. Although Anglo-Australians ($M = 4.19, SD = .645$) rated marginally higher than Chinese-Australians ($M = 4.16, SD = .751$) on their own expectations that they will (or already have to) retain contact with older adults, this difference did not reach statistical significance, $p = .744$. There was also no difference between the two groups on ‘please older adults and make them happy’, $p = .069$.

Filial expectations of older adults

Filial expectations look at expectations of older adults, whether they have been brought up to expect from young adults, and their own expectations of younger adults. Means, standard deviations and t-value for ‘Filial expectations of older adults’ are shown in Tables 4, 5 and 6.

‘It is an expectation of older adults that adult children/young adults should...’

	Anglo-Australians M (SD)	Chinese-Australians M (SD)	t-value
1. . . . look after them	3.01 (.951)	3.85 (.869)	-7.264***
2. . . . financially assist them	2.66 (.841)	3.72 (.802)	-10.001***
3. . . . respect them because of their age	3.84 (.692)	4.07 (.707)	-2.509*
4. . . . listen patiently to them	3.82 (.643)	3.93 (.700)	Ns
5. . . . please them and make them happy	3.47 (.869)	3.72 (.841)	-2.256*
6. . . . retain contact with them	4.20 (.557)	4.14 (.654)	ns

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$, non-significant (ns)

Table 4: Means, standard deviations and t-value for whether ‘It is an expectation of older adults that adult children/young adults should...’

Mean comparisons in Table 4 showed greater expectations among Chinese-Australians than among Anglo-Australians. Chinese-Australians placed significantly greater emphasis than Anglo-Australians that it is an expectation of older adults that adult children/young adults should look after older adults ($t(256) = -7.264$, $p < .001$), assist older adults financially ($t(250) = -10.001$, $p < .001$), respect older adults because of their age ($t(250) = -2.509$, $p < .05$), and please older adults and make older adults happy ($t(246) = -2.256$, $p < .05$). There were, however, no significant differences between the two groups when it comes to listening patiently to older adults ($p = .171$) and retaining contact with older adults ($p = .466$). It should be noted that Anglo-Australians ($M = 4.20$, $SD = .557$)

rated marginally higher than Chinese-Australians (M= 4.14, SD= .654) on expectation that young adults should retain contact with them, but this difference did not reach statistical significance, $p = .466$.

‘Have been brought up to expect...’

	Anglo-Australians M (SD)	Chinese- Australians M (SD)	t-value
1. . . . to be looked after by young adults	2.32 (.939)	3.51 (.998)	-9.653***
2. . . . financial assistance from young adults	2.17 (.833)	3.26 (.955)	-9.607***
3. . . . young adults to respect you because your age	3.59 (.868)	3.83 (.864)	-2.139*
4. . . . young adults to listen patiently to you	3.42 (.925)	3.52 (.763)	ns
5. . . . young adults to please and make you happy	2.92 (.961)	3.43 (.879)	-4.265***
6. . . . young adults to retain contact with you	3.93 (.833)	3.90 (.823)	ns

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$, non-significant (ns)

Table 5: Means, standard deviations and t-value for whether they ‘Have been brought up to expect...’

As shown in Table 5, significant differences were found between the two groups on what they were brought up to expect. When participants were asked whether they have been brought up to expect certain filial duties, mean comparisons showed that Chinese-Australians again scored significantly higher than Anglo-Australians on ‘to be looked after by young adults’ ($t(250) = -9.653$, $p < .001$), ‘financial assistance from young adults’ ($t(247) = -9.607$, $p < .001$), ‘young adults to respect you because your age’ ($t(248) = -2.139$, $p < .05$), and ‘young adults to please and make you happy’ ($t(246) = -4.265$, $p < .001$).

There were, however, no differences between the two groups on upbringing when it

comes to listening patiently to older adults ($p = .371$) and retaining contact with older adults ($p = .753$).

‘In your old age, would you expect...’

	Anglo-Australians M (SD)	Chinese- Australians M (SD)	t-value
1. . . . to be looked after by young adults	2.34 (.978)	3.39 (1.026)	-8.321***
2. . . . financial assistance from young adults	2.12 (.784)	3.08 (.936)	-8.525***
3. . . . young adults to respect you because your age	3.49 (.975)	3.75 (.892)	-2.202*
4. . . . young adults to listen patiently to you	3.39 (.892)	3.46 (.797)	ns
5. . . . young adults to please and make you happy	2.96 (.934)	3.32 (.862)	-3.085**
6. . . . young adults to retain contact with you	4.00 (.847)	3.90 (.883)	ns

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$, non-significant (ns)

Table 6: Means, standard deviations and t-value for ‘In your old age, would you expect...’

When participants were asked about their own expectations in old age, mean comparisons in Table 6 showed that Chinese-Australians have higher expectations than Anglo-Australians. Expectations ‘to be looked after by young adults’ ($t(251) = -8.321$, $p < .001$), for ‘financial assistance from young adults’ ($t(194) = -8.525$, $p < .001$), for young adults to respect them because of their age ($t(236) = -2.202$, $p < .05$), and for young adults to please and make them happy ($t(247) = -3.085$, $p < .01$) were rated significantly greater among Chinese-Australians than among Anglo-Australians. There were also no differences between the two groups on their expectations in old age with regards to listening patiently to them ($p = .559$) and retaining contact with them ($p = .346$). Interestingly, Anglo-Australians ($M = 4.00$, $SD = .847$) rated higher than Chinese-Australians ($M = 3.90$, $SD =$

.883) on their expectations for young adults to retain contact with them, but this difference did not reach statistical significance, $p = .346$.

Children caring for their elderly parents

	Anglo-Australians (N= 143) %	Chinese-Australians (N= 97) %
Good custom	26	44.3
Natural duty as children	21	46.4
Unavoidable	14.7	5.2
Not a good custom	18.2	2.1
Do not know, Other, No answer	20.3	2

Table 7: Opinions of Anglo- and Chinese-Australians on children caring for their elderly parents

When asked about their opinion on children caring for their elderly parents, Chinese-Australians rated higher than their Anglo-Australian counterparts (Table 7). Majority (46.4%) of Chinese-Australian participants indicated that caring for their elderly parents is their ‘natural duty as children’ compared to 21% of Anglo-Australians. Another large proportion (44.3%) of Chinese-Australians believed that children caring for their elderly parents are a ‘good custom’, compared to just over a quarter of Anglo-Australians. The Anglo-Australian group was more spread out in their responses compared to the Chinese-Australian group who was more focussed on the first two answers. Higher number of Anglo-Australians (14.7%) believed that children caring for their elderly parents was ‘unavoidable’ and 18.2% stated that it was ‘not a good custom’ compared to 5.2% and 2.1% of Chinese-Australians respectively. The results provide some indication that there is still some preservation of traditional filial values.

Discussion

The current research paper looks at the prevalence of filial piety within the context of migration. It investigates the degree to which traditional belief and values are being maintained in order to gain further understanding whether the family is still the preferred option when it comes to care of the elderly as it traditionally once was. Results indicate that Chinese participants felt more obliged towards older adults and have higher expectations of younger adults than their Anglo-Australian counterparts. The current study reveals that Chinese-Australians held certain values of higher regard than Anglo-Australians, namely 'look after', 'financially assist', 'respect', and 'please and make them happy'. These results suggest some aspects of filial piety were particularly salient for Chinese-Australians. There were, however, no differences between the two groups on 'listening patiently' and 'retaining contact', which suggest that both groups shared common values in communication and interaction.

This research highlights the need to recognise cultural differences as part of a more person centred, whole-of life approach. Positioned within COTA Over 50s 2008 policy priorities, the development of a community care policy must acknowledge the complex interplay of familial, social, economical and cultural factors that shape their ageing experience. A flexible whole-of life approach to coordinated care is not only of value to ageing migrants, but also to their families and community at large.

While it is not surprising that Chinese-Australians rated higher than their Anglo-Australian counterparts, and although filial piety remains an important value, there is indication of decrease in filial expectations. Although providing financial assistance to parents was a traditional way of communicating filial piety (Ng, Phillips, & Lee, 2002), Chinese-Australians were varied in their responses. On one hand, Chinese-Australians have higher financial expectations than their Anglo-Australian counterparts; on the other hand, financial independence was also important for Chinese-Australians, which may have been influenced by Australia's retirement and pension schemes. In contrast, under-resourced elderly people in Hong Kong tend to prefer to be looked after by their children and therefore have higher filial expectations (Ng et al., 2002). It is therefore not only important to consider the impact of ageing migrants on Australia's social welfare system and attitudes towards parental care, but also the impact of the system itself on one's ageing experience.

Participants showed signs of distinct collectivistic beliefs. Majority of Chinese-Australian participants believed that caring for their elderly parents is their 'natural duty as children' and children caring for their elderly parents are a 'good custom' compared to their Anglo-Australian counterparts. Chinese-Australians and their adult children may therefore encounter greater pressure to fulfil their traditional roles. However, actual behaviour cannot be determined as these results 'reflect ideals more than actual behavior' (Liu et al., 2000, p. 221). Results must therefore be interpreted with caution.

This paper is a small section of the larger PhD research project. Higher level of analysis explores in greater depth other important aspects including, just to name a few, comparisons between English-speaking and Chinese-speaking Chinese-Australians, filial piety in relation to acculturation and length of migration, comparisons between age groups, and across genders on various measures (e.g. ageing well, psychological well-being and filial piety).

The inclusion of the Chinese group, particularly Chinese-speaking participants is an invaluable part of this research. However, language barrier, access to participants from interstate, access to the Chinese community and translation of the materials were some of the major challenges encountered during data collection. Nevertheless, this selection criterion was worth pursuing. It was particularly worthwhile working together with bilingual speakers which enabled building of rapport with community leaders and promotion of the research to potential participants within the community. Despite their general lack of interest and negative attitudes towards research participation (i.e. participants tend to regard research as intrusive and invasive), it was most encouraging when participants (including the Chinese-speaking group) across Australia indicated their interest (contact details provided) to participate in future research. Follow-up research would therefore be useful to investigate their needs and expectations in more detail through focus groups. This may be a significant step towards a national study of ethnic communities in Australia.

Recommendations

Future research would benefit from investigating the value orientations of migrants of other cultures. This would provide a more multifaceted portrayal of the aspirations, needs and issues affecting emerging groups of migrants as they age abroad. Future directions could entail further expansion of this research to examine the needs and cultural expectations of other ethnic communities. The availability and provision of appropriate support to various groups of ageing migrants can optimize quality of life by enhancing independence, social participation and equity, thereby reducing adverse consequences one may otherwise experience. Thus, the current research framework could serve as a useful foundation of a much larger collaborative and coordinated research project of other ethnic groups, which essentially provides a strategic response to COTA Over 50s action arenas, *Participation, inclusion and contribution older people*.

Current strategies are largely based on a ‘one size fits all’ model, which follows mainstream Western aged care principles. Lack of understanding of service needs of people from other cultures may lead to depersonalisation of services and unmet needs and expectations of individuals and their families. The provision of an interpreter, for example, is not acceptable on its own as it only meets the language needs of clients from CALD backgrounds. Yet, the use of an interpreter is sometimes the only tool used for ‘culturally appropriate care’, which ignores their complex and diverse ageing and cultural needs. This may lead to adverse consequences such as increased anxieties, insecurities and lack of confidence in old age. As such, research on ethnic communities is warranted,

with a view to improve culturally appropriate services for advancing health and well-being of older persons (Kendig, 2004).

In accordance with the whole-of-life approach, which aligns with one of COTA Over 50s policy arenas, *Health and Care* and its priorities for *person centred delivery of integrated health services*, policy makers and service providers need to also consider heterogeneity of ethnic communities whereby individual lifestyles, values and beliefs are recognised. Older people are often disadvantaged not only when assumptions are made about their ageing needs and experience but also when assumptions are made about their cultural needs and expectations. A policy implication is that although Chinese-Australians believed in caring for elderly parents and has more support system in place, the future care of the elderly by the family cannot be assumed nor guaranteed simply on the basis of their collectivist beliefs (Pyke, 1999). As Ng et al. (2000) points out, ‘the caring capacity of the Chinese family cannot simply be assumed, nor can the assumption be made that filial piety will in the future guarantee the provision of assistance’ (p. 138). The concept of filial piety is nevertheless important when looking at the future care of the elderly, as Chow (2004) asserts, ‘any discussion on aged care policies in East and South-east Asian societies would be incomplete without a discussion on the nature and practice of filial piety in these societies’ (p. S21).

Greater understanding of how dependency is perceived is crucial for planning of culturally appropriate care and government’s allocation of residential and community care packages. This research gives an indication to potential service use within the

complex interplay of traditional roles and support systems. As detailed in the National Strategy for an Ageing Australia, people's cultural and linguistic backgrounds are crucial elements to be considered in determining appropriate healthy ageing strategies (Andrews, 2001). This includes the need to recognise within group differences and the different levels of culture-rooted attitudes and behaviours. Better understanding of the extent to which migrants identify with their own culture, and the complex and diverse ageing needs of seniors specifically that of migrants would inform government's responses to provide appropriate social infrastructure and provision of quality, culturally responsive service. Thus, within COTA Over 50s 2008 policy priorities, development of a community care policy needs to facilitate every aspect of service provision, from early planning (i.e. more flexible application process) through to operation (i.e. one that supports ageing in place) and evaluation (i.e. follow-up, quality assurance).

This research utilised various approaches to generate interest and promote research participation through appropriate guidelines and research protocols when recruiting Chinese participants. As more and more research focuses on cultural groups, a step towards a national approach to CALD specific research guidelines (e.g. definitions and selection criteria, community consultation) and protocols (e.g. data collection and analysis) is paramount. This would not only allow researchers to work within a framework that is culturally sensitive and viable, but by understanding issues that hinder research participation, barriers to research participation of ethnic communities will be reduced. Evidence-based research, as recognised by the National Strategy and COTA Over 50s has the capacity to raise the profile of communities and inform policy so as to

achieve equitable access and appropriate support services for ageing individuals and families. Cross-cultural awareness is important because ‘these comparisons and insights help us to see ourselves and our own societies more completely’ (Kendig, 2004, p. S6). Thus, a national research framework for CALD communities, combined with the framework used in the current PhD project is a significant step towards a national study of the needs of ethnic communities in Australia, thereby raising the profile of ethnic communities in the wider society. This would inform government at all levels, organisations, community programs and support networks to better promote the health and well-being of the diverse groups of Australians.

Conclusion

Little is known about the diversity of expectations and needs of older people from different communities. This research is an important contribution to the cross-cultural understanding of the value of filial piety and to the broader knowledge of the issues and demands for future care of adults ageing in Australia. By exploring Australia’s diverse ageing population, for example, the Chinese population in Australia (including the non-English speaking group), we are better informed as to how they view cultural responsibilities and expectations, family support systems and the impact of migration. In doing so, the research begin to address the crucial question of how best to support the lifestyle needs of older Australians in a way that acknowledges the different value orientations of cultural groups is imperative for service choice and delivery, and policy development.

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