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NEGOTIATION IN CROSS-CULTURAL MARRIAGES: AN EXPLORATORY QUALITATIVE STUDY AMONG MIDDLE CLASS PROFESSIONALS IN HONG KONG

MAN PUI KWAN

MPHIL

LINGNAN UNIVERSITY

2009

NEGOTIATION IN CROSS-CULTURAL MARRIAGES: AN EXPLORATORY QUALITATIVE STUDY AMONG MIDDLE CLASS PROFESSIONALS IN HONG KONG

by
MAN Pui Kwan

A thesis
submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the Degree of
Master of Philosophy in Social Sciences
(Sociology)

Lingnan University

2009

ABSTRACT

Negotiation in Cross-cultural Marriages: An Exploratory Qualitative Study among Middle Class Professionals in Hong Kong

by

MAN Pui Kwan

Master of Philosophy

This thesis attempts to focus on families and their children (if any) in cross-cultural marriages. These families potentially face extra stress and strains in addition to those which all families face. As a result of recent social and economic changes, certain roles such as those of the breadwinner and caregiver, traditionally male-female roles, may be becoming more interchangeable. Cross-cultural families' may have differences in cultural backgrounds, attitudes and expectations, as well as potential support networks, so the research will investigate whether these sorts of changes place even greater than usual demands on families.

Therefore, it may be important for couples to be able to negotiate in respect to roles and activities as it is a form of interaction and communication. Negotiation usually takes place between couples because both have something to offer and gain from the process in order to achieve a win-win situation between them. Whilst the literature addressing the division of labour among cross-cultural couples in Western societies has grown considerably, there is relatively little research which examines the situation between cross-cultural couples in Hong Kong, where such unions are quite common. Hence, this research aims to investigate the process of negotiation (if any) between husbands and wives in cross-cultural marriages with relation to their roles within the family. It also attempts to elaborate the roles of domestic helpers and ageing parents, which may mediate or complement the duties of couples and, perhaps, enhance family harmony and family care to family members.

The present study adopts a qualitative approach and grounded theory for data collection in examining a negotiation process between husbands and wives. A total of 14 middle class cross-cultural married couples (aged 30 to 58) were interviewed. Different sources of information such as literature, in-depth interviews with couples and opinions from key informants were also adopted to enrich the findings and to

enable triangulation to enhance the reliability of the data.

The findings show that all of the cross-cultural couples shared the household division of work due to the egalitarian attitudes they held towards each other. They tended to be more tolerant to each other. It is noted that domestic helpers can complement the duties of couples. The roles of full-time domestic helpers are essential because they take the pressure off couples, whereas part-time domestic helpers are very helpful in doing jobs that couples do not want to. It is also suggested that ageing parents in Hong Kong only complement the duties of couples after the women has given birth.

With respect to negotiation strategies, the more popular ones used were: compromising, accommodating and collaborative (problem-solving). It is also hoped that such strategies may be developed for social help, with direct relevance to the social stability of cross-cultural families in Hong Kong.

DECLARATION

I declare that this is an original work based primarily on my own research, and I warrant that all citations of previous research, published or unpublished, have been duly acknowledged.

_____

(MAN Pui Kwan)

October 2009

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to express my utmost and sincere gratitude to both my supervisors, Prof. David R. Phillips and Prof. William Lee. This thesis would not have been possible without the expert guidance of my outstanding supervisors. Prof. Phillips is an expert in Gerontology. It is my honor to have such a knowledgeable and supportive supervisor of my postgraduate study. He is not just always available for me but also gives me prompt, fruitful and helpful comments. He gives me abundant guidance and support in both my study and career development. His undying and generous support through the years have enlightened my postgraduate life. I am especially indebted to him.

I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to Prof. William Lee for his generous support. I began the thesis with an unclear direction and focus. Prof. Lee stimulated my thinking and provided detailed and insightful comments and ideas for me. He also toiled over my imperfect drafts and I will never forget that my esteemed supervisor had an extensive discussion with me about my drafted work, page by page, despite his own demanding schedules. His patience and care made my postgraduate life unforgettable. Words will never be able to express how thankful I am for both my supervisors who have made this thesis possible.

I also greatly appreciate the help of Prof. Siu Oi-ling, Prof. Peter Baehr, Prof. Alfred Chan, Dr. Annie Chan, Dr. Kevin Cheng, Dr. Francis Cheung, Dr. Kenneth Law, Dr. Kwok Hong-kin, Dr. Lu Jia-fang, Dr. Lucia Siu and Lisbeth Ku for their precious time, comments and suggestions. Thank you for spending a lot of time in discussion and providing insightful ideas to me! I would like to acknowledge Dr. Kevin Cheng for his flexibility, tolerance, patience and dedication to my teaching assistance. I am truly thankful to Prof. Simon Fan, Dr. Thomas Voon, Dr. Chung Chien-peng and Lawrence Ho. They have provided me with immense support and encouragement.

My research would not have been possible without the fourteen cross-cultural couples (a total of 28 respondents) and two key informants – Dr. Dan Waters and Ms. Carol McNaughton Ho, who did not hesitate to share their stories, experiences and expert knowledge. I express my sincere thanks to each respondent who graciously gave his / her time to my research. I am also grateful to Prof. Andrew P. Goatly, Dr. Mark A. Hampton, Dr. David L. Smith, Mr. James A. Rice and Mr. Andrew J. Sewell for their valuable opinions and case referrals.

I have been accompanied and supported by many friends who I met during these two years. Special thanks to Crystal So, who gave me a lot of emotional support throughout the study. We shared a lot of challenges, tears and fun together. Lots of thank to Vienne Tso, Carol Ma, Sharon Chan and Little Cheng. They have shared their MPhil study experiences with me which gave me valuable comments on both my research and teaching. Many thanks to Jeffrey Cheung, On Fung, Chad Chan, Zhendong, Pamela Lee, Creamy Wong, Caoting, Tina Tang, Druid Fung, Willy Huang, Lisa Wang, Maia Zhou and Bill Krolicki. We had a lot of fun and joy that made my MPhil study colourful. Being with them in the office was one of the best experiences of these two years time. I would also like to thank the secretariats of the department office, Grace Wong, Ivy Tsang, Bobo Tsang and Ivy Kong. They deserve special mention for being abundantly helpful.

My deepest gratitude goes to my mother who has been with me every step of the way in all these years. Thanks to her unconditional love, I can pursue my dreams without any doubts. She has given me everything that I need and supported any of my plans. I am sorry for making her worry about me all the time. Her love, patience and support, such as giving me an affectionate hug and kiss everyday, enrich my life. It is my biggest blessing to have such a mother in my life!

CHAPTER 1:
BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH — CROSS-CULTURAL MARRIAGE AND NEGOTIATION

1.1 Introduction

This research examines "Negotiation in Cross-cultural Marriages". Cross-cultural marriages here are taken to mean marriages between two people with different linguistics, social values, ethnicity or nationality. In Hong Kong, 36% of minority couples (both of the couple are not Chinese) are inter-racially married. Married individuals whose spouse has a different ethnicity occupied 1.6% of the whole population (Census and Statistics Department, 2006). Nowadays, both men and women have higher education levels due to modernization and globalization. There are many opportunities for people from different countries to interact with each other, especially in schools and workplace, and this facilitates cross-cultural marriages.

Individuals in cross-cultural relationships encounter differences at two levels. They face cultural differences and they need to learn to interact in despite their differences. They face the fact that their relationship is somewhat different from the norm in society as well (Gudykunst, 2003). Cross-cultural couples deal with the first type of difference through communication of mutual respect and acceptance. They respect each other and are willing to accept their differences and overcome challenges (Collier, 1996; Collier and Bornman, 1999; Hecht, Ribeau and Sedano, 1990). Respect and acceptance are shown by requesting more information or expressing curiosity about each other and contributing positively to establish an

intercultural friendship (Chen, Isa and Sakai, 1996; Collier and Bowker, 1994; Hecht, Larkey and Johnson, 1992). Intercultural romantic relationships sustained by seeking or building social networks for support (Johnson and Warren, 1994; Spickard, 1989). Empirical studies have found that the components of healthy cross-cultural marriages include love, communication, cooperation, understanding, respect and role flexibility (Brown and Shalett, 1997).

However, cross-cultural marriage counsellors argue that marriage breakdown is linked to the cultural differences (Breger and Hill, 1998). In addition, the role of breadwinner and homemaker in men and women is vague today due to high education level and increasing labour force participation rates (from 38.3% in 1991 to 44.9% in 2005 (Census and Statistics Department, 2006). This implies that the role of the breadwinner is not entirely with husbands but with wives as well. It follows that the role of homemaker should not be with wives but with husbands as well (Bengtson and Pina, 1993; Cast, 2004; Chappell, 2005; Bird and Cast, 2005). These role changes between husbands and wives have caused undesirable effects such as family disputes, inadequate care for ageing parents or small children or even divorce (Tang, 1999). The divorce rate for both men (from 1.1% to 2.3%) and women (1.6% to 4.2%) has increased since 1996 (Census and Statistics Department, 2007). This is especially true for cross-cultural couples. Research has shown that the divorce rates among intercultural couples were higher when compared with same race or same culture couples (Bratter and King, 2008). Couples with disparate cultural backgrounds, differing interpersonal styles and varying values may generate conflicts.

It is important for couples involved in negotiations to resolve their conflicts.

Negotiation is a special type of social interaction, distinguished by goals, relationships and normative practices and differs from other types of communication. Negotiation employs problem solving and persuasion to reach a mutually acceptable agreement, it centers on perceived incompatibilities (Putnam and Roloff, 1992). People use negotiation for either claiming values or creating values (McRae, 1998). In addition, the negotiation process refers to a process by which the negotiating parties interact with one another to reach a mutual agreement to provide terms, conditions and guidelines for future behaviour (Ghauri and Fang, 2003). Negotiation is a broad topic, so to be more specific, this research will examine negotiation processes in cross-cultural couples in relation to the roles in household division of work. Research found that when individuals feel that they can understand their spouse's perspective, they are more likely to behave supportively, such as role-taking with the spouse (Cast, 2004). In addition, women who hold the primary provider position in their relationship or have a higher income are more likely to have their husbands involved in negotiation so as to gain mutual respect (Bolak, 1997). Both men and women inevitably experience boredom, fatigue and tension when they do household work alone, especially wives. Modern wives often have a second shift which means they are under the double burden of their job as well as the household work (Wood, 2001). It is essential that couples understand their spouse so that they can provide support for each other, in order to enhance family harmony. The details of negotiation and specific aspects of negotiation processes will be introduced in the later chapters.

1.2 Significance of Study

Cross-cultural families in Hong Kong may potentially face extra stress and

strains in addition to those which all families face. As a result of recent social and economic changes, the roles of breadwinners and caregivers, traditionally male-female roles, are becoming more interchangeable. Dual-earner families, in which wives and husbands are both employed full-time or part-time are common. Together, with increased education level, the role of breadwinner and caregiver between men and women are interchangeable. Many people are now trying hard to find new work and family roles in order to adapt to the emerging market economy and society (Lu, Tjosvold, Shi and Wang, 2007). In many Western societies, preparing meals, washing dishes, cleaning the house, washing, ironing and grocery shopping are regarded as “female tasks”, while yard work and auto-maintenance are regarded as “male tasks” (Greenstein, 1996). Similarly, in many Chinese societies, “female tasks” are cooking, cleaning, caring for the children and shopping while “male tasks” are doing repairs like changing the fuse, repairing water pipes, fixing shelves and playing with children (Milkie and Peltola, 1999). It is clear the extent to which tradition and culture universally determine the role of men and women. There is gender stereotyping of female and male tasks universally. However, today, the duties of cooking, washing and doing housework are no longer entirely placed on women (Chappell, 2005). Whether these sorts of changes place greater demands on cross-cultural families would be investigated. Theoretically, it is noteworthy to explain how cross-cultural couples divide household work between themselves, why they have certain kinds of division and what reasons and factors affect their decisions.

Practically, it is interesting to know how cross-cultural couples negotiate these issues and what strategies they use to negotiate housework. If such strategies were successfully identified and their success evaluated, then considerable social help and

guidance may develop with direct relevance to the social stability of the growing number of cross-cultural families in Hong Kong. Discovering the process of negotiation, if it exists, between husbands and wives in cross-cultural marriages with relation to their roles within the family in Hong Kong, will be groundbreaking.

Literature addressing the division of labour among intercultural couples in western societies has grown exponentially. But we still know relatively little about cross-cultural couples in Hong Kong (Watts and Henriksen, 1998; Hu and Kamo, 2007). Moreover, it seems that there is a lack of research in examining the real situation of intercultural couples in Hong Kong. Hence, it is worthy to analyze this topic and I believe that this research will yield important and significant findings.

1.3 Aims of this Research

The focus of this research will be the negotiation process of roles in cross-cultural families. The roles of couples include that of the breadwinner (working in society to earn money) and the homemaker (includes domestic work and the education of their children). Also, this research attempts to find out if the roles of domestic helpers and ageing parents mediate or complement the duties of couples and if they enhance family harmony or family care to family members. The research questions are as follows:

Overall question: What are the major components affecting the negotiation process?

1. What are the differences between child raising methods in Asian and Western people?
2. What are the roles of factors such as values and attitudes, characters and

personality, economic status, educational differences, power distance, peer pressure, cultural differences that affect the negotiation process?

3. How do cross-cultural couples decide the roles in the household division of labour?
4. To what extent do people in cross-cultural marriages that have higher economic status and power distance tend to have higher decision making power in the negotiation process?
5. To what extent are the roles of ageing parents and domestic helpers mediating the duties of cross-cultural couples?

CHAPTER TWO:
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Issues on Cross-cultural Marriages

Thirty eight American states forbade intercultural marriage in the 19th century. Laws made mixed-race marriage illegal because sexuality between races was viewed as deviant and pornographic (because of religious bigotry and misunderstanding of genetics as I will explain below) (Ross, 2002; Lee and Boyd, 2008). The Missouri Supreme Court explained that anti-miscegenation laws were necessary because offsprings of mixed-race couples contaminated both races and could not keep racial purity. When it comes to the parental reactions on the decision for their offspring or children to date or marry a partner of a different background, they often reflect that of the social norm. The opinions of parents can have a large effect on the quality of life before and after marriage. Generally speaking, parents respond in similar ways, from denial, self-doubt and accusation on one hand, to toleration and acceptance on the other. They will label their children as “rebellious” and the children are separated psychologically. Spouses reported the loss of relationships with some family members and friends due to marrying interracially (Ross, 2002; Leslie and Letiecq, 2004). The loss of support from family can put unrealistic pressure on these marriages and heighten negative emotions between partners. Thus, parents’ reactions often affect the quality of life of mixed-race couples.

Nevertheless, kinship can be used to introduce heterogeneity into social network. Researchers have concluded that exogamy (which is also known as intermarriages) is

seen as a force which reduces social distance between racial and ethnic groups and hence serves as a social integration function leading to the amalgamation or blending of various racial and ethnic groups (Goldstein, 1999; Lee and Boyd, 2008). Interracial marriages can be expected to have positive consequences in extended families with relatively egalitarian relations, in which family occasions tend to be happy, and family bonds tend to be strong.

Education, age and income have influenced on intermarriage (Lee and Boyd, 2008). As a matter of fact, educational attainment is a crucial factor in determining interracial marriages. Education weakens and reduces ethnic attachments and increases contact with people from other racial groups. Highly educated individuals are more likely to meet people of different races as they have more opportunities to interact with others either on college campuses or work places. For example, Japanese Americans are most likely to marry interracially when compared with Chinese, Koreans and Southeast Asians (Blair, Ruf and Qian, 2001). Interracial marriage is more likely to occur in highly educated couples than in less-educated couples because highly educated people hold more egalitarian attitudes towards race and are less likely to be prejudiced. They also have more opportunities to interact with people from different racial and ethnic backgrounds such as in school and the workplace. Such contacts improve inter-group relations and lessen the social distance between groups. New set of values and ideas are developed during intensive contact (Goldstein, 1999; Hu and Kamo, 2007; Lee and Boyd, 2008). Johnson and Jacobson (2005) support the contact hypothesis, which states that the chance for members of different groups to intermarry depends primarily on their opportunities to meet and interact socially. Positive contact and favourable attitudes towards members of the other group are crucial factors in intermarriage. Positive outcomes of social contact

only occur in four conditions: participants have equal status; they hold common goals; contact occurs in cooperative events and participants have supportive authority. The contact hypothesis was accessed in four settings. Educational settings and religious institutions appear to offer sufficient positive contact to improve attitudes about interracial marriage. It may be because colleges and universities provide an atmosphere of tolerance and acceptance. At the same time, they offer opportunities for cooperative and equal-status contact. The approval of interracial marriage is greatest among college educated individuals. In religious institutions, members from different races are likely to cooperate as they have to perform religious duties. Like education, religion can provide both contact and positive attitudes about the acceptance of the other. In contrast, neighbourhoods and workplaces do not furnish sufficient contacts to produce positive attitudes. Although neighbourhoods allow contact, individuals may be quite isolated within the area and can often lead separate lives. Sometimes, residential integration can exacerbate racial hostilities rather than alleviate them. The workplace provides individuals with opportunities to contact members of other groups but such contact is often hierarchical, distant and impersonal (Johnson and Jacobson, 2005). On the other hand, romantic love is a major motivating force in cross-cultural marriage. Most interethnic couples cite love as their primary reason for getting married (Gaines, 1997; Ross, 2002). A cross-cultural marriage is seen as romantic and adventurous, and people like to believe that true love can cross many boundaries, regardless of class, race, religion or age (Waters, 2005). Love is the expression of freedom and individualism in modernized societies. Moreover, intermarriage is higher among younger couples because younger people are less prejudiced and have a greater tolerance of interracial relationships. Generally speaking, they also have higher educational attainment. Studies have showed that education is positively related to interracial marriages as

described above (Bratter and King, 2008; Lee and Boyd, 2008). Also, high income individuals are more likely to engage in intermarriage than low income individuals. As high income is associated with high educational attainment, both are positively related with interracial marriages (Lee and Boyd, 2008).

Regarding possible undesirable effects of mixed-race marriages, some researchers state that the cross-cultural natures of interethnic and interracial marriages are more susceptible to stress than mono-ethnic marriages (Negy and Snyder, 2000). The stressors include marital conflict over child rearing, low self-esteem, dealing with conflicting cultural demands, struggling to support children in forming a cultural identity, conflicting role expectations among partners and social pressure. Cross-cultural marriages are regarded by some people as less stable than mono-ethnic marriages due to families' and society's disapproval. Consequently, these couples are likely to engage in home-based leisure activities such as movie renting, reading and dining, in order to avoid negative societal pressure (Dunleavy, 2004). As a result, cross-cultural marriages are at a higher risk for divorce. Research has shown that cross-cultural couples have higher rates of divorce than same-culture couples. It provides an indication of the consequence of violating norms of racial homogamy (Bratter and King, 2008). However, there are other factors which have greater influence on divorce, for example, experiencing parental divorce in youngsters or adolescent have a positive association with marital instability. Similarly, premarital family formation behaviours like cohabiting or having a child also increase the risk of divorce (Bratter and King, 2008).

While it is true that cross-cultural marriages may bring out undesirable effects as mentioned above, communication between cross-cultural couples is of the utmost

importance. Eleta Greene, a clinical psychologist, agreed that couples from different cultural background have to establish an open dialogue, with each person expressing their fears and anxieties (Johnson, 2002). In addition, if an individual has a positive attitude toward interracial marriage, it will imply that he / she holds equality for all people (Dunleavy, 2004). This is due to egalitarian-based values which are directly predicted by values of tolerance and general acceptance of others. Evidence has shown that partners who have pride in their race but are also accepting of other races and cultures experience higher marital quality (Leslie and Letiecq, 2004). A common task of those in mixed marriages is to work out the meaning of marrying interracially for one's identity and resolving mixed feelings about cultural difference in the early stages of their marriage. McFadden and Moore (2001) suggest open, honest and congruent communicate; understand and appreciate one's own and others' cultural background, and acknowledge the significance of adopting a broad worldview of fellow human beings as strategies to maintain positive relationships among interracial couples. Moreover, Foeman and Nance (2002) described four communication stages of cross-cultural relational development: racial or cultural awareness, coping, emergence and maintenance. The stage of coping and emergence requires couples to use communication strategically to negotiate threatening situations and to develop skills for them in order to increase relational intimacy and a closer bond.

2.2 Theoretical Perspectives in the Household Division of Work

2.2.1 Time Availability Approach

In Hong Kong, married individuals whose spouse belongs to a different ethnicity occupy 1.6% of the population (Census and Statistics Department, 2006). In

view of the increasing number of couples in Hong Kong who go out to work (44.9% of women and 71.1% of men) (Census and Statistics Department, 2006), the work-life balance has drawn public attention. According to the "Work Life Balance in Hong Kong Survey Results" conducted by the University of Hong Kong in 2002, the overall score of work life balance is slightly under 2[1], which indicates that people consider that they have too much work (paid work). Mahtani (2006) stated that 61% of Hong Kong workers regularly work overtime (OT), and they are not satisfied with the amount of time spent with family and friends. One leading cause of work life imbalance is long working hours (an average of 45 working hours per week) in paid work (Census and Statistics Department, 2007). Couples spend less or inadequate time taking care of family members and the household division of labour. Cross-cultural couples who work in Hong Kong also argued that the long working hours affect their time spent with families.

When it comes to the domestic division of work, many researchers suggest that time constraints are an influential factor. The time availability perspective focuses on family members' time allocation between market and domestic work (Davis and Greenstein, 2004). In other words, people who spend more time at paid work have less time to spend doing household labour. In dual-earner families, husbands do relatively more family work than husbands in single-career families, not because they do more, but because their employed wives do less owing to the time constraint (Thompson and Walker, 1989).

[1] This survey was conducted by the University of Hong Kong. The average score of work life balance is 3. Because the overall score of work life balance is now slightly under 2. This means that most people believe that they are experiencing work life imbalance.

However, the time availability approach neglects the gender embeddeness of processes whereby domestic work is divided between men and women mentioned in gender ideology. The link between housework and paid work for husbands and wives is predetermined by gender and culture. Generally, grocery shopping, children's discipline and education are defined as female responsibilities (Bolak, 1997). Women are more likely to make time for domestic division of labour, but men are more reluctant to do so regardless education and class (Milkie and Peltola, 1999). The gender socialization of women's roles is that they are the homemakers in the family. They are expected to sacrifice their leisure time in order to do domestic work. It seems that the time availability approach is a "practical" approach (it is practical because supposedly gender ideologies do not affect the allocation of time in housework) to understand the division of household labour, but does not reveal why some people have more free time than others. Furthermore, the time availability approach neglects the cultural constructions of gender on the allocation of time in family work. According to gender construction theory, women continue to perform the bulk of routine housework and child care in order to feel more responsible, regardless of income, time constraints or ideology. Women do not perceive the unequal distribution of family work to be unfair. Instead, they feel more responsible and gain self-identity or self-meaning from it (Erickson, 2005).

2.2.2 Gender Role Ideology and Socialization

When it comes to household division of labour, gender ideology plays an important role. Gender ideology refers to how a person identifies himself or herself with regards to marital and family roles that are traditionally linked to gender (Greenstein, 1996). It posits an inverse relationship between traditional attitudes and an egalitarian division of family work (Erickson, 2005). That means the more

traditional attitudes a man holds, the less domestic work he does, and vice versa. By contrast, the more traditional attitudes a woman holds, the more domestic work she does, and vice versa. In other words, husbands holding more egalitarian gender ideologies tend to perform more housework, while traditionally oriented husbands tend to do less. An interesting finding suggested that married couples who cohabit before marriage have a more equal division of housework because they support equalitarian gender relations and nontraditional family roles (Batalova and Cohen, 2002). A more egalitarian husband will be more likely to see his wife's domestic labour as a gift as he does not feel that he is necessarily entitled to her domestic work. However, the traditional husband expects his wife to do most of the housework as he does not view her housework as a gift, but rather as an entitlement (Greenstein, 1996). It should be noted that women in middle-class Chinese families in Hong Kong often have a double burden. According to gender ideology, women should do most of the household work. In other words, family work is sharply divided by gender. In general, women from Hong Kong, middle-class families expressed the view that their husbands did not take on their share of family responsibility (Lee, 2002). Even though women in Western societies have undergone similar changes and experienced role conflict and overload, the degree of conflict and the amount of social pressure experienced by Hong Kong women may be greater. It may be because there is a cultural gap in attitudes towards these changes (Lewis, 1994). It is essential to use gender ideology to examine if the household division of work in cross-cultural marriages is the same or not.

Gender role ideology argues that gender roles are result from early and intensive socialization by parents, teachers and society about appropriate "male" and "female" behaviours (Presser, 1994). For instance, women are assigned the role of caregiver,

whereas men are assigned the role of breadwinner (Maurer, Pleck and Rane, 2001). Traditional ideology reinforces the division of labour in the home where women perform more of the work traditionally associated with being female, for example, the housework, childcare and emotional work (Erickson, 2005). In Taiwan, married women are responsible for more than 70% of the household work (Hu and Kamo, 2007). Gender ideology shapes how time is allocated and how duties are negotiated. Batalova and Cohen (2002) claimed that women do more routine housework than men in all countries. Women abandon their own leisure time because of the unequal division of labour and the restrictive gender and mother role norms (Bialeschki and Pearce, 1997). On the other hand, the gender ideology perspective claims that men with egalitarian gender attitudes are more likely to have a larger share of the household work (Hu and Kamo, 2007).

With regards to gender ideology and household division of labour in various countries, cross-cultural couples have different values in the division of work due to their different cultural backgrounds. They can be categorized as traditional societies, transitional societies and egalitarian societies. Traditional societies are characterized by strict gender-based household division of labour. Men are breadwinners and women (even if employed for pay) have the primary responsibility of the home and children. For example, Japan is a strongly patriarchal society. Men have direct control over the lives of their wives and children and expected absolute obedience and respect from family members. Japanese wives are expected to handle both the home and their career even though they are full time housewives too. Fathers are absent from their children's lives, leaving the domestic work and nurturing to the wives. A cross-national study found that 37% of Japanese children never interacted with their fathers, or even ate meals together, compared to 20% of German children

and 15% of U.S. children (Ingoldsby and Smith, 1995). China is an example of a transitional society. A national policy has been implemented to encourage women to assume an active breadwinning role. Some resources have been devoted to help working mothers, such as maternity leave and day care. However, improving women's employment opportunities had little to do with the promotion of gender equality. Egalitarian societies manifest equal sharing of breadwinning, housework and child care by men and women. Sweden is one of the examples. Gender equality has been a goal of social policy in Sweden since the late 1960s. A majority of programs and laws are aimed at improving women's employment opportunities so that they can become family breadwinners, on level equal to that of men (Ingoldsby and Smith, 1995). When it comes to the household division of labour in cross-cultural marriages, Swedish men and women hold egalitarian attitudes towards it. They are willing to share the household work equally.

Socialization and gender ideology are inter-related in many ways. Socialization theories define gender-specific appropriate behaviour and responsibilities for men and women (Chan, Lau and Ma, 2006). Gender socialization includes the learning of the role requirements of positions occupied by both men and women. In other words, people learn what is required of them in their positions in light of their sex (Kramer, 1991). Individuals are socialized in a different way according to their culture. Individuals in a culture are generally socialized in a way that is consistent with the cultural-level tendencies (Gudykunst, 2003). Socialization can be categorized as primary socialization and secondary socialization. Primary socialization refers to socialization during the early years of childhood and takes place mainly within the family, while secondary socialization occurs during later years when family is less involved and other agencies (such as peer groups and school) exert increasing

influence (Haralambos and Holborn, 2000). Regarding primary socialization, the family is the most important agent. The family provides children with role models. For instance, the mother is the main caregiver at home, while the father is the main breadwinner. A good motherhood should take good care of her children and cook for the family, while a good father should serve as the main economic bases (the breadwinner). In short, the family is the child's first reference group. The child adopts her or his family's values, norms and practices as her or his own (Nock, 1992). Boys and girls grow up in different worlds, even if they grow up in the same household (Tannen, 1986). For instance, parents socialize girls more towards obedience, nurturance and responsibility but socialize boys more towards self-reliance, independence and achievement (Bond and Smith, 1999). This helps them to form a certain kind of gender ideology. However, when children start school, school and education exert a greater influence on them. Shu (2004) states that people who receive higher education hold more egalitarian gender attitudes. Egalitarian gender attitudes trickle down through education because people with high education are socialized toward a more egalitarian attitude of roles and racial identity. This is one of the reasons why higher-educated people accept cross-cultural marriages as they are more open-minded. Moreover, higher levels of education have given rise to social and cultural change regarding women's roles. They can have their own career achievements and not just stay at home, being solely a housewife. As we have seen, socialization is a vital part to a person forming his / her values and attitudes. Hence, variables like values, attitudes and perception can be used in this research to examine the role of primary socialization, while peer pressure or social environment can help to examine the role of secondary socialization in the process of negotiation. We can see if levels of education influence gender ideology.

However, gender role ideology is not workable in lesbians' families, although numerically these are far fewer. The negotiation in these families place great value on achieving equity between partners in all aspects of their joint lives (Bialeschki and Pearce, 1997). Their negotiation strategies differed from heterosexual strategies. There are no assumed gender-based roles in such relationships, and they strived for equal responsibilities. It may that both are women, hence, they are socialized to do the same types of things. Further, gender role ideology neglects the effects brought by modernization such as individualism, increased women status, more egalitarian gender attitudes and the changing attitudes due to the rising educational level among people. Some researchers have said that women in Hong Kong are at the crossroads of traditionalism and modernism. On the one hand, they are still under the pressure of traditional expectations of females; to be a good mother and wife. On the other hand, they have an increasing amount of financial and decisive power in the family and society (Kwong, Sin, So and Yau, 2001).

2.2.3 Role Theory

Role theory is somewhat related to gender ideology and socialization. It is especially applicable in areas such as Social Gerontology. A role is defined as the expected or typical behavior associated with a position within the organization of a group (Atchley, 2000). A role is a set of expected behaviours that go with a status. For example, the status of a husband is accompanied by the role of a husband, the status of a wife by the role of a wife and so on. We "expect" fathers to act a certain role and so on. This is somehow shaped by culture and gender ideology. For instance, Japan is a strongly patriarchal society historically, and Japanese girls have to take special courses to prepare them as good wives and mothers (Hendry, 1989; Ingoldsby and Smith, 1995). By contrast, gender equality has been widely practiced in Sweden.

Women in Sweden have the same rights as men and do not have to just stay at home and be a homemaker (Ingoldsby and Smith, 1995). However, people play a variety of social roles in their lifetime, which form the basis of self-concept and identity (Lee and Phillips, 2002). Roles in this research include the breadwinner, homemaker or caregiver (domestic work and education for children). Social roles regulate and organize behavior. In particular, they provide the means for accomplishing certain tasks. Roles provide social life with order and predictability (Haralambos and Holborn, 2000). For example, in traditional values, men work outside and are the breadwinners, whereas women work inside and are the homemakers. People may think that it is more effective if husbands and wives adopt their appropriate roles. This involves the exclusion of other areas of their lives so as to concentrate on the matter at hand. Nowadays, in contrast, women who participate in the labor force not only sustain the living conditions of their family, but also have career achievement. Sweden is a good example of this. The need to redefine the roles between cross-cultural couples has become a must.

2.2.4 Modernization Theory

Modernization theory is useful in explaining the process of how society has changed and hence facilitates cross-cultural marriages, and the position of women has improved so that it has influence on the attitudes towards household division of work and negotiation is workable among cross-cultural couples. Modernization forms a vital part in explaining the process of society change. Modernization refers to the process of change from a small, agrarian and traditional society to the contemporary world (Chiang and Tamney, 2002; Vago, 2004). In the past (hunting and agricultural society), people lived in an area of forest, surviving on natural vegetation and animals. The division of labour was based on gender and sex. Men

did the hunting or farm work which required physical strength, while women stayed at home and spent much of their lives nursing and caring for their young children. In other words, they had a simple division of labour in that men worked outside and women worked inside (Hodson and Sullivan, 2002).

Once machines were invented and used to and work in factory systems, industrialization played an important role in societal changes. Industrialization refers to the process by which technology is substituted for manual labour as the basis of the production of goods (Vago, 2004). Industrialization is also accompanied by a growing degree of complexity in the division of labour. At the general level, industrialization involves the shift of the labour force from agricultural employment to manufacturing employment and eventually to employment in the service sector. In order to save transportation time and to have more convenient economic activity and communication networks, many people move from rural areas to urban areas. This is called urbanization. Extended families that are embedded in the agricultural society are replaced by the nuclear family. During industrialization and urbanization, there was an increased need for literacy and education, which became a determining factor in labour force participation. Meanwhile, the division of labour is also related to geographic and occupational mobility as well as to level of educational attainment. Because women are attaining higher education, the social position of women is changing (Hodson and Sullivan, 2002; Vago, 2004) In Hong Kong, the educational level of women has increasd (from 2.5% to 13.2% of women holding a tertiary degree) (Census and Statistics Department, 2006).

Industrialization, urbanization, modernization and globalization often occur in combination. The modernization phase involves several features, such as the familiar

syndrome of industrialization, urbanization, occupational specialization, mass formal education and beliefs and values that support high rates of economic growth (Inglehart, 1997). In addition, technological development and the growing importance of individualism has become a major component in society. At the same time, it enhances globalization. Globalization refers to the process whereby political, social, economic and cultural relations increasingly take on a global scale, which has profound consequences on individuals' local experiences and everyday lives (Bilton et al., 2002). People in this century often travel abroad in order to pursue studies or work. They have many opportunities to interact with people from other races or countries in transnational corporations (TNC). Globalization is more than international or transnational. Technology plays an important role in globalization, particularly in telecommunications and computers. The recent trend is moving towards increasing the flow of goods, labour, materials, technology and funds between nations and countries (Norales, 2006). People can not only meet others in schools, workplace or in TNC, but also through the internet. This phenomenon encourages cross-cultural marriages.

Service-oriented industries have become the dominant sector in modern society (Hodson and Sullivan, 2002). Due to increasing educational levels and the encouragement of equal opportunity in employment, women can have their own career achievements. Pong (1991) stated that women with more schooling or training are more likely to enter the labour force. This is because additional vocational training improves skills, which enhance women's earning power. Also, with the establishment of the Equal Opportunities Commission in Hong Kong in 1997, it is inevitable that women's participation in the labour force is increasing (Kwong, Sin, So and Yau, 2001). The labour force participation rates of married women have

increased from 38.3% in 1991 to 53.1% in 2007 (Census and Statistics Department, 2007). More importantly, modernization has brought a significant impact on women's status. Firstly, economic development and modernization has destroyed the economic basis of traditions that regard men as superior to women. Secondly, modernization has vastly improved the cultural and material level of women, and has effectively raised their status. Thirdly, modernization of production has freed women from the burden of physical labour and has provided a better life both physically and psychologically for them. Fourthly, modernization has provided the technological and material basis for socializing household labour. For instance, it has freed women from household chores, which is an essential condition for their complete emancipation (Unesco, 1984). These kind of postmodern values are developed or have emerged into women's mind. They can put top priority on self-fulfillments through careers, rather than childbearing (Inglehart, 1997). It goes without saying that the gender roles in Chinese societies are changing.

Traditionally, the views of women were very conservative, deriving from Confucian. According to *The Book of Rites*, women's lives should follow "Three Obediencies": obedience to the father as a child, to the husband as a wife, and to the sons as a widow (Chiang and Tamney, 2002; Waters, 2005). In *The Book of Filial Piety* and *The Analects*, girls are taught to be submissive to their fathers, husbands and sons. Women should be obedient, quiet, self-effacing and devote herself only to the service of the family. In other words, men have their work outside the home and women have their work in the home from functional perspective. Wife beating has been accepted as a part of Chinese traditional practice. Here we can see the consequence of a patriarchal culture which defines women as subordinate to men. Marital relationships have not been the result of negotiation or of romance. In

contrast, throughout the second half of the twentieth century, the situation of women in Chinese societies has changed dramatically. The educational level of women has increased and more are entering the labour market. The status of women is strengthened by the opportunities for higher education and participation in economic activities. On the other hand, modernization has enabled the growth of romantic love. Traditional arranged marriages by parents are being replaced by freedom of choice of one's own mate, emphasizing love as the basis for marriage (Wong, 1969). Modern people are marrying for love. Romantic love has contributed to the development of more democratic families. Romantic love was also the major motivating force for couples to marry despite cultural barriers due to racial difference (Ross, 2002). People have more chances to interact with people of other races or from different countries either in college or at the workplace. When love is emphasized as the basis of marriage, parents' control over their adult children are weakened. Furthermore, women use love to gain some control over men, for example, they will use the "If you loved me, you would…" argument to bargain with men (Chiang and Tamney, 2002). The value of romance has weakened patriarchy, strengthened the positions of wives and eliminated gender-based oppression across countries. So, it is possible for wives in cross-cultural marriages to negotiate with husbands if problems arise..

Women have gained greater equality. Education is associated with more equal gender attitudes because education influences gender attitudes by improving individuals' material prospects (Shu, 2004). Higher levels of education provide better occupational opportunities and higher income for individuals. At the same time, higher levels of education give rise to social and cultural changes in women's roles in industrialized societies. It follows that the more education women and men receive, the more egalitarian gender attitudes they hold. In addition, Presser (1994) showed

that the more egalitarian people's ideologies are, the greater the husband's share of housework. Education promotes an egalitarian gender ideology for both spouses. This is also true of cross-cultural marriages. It has been found that educated husbands tend to spend more hours on housework and hence, reduce wives' hours of housework (Presser, 1994).

2.2.5 Economic Approach

On the other hand, economists hold a somewhat different perspective to gender role ideology. Economists argue that economic dependency and relative resources are important factors in understanding gender roles. The relative resources approach takes an exchange-based perspective, which suggests that the division of housework reflects the resources that women and men bring into their relationship. Individuals with the most resources, for example, earnings, positions and education, can use those resources to negotiate a more favourable division of labour for themselves (Greenstein, 1996; Davis and Greenstein, 2004; Erickson, 2005; Breen and Cooke, 2005). In other words, individuals with more resources, such as occupational status and income, can use them to reduce their contribution to the household work (Hu and Kamo, 2007). Women in administration, government and professions might have greater bargaining power within marriages (Batalova and Cohen, 2002). Economic resources are a primary source of bargaining power. The relationship between husband and wife, as viewed from the Game Theory, use the family outcome as a function of relative bargaining power.

Gaines (1997) argued that interethnic or cross-cultural marriages use a "generic" model of interpersonal resource exchange. It means spouses' mutual giving and receiving of affection and respect in a marriage is crucial to the development and

maintenance of a satisfying, stable relationship. This is derived from the Resource Exchange Theory. According to the reciprocity effect, if a spouse offers affection and respect, he / she will expect to receive affection and respect in return.

The bargaining theory is another theory which is useful to explain the power distance between couples. It is an economic theory and was developed earlier by John Nash, and implies that an individual's bargaining position is determined by his or her outside option (Abhinay, 1999). For example, in a traditional society, the wife serves as the homemaker, so her utility is very low (i.e. 10), but because the husband serves as the breadwinner, his utility is very high (i.e. 100). As a result, the husband has a stronger bargaining position in their marriage. In contrast, in a modern society, women go out to work, so their utilities increase (i.e. to 80). In this case, the wife's bargaining position within the marriage is strengthened. Employment has enhanced women's bargaining power and status (Kwong, Sin, So and Yau, 2001). Research has found that the more power wives have in their marriage, the more decisions they make and the more housework their husbands do (Thomson and Walker, 1989). Also, women in higher occupational positions have more power to negotiate the division of household work with their husbands (Hu and Kamo, 2007). The bargaining theory predicted that women's greater labour participation would enable them to negotiate more equal sharing of unpaid work (Breen and Cooke, 2005). This means those women's greater economic autonomy results in men's greater participation in domestic tasks. So, the bargaining theory is a useful theory to investigate the power distance between a husband and a wife. It is interesting to know if this is true in couples in cross-cultural relationships.

However, an economic approach is seen as too rational due to the subjective

nature of romance and love. In fact, love is irrational. While men and women cannot gain equal benefits, men, because of their economic status, are likely to benefit more than women in a marriage.

2.2.6 Exchange Theory

The exchange theory assumes that people try to maximize their rewards and minimize their costs in their interactions with others. Rewards can be defined in material or non-material terms, and include factors like assistance, property, money, affection, skill and conformity. Costs can be defined as the loss of any of these rewards (Atchley, 2000). Furthermore, the exchange theory states that power over others depends on the individuals' resources and on their available alternatives to a situation or relationship (Lennon and Rosenfield, 1994). Thus, the person with the greater exchange resource has more power in the relationship, while the person with the lower exchange resource is assumed to be more dependent on the relationship (Lee and Phillips, 2002; Cherlin, 2005). Couples from different cultures hold different amounts of information towards one's cultural background. One side has to depend on the other side if partner has more support networks or resources if one has to settle in partner's country. Finch (1983) claimed that domestic labour does not produce exchange values. Because domestic labour produces only "use values" but not "exchange values", housework is not a paid job. Wives do productive work which can be exchanged if their husbands require it. The relative resource model is closely linked to the exchange theory. Marital partners negotiate the allocation of housework using the basic principles of economic exchange (Erickson, 2005).

2.3 Negotiation among Cross-cultural Couples in Relation to their Roles

It is crucial that couples communicate with each other and define their roles in the family. Communication, both verbal and nonverbal, is crucial in achieving negotiation goals and resolving conflicts, because communication facilitates mutual understanding. Communication is a step in the negotiation process (Bond and Smith, 1999). A communicative framework for negotiation is dynamic (it offers change or shift over time), interactive (negotiators influence each other) and subject to situational and environmental constraints such as alternatives and time limitations, to name just a few (Barry, Lewicki and Saunders, 2007; Lewicki, Minton and Saunders, 1999). People use communication to ensure group cohesion and to assess and maintain one's own position within that group (Luxen, 2005).

More and more women work outside the home and equality has become the norm, relationships have changed and no longer rely on traditional roles. Redefining roles helps family life run smoothly. Although traditional ideology (women are homemakers while men are breadwinners) can help keep the family running smoothly, it may not function as well nowadays due to the shifting of the balance of power and the values and attitudes in cross-cultural marriages. Cross-cultural couples have conflicts over child rearing practices, language understanding (because it reflects or transmits cultural values) and food habits (Durodoye, 1997; Durodoye and Coker, 2008).

With increased education level and labour force participation, women gain power in their family. They have the resources to bargain with their spouses. A person's needs and life demands are fluid and change over time, good relationships

are negotiated and renegotiated all the time. It is important for every person to know their strengths and weaknesses through education to help decide what he or she does best because education encourages openness (Chappell, 2005). This is especially true for cross-cultural couples. To sum it up, the negotiation process was enhanced by the relationship that included good communication patterns that reflected an ability to share their thoughts and have them respected (Bialeschki and Pearce, 1997).

On the other hand, a wife's perception of support from her husband is linked to happiness. Wives who had less support, had lower marital and personal happiness than wives with more equal household labour arrangements. Marital stability is more closely linked to equitable divisions of housework and child care (Bengtson and Pina, 1993; Wood, 2001). In addition, Bird and Cast (2005) suggested that the more that husbands participate in household labour activities, the more they will perceive that they can role-take with their wives. Meanwhile, the more that wives participate in paid labour activities, the more they will perceive that they can role-take with their husbands so as to enhance compatibility. However, the effects of role-taking depend on the cross-cultural couples' gender ideology. Couples holding egalitarian gender ideology are happy with their role-taking ability because they believe men and women should be respected equally in paid labour and in housework. In contrast, couples with traditional ideologies believe that a man should focus primarily on paid work and a woman on housework and child care. Men are often not happy with the role-taking arrangement (Bird and Cast, 2005). Thus, the roles between husbands and wives in cross-cultural marriages have recently become a popular area of study for family researchers.

On the other hand, access to kin and other support systems can influence the

negotiation of family work (Bolak, 1997). Kin or ageing parents, may uphold traditional ideology and reinforce the traditional roles of men and women. As a result, Bolak (1997) found that the availability of kin support can limit men's participation in family work. The accessibility of kinship help may be the pulling factor of cross-cultural couples staying at Hong Kong as well.

CHAPTER THREE:
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter begins by defining cross-cultural marriage and negotiation. Secondly, it will examine several negotiation strategies which are frequently used by people. Then, we will probe into the factors affecting the negotiation process.

3.1 Definition of Cross-cultural Marriage

Cross-cultural marriages here are taken to mean the marriage between two people with different linguistics, values, attitudes, ethnicities or nationalities. The use of the term “cross-cultural” implies a comparison between two culturally different groups. In this way, culture is homogenized. It is assumed that cultural conventions such as language, religion, norms and expectations, dressings, beliefs, food, gender roles, child rearing and general lifestyles are not only the same for people of a particular ethnic identity, but are also completely accepted and practiced by them all (Breger and Hill, 1998). Leach (1982) pointed out that marriage as an English word alone has at least four general meanings. The first is linked with the legal aspect of marriage, which deals with rights, legitimacy of children and so forth. The second describes the practical aspect of marriage, such as household tasks and the routine of marriage. The third is concerned with the ceremonial aspect of marriage, the wedding and other ceremonies that may precede or follow it. The last considers the joining of families upon marriage and the affinal relationships which are formed (Leach, 1982). This research looks at the second and fourth meanings of marriage by focusing on the household division of work and relationships formed with extended families in cross-cultural marriages.

3.2 Definition of Negotiation

According to Johnson (1993), “negotiation is a process in which individuals or groups seek to reach goals by making agreements with others. This process often includes offering concessions and demanding them from other parties, but it functions best when it serves as a method for discovering mutual interests and joint payoffs”. In other words, negotiation can be used to resolve a problem or dispute between parties (Lewicki, Minton and Saunders, 1999). Negotiation aids conflict resolution (Cleary, 2001).

Moreover, negotiation is different from bargaining according to the terminology. Bargaining is a term describing a competitive, win-lose situation, while negotiation refers to a win-win situation where both parties are trying to find a mutually acceptable solution to a complex problem (Lewicki and Litterer, 1985; Lewicki, Minton and Saunders, 1999; Barry, Lewicki and Saunders, 2007). People use negotiation for either claiming values or creating values (McRae, 1998). These are two types of negotiation. One type is distributive bargaining (claiming values), while the other type is integrative negotiation (creating values). Distributive bargaining is known as competitive or win-lose bargaining. The goals of one party are usually in direct conflict with the goals of the other party. Distributive bargaining strategies and tactics are useful when a negotiator wants to maximize the value obtained in a single deal and the relationship with the other party is not important. They are at the claiming value stage of negotiations as well (Lewicki and Litterer, 1985; Lewicki, Minton and Saunders, 1999; Barry, Lewicki and Saunders, 2007). In a bargaining situation, one party wants the other party to surrender and accept one’s proposal. In

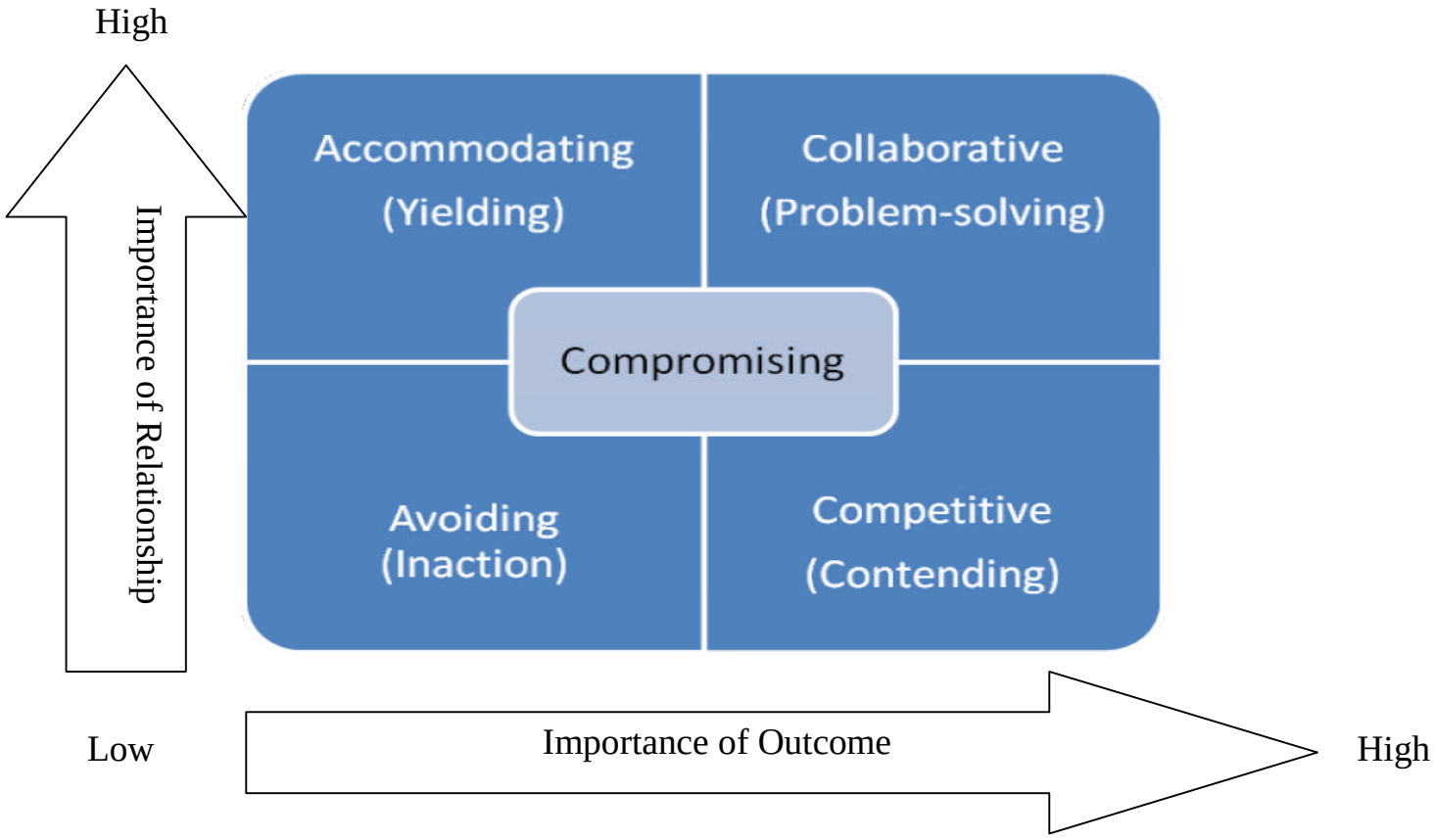
contrast, integrative negotiation is cooperative and collaborative, where both parties gain, creating values and a win-win situation. The goals of both parties are not mutually exclusive, which means one party's gain is not at the other party's expense. Integrative negotiators focus on commonalities rather than differences, invent options for mutual gain, commit to meeting the needs of all involved parties, attempt to address needs and interests and exchange information and ideas (Lewicki and Litterer, 1985; Lewicki, Minton and Saunders, 1999; Barry, Lewicki and Saunders, 2007). Both parties try to understand each other, compromise or find the other alternative to satisfy both needs and desires.

After all, negotiation occurs between couples because both have something to offer and gain from the process, owing to the win-win situation between them. In short, they are willing to invest in the relationship and they would like to use negotiation as a means to maintain a long lasting relationship.

3.3 Strategies of Negotiation

There are many strategies or frameworks for negotiation and managing conflicts. This research will adopt the two-dimensional framework – the dual concerns model as the main model for negotiation. The dual concerns model postulates that people in conflicts have two independent types of concerns: concern about the outcome for them and concern about the outcome for the other (importance of relationship) (Lewicki and Litterer, 1985; Lewicki, Hiam and Olander, 1996; Lewicki, Minton and Saunders, 1999; Barry, Lewicki and Saunders, 2007). Five major strategies have been identified in the following model (figure 3.3):

Figure 3.3 Negotiation Strategies



3.3.1 Avoiding / Inaction

Avoiding is known as inaction or lose-lose, it is the strategy on the lower left-hand corner. People pursuing this strategy show little interest in whether they attain their goal or whether the other party obtains his or her goals. Avoiding is synonymous with passivity or withdrawal. Actors prefer to be silent, to retreat or do nothing. One chooses the avoiding strategy when negotiations can be costly in time, money or relationships. When negotiation is regarded as a waste of time or not worth pursuing, avoiding strategy is employed. However, when the issue must be resolved and prompt attention is needed, the avoiding strategy is inappropriate to use (Lewicki and Litterer, 1985; Lewicki, Hiam and Olander, 1996; Lewicki, Minton and Saunders, 1999; Barry, Lewicki and Saunders, 2007).

3.3.2 Competitive / Contending

Competitive strategy is also called contending or dominating strategy. It is the strategy in the lower right-hand corner. People who employ this strategy pursue their own outcomes and show little concern for whether the other side obtains his or her desired outcomes. In other words, it is a kind of win-lose strategy (the outcome is won, but the relationship is lost). Contending should be used when the issue is important if the subordinates lack the expertise to make technical decisions, or if an unfavourable decision by the other side may be costly or speedy decision is needed. Competitive strategy is inappropriate if the issue is complex or unimportant, both parties are equally powerful, the subordinates possess a high degree of competence or if the decision does not have to be made quickly (Lewicki and Litterer, 1985; Lewicki, Hiam and Olander, 1996; Lewicki, Minton and Saunders, 1999; Barry, Lewicki and Saunders, 2007).

The competitive strategy is the same as the hard bargaining strategy (Johnson, 1993). Hard bargainers appear rigid and tough. It is difficult for them to reach an agreement not on their terms. They present a tough image because any sign of concession or compromise can be taken as a sign of weakness. They attempt to reach their goals through power, fear, pressure and intimidation. These bargainers use the force of their personalities to put pressure on the other by showing no viable alternatives (“The only way that we can work together is if you…”), focusing on the supposed consequences of noncompliance (“If you do not buy it today, I can assure you…”) and using their position of power to put pressure on the other side (“As long as you work for me, you will do what I tell you…”) (Johnson, 1993). They want the other side to surrender, not offer to meet halfway.

Regarding the advantages of hard bargaining, stronger bargainers usually make greater gains than weaker bargainers. People often accept the proposals from hard bargainers simply because they cannot think of a good alternative. The hard bargaining strategy works well when the other side is confused, lacks information or if there is no alternative.

However, hard bargainers experience significant risks and costs. They risk damaging their friendships. Their aggressiveness and inflexibility wounds their friends and makes it difficult for enemies to drop their animosity. Furthermore, they may meet someone tougher and more intimidating than they are and risk losing their credibility. Because their claims and demands are great, they must prove themselves and hide any weaknesses. More importantly, they inevitably miss good bargains. If they overestimate their own power, they will not have an easy route to back down or to accept a less desirable settlement (Johnson, 1993).

3.3.3 Accommodating / Yielding

Accommodating, also known as yielding or obliging, is the strategy in the upper left-hand corner. People pursuing this strategy show little interest in their own outcome but are interested in whether the other side achieves his or her desired outcome. It allows the other side to win. In other words, it is lose-win strategy (the outcome is lost, but the relationship is won or one party gives up (loses) and the other wins). This strategy works best when you believe you are wrong, are willing to give something up in exchange for something from the other party in the future, if you are dealing from a position of weakness, the issue is more important to the other side or if preserving the relationship is important. However, the accommodating strategy is inappropriate when the issue is important, the other party is wrong or unethical and

one party believes he / she is right (Lewicki and Litterer, 1985; Lewicki, Hiam and Olander, 1996; Lewicki, Minton and Saunders, 1999; Barry, Lewicki and Saunders, 2007).

3.3.4 Compromising

The compromising strategy is located in the middle of the diagram. It represents a moderate effort in pursuing both parties' outcomes and relationships (both sides give up something). The compromising strategy works best when the goals of the parties are mutually exclusive, a consensus cannot be reached, both parties are equally powerful, time is limited and a temporary solution to a complex problem is needed or integrating or dominating is not successful. However, compromising is inappropriate when one party is more powerful and the problem is complex enough to need a problem-solving approach (Lewicki and Litterer, 1985; Lewicki, Hiam and Olander, 1996; Lewicki, Minton and Saunders, 1999; Barry, Lewicki and Saunders, 2007).

3.3.5 Collaborative / Problem-solving

The collaborative strategy is also called problem solving or integrative strategy. It is in the upper right-hand corner. People pursuing this strategy show high concern for their attaining own outcome and others' outcome. Both parties pursue approaches to maximize the joint outcome from the conflict. It is a win-win strategy. People who collaborate should have a high degree of trust, openness and cooperation. The collaborative strategy works best when the issues are complex, better solutions are required, time is available for problem solving, commitment is needed from the other side for a successful implementation or resources possessed by different parties are needed to solve their common problems. However, this strategy is inappropriate if

the problem is simple, an immediate decision is required, the other parties are unconcerned about the outcome or do not have problem solving skills (Lewicki and Litterer, 1985; Lewicki, Hiam and Olander, 1996; Lewicki, Minton and Saunders, 1999; Barry, Lewicki and Saunders, 2007).

The collaborative strategy is the same as the principled negotiating strategy suggested by Johnson (1993). Principled bargaining is similar to win-win bargaining, which implies that if the plan is learned and followed, it will guarantee profitable and agreeable solutions. There are four major principles in the principled bargaining strategy: separate the people from the problem, focus on interests, not on positions, generate options for mutual gain and use objective standards. Using the principled approach is to seek a method that will provide an equitable approach. Principled negotiators search for agreements and creative options that benefit both sides, such as "If we keep thinking and talking, we can find a solution that enriches both of our lives" (Johnson, 1993).

The principled bargaining strategy has some positive impact. A negotiator who uses this approach does not feel the need to rely on the strength or attractiveness of his or her personality. It is an excellent method for a weaker side to confront an opposition that has more power. Secondly, principled bargaining focuses on problem solving, mutual gain and objectivity, and provides an opportunity for both parties to gain.

However, principled bargaining has some undesirable effects. By refusing to take a position, principled negotiators often extend the negotiating time. When both sides have strong and clearly conflicting needs and aims, with no viable options for

mutual gain, they are forced to use personality bargaining.

3.3.6 Other Types of Negotiation Strategies

Apart from the above strategies, several strategies or tactics are adopted during the negotiation process, according to Johnson (1993). They are the soft bargaining strategy and the tit-for-tat bargaining strategy.

The idea behind the soft bargaining strategy is that the other side responds generously and positively to one who is nice. The soft bargaining strategy is somewhat similar to the accommodating strategy, but in the soft bargaining strategy, the negotiator still wants to persuade the other side to accept their own suggestions, whereas in the accommodating strategy, the negotiator accepts the other side's offer. The soft bargainers are those who attempt to prevail by being agreeable. They try to be agreeable and flexible in all their dealings because they do not seek conflict. The message is that being friendly and showing interest in others is not only a moral act, but also an instrument for gaining influence. Kindness can produce practical rewards in everyday relationships. Moreover, soft negotiators use effective tools, such as pressuring by using guilt ("If you loved me as I love you, you would…"), implying threats of withdrawing love or friendship ("I do not see how I can continue our relationship unless you…"), sympathy ("It hurts me when you…") and other personal appeals ("You know how I am always there when you need me…") (Johnson, 1993). Also, soft bargainers can make effective arguments. For instance, they will use words and phrases related to community, family, common purpose, partnership, mutual interest and national purpose in order to make the other side move from private purposes to making a joint effort.

Soft bargaining carries some advantages. It has enormous power for people who are lonesome or searching for a comfortable and predictable relationship. People are more likely to reciprocate a concession for a concession. Thus, it produces positive results without harming the relationship, as both sides care about each other. In short, the soft approach works well when both sides know each other well, when both face a common picture of the issues and alternatives, and when both share a situation and a vision that offers a mutual advantage.

However, the soft bargaining strategy is not without disadvantages. The soft strategy may erode long-term credibility. Although creating a warm relationship may sometimes be the best strategy for reaching an agreement with the other side, it creates suspicions about the motives of soft bargainers. In addition, soft bargaining does not hold up well against aggressive opponents. It is because hard bargainers may take advantage of the concessionary posture without leaving the negotiator an opportunity to recover.

The other type of strategy suggested by Johnson is the tit-for-tat bargaining strategy. Tit-for-tat bargaining is also known as reciprocal bargaining. Tit-for-tat bargainers attempt to remove personality from the bargaining behaviour and respond to others on the basis of reciprocation. This strategy is cautious and imposes a wait-and-see attitude. It also promotes cooperation and goal-oriented motives. It requires the bargainer to let the other side move first. When the other side makes a positive move, the bargainer will respond with a positive move of equivalent value. However, if the other side makes a negative move, the bargainer will respond with a negative move of equal value. Trades are the basis of tit-for-tat. The nature of the trade is behaviour based on the attitude “If you are reasonable, I will also be

reasonable." Also, the trades may be about the direction of movement: "If you give a little, I am sure that I will be able to give some also" (Johnson, 1993). On the other hand, persuasive arguments are a major factor in this approach. The arguments made are usually one of three types: convincing the other side that the rewards will help them and the punishments will hurt them, convincing them that they will be punished and rewarded or providing a clear and comprehensive picture of when they will be rewarded and when they will be punished.

The major advantage of the tit-for-tat strategy is reducing the impact of the other side's personality in bargaining. A reciprocal bargainer responds to the moves of the other side, making them responsible for their own behaviour and consequences. The tit-for-tat approach shapes the behaviour by positively reinforcing cooperative behaviour and negatively reinforcing uncooperative moves when administered properly. In short, reciprocal bargaining is a good strategy if both sides are unhappy with the past relationship and are prepared to move cautiously toward a more cooperative relationship.

But the tit-for-tat approach does have a downside. It is difficult for tit-for-tat bargainers to measure accurately the amount of positive or negative response that is appropriate for the other side's behaviour. People often over-respond to a positive or a negative move. Furthermore, outright victory is impossible. In this cooperative, equitable solutions are the highest goal. The negotiator gives up the ability to get his own way, and the costs may exceed any possible gain. If the other side is hostile, shortsighted or aiming for a win at any cost, the negotiator will be involved in a series of punishing moves and retaliations without a viable escape route.

3.4 Components Affecting the Negotiation Process

In fact, there is no perfect strategy. No approach works well in all situations. It is worth noting that some components (such as power, language barriers, non-verbal signs and gender differences) are crucial in the negotiation process. We may see different facets of power generated during the negotiation process. Further, language includes different patterns and symbolic meanings in communication. Apart from language, nonverbal communication also affects meaning during interactions. Moreover, it is important to note the gender differences in men and women during interaction. Details will be explained in the following:

3.4.1 Power

The definition of power refers to the capability one person has in affecting the other's behaviour (Swingle, 1970). According to Lukes (1974), there are three views of power. The first, the one-dimensional view of power, focuses on behaviour in decision making over key or important issues as involving observable (overt) conflicts of subjective interests. In this research, negotiation involves problem-solving (for overt conflicts) and decision making as they (husbands and wives in cross-cultural marriages) may have conflicts and competing demands such as child rearing and division of household work. Those who make the decisions can be viewed as having more power.

The second facet is the two-dimensional view of power, which involves a qualified critique of the behavioural focus of the first view. The two-dimensional view considers decision making and non-decision making over issues and potential issues as involving observable (overt or covert) conflicts of subjective interests.

Non-decision making is a means to make demands for change in the existing allocation of benefits before the other voices out. The potential issues refer to the issues that are not brought up among couples because they dare not upset their partner. In this research, those issues will be examined and to identify the common potential issues or issues that would not be brought up among cross-cultural couples.

The third facet is the three-dimensional view of power, which focuses more on the sociological perspective. This view considers decision making and control over political agenda on issues and potential issues (through the operation of social forces and institutional practices or through individuals' decisions) as involving observable (overt or covert) and latent conflict of subjective and real interests. This research aims to find out whether couples' power is socially or culturally constructed through the mass media or kinship or from the process of socialization. In short, individuals' power is influenced by the macro level.

Besides, there are specific sources of power which may affect the negotiation process. French and Raven (1959) identified five major types of power: expert power, reward power, coercive power, legitimate power and referent power.

Expert power: derived from having a unique, in-depth information about the subject.

Reward power: derived by being able to reward others for doing what needs to be done.

Coercive power: derived by being able to punish others for not doing what needs to be done.

Legitimate power: derived from holding an office or formal title in some organizations and using power associated with that office such

as a director or a vice president.

Referent power: derived from the respect or admiration one commands due to attributes like personality, interpersonal style and integrity. A is said to have referent power over B to the extent that B identifies with or wants to be closely associated with A.

3.4.2 Language / Linguistics

In cross-cultural marriages, partners often do not share the same mother tongue. The language in which they decide to communicate at home can be symbolic of the extent to which each partner is prepared to somewhat leave his or her cultural background and incorporate new elements in their relationship (Breger and Hill, 1998). Relationships are made, maintained and broken through talk or conversation. In accordance with Tannen (1986), linguistics provide a concrete way of understanding how relationships are made, maintained and broken. Linguistics are the symbolic representation of language. This cultural difference implies different assumptions about the social world, and these differences reflect different cultural values. For instance, “approbation” or “praise of other” is not encouraged in Japanese culture because “praise of other” is seen as arrogant and presumptuous in Japanese culture (Wierzbicka, 1991). Generally speaking, people prefer not to say exactly what they mean. They are not only concerned with the ideas they are expressing, but are also concerned with the effect of their words on other people. Furthermore, the more contact people have with each other, the more opportunities both have to do things their own way and be misunderstood. As relationships continue, small frustrations may pile up to a cumulative effect of big frustration. Style differences cause misunderstandings, and each misunderstanding gives added evidence for negative conclusions about each other. That is why things can

deteriorate so easily among couples.

Linguistics contain different conversational signals and devices. Whereas words convey information, what we say and how we say contains social meanings. Besides, how we speak; such as how loud, how fast, with what intonation and emphasis can carry different messages. For instance, getting louder can show the relationship between ideas like “This point is important”, or express emotions like “I’m excited”, or serve as a switching signal like “Wait, I want to say something”. Getting softer can reflect parallel meanings like “I feel too bad or embarrassed about this to say it any louder”, while speaking softly can also be a sign of respect when you speak to those of more advanced age or status. Japanese tend to speak softly in public as this action represents politeness and consideration to the public. Moreover, pitch shifts are a basic tool for signaling meaning. For instance, if the pitch goes up at the end of a sentence, this can make the sentence into a question. However, it can also show uncertainty or asking of approval. Many women use rising intonations to be agreeable. Some people use rising intonations at the end of each phrase in order to encourage their listeners to give approval and verification. Some people vary their pitch to show they care and are emotionally involved (Tannen, 1986).

Regarding conversational strategies, indirectness is often used because it creates a rapport situation. Firstly, it is better to get what we want without saying what we mean, especially when talking about birthday presents and related do-you-love-me games. Secondly, it is useful in self-defense. If what we want or think does not meet a positive response, we can take it back and claim that it is not what we meant. On the other hand, framing is another aspect of indirectness in conversation. Framing is a way of showing how we mean, what we say or do and figuring out what others

mean by what they say or do. If you feel cold, you may frame your words by saying "Do you feel cold?" or "Do you feel the temperature in this room is quite low?" instead of saying directly "Switch off the air-conditioner for me, please". When something is very important, many people prefer to discuss things on the phone rather than write about it and would rather talk in person than on the phone because nonverbal signals such as gestures, facial expression and posture frame meaning (Tannen, 1986). The main difference between Chinese or Japanese and mainstream English in expressing one's own opinion is indirectness. This is especially true for Japanese. Japanese are discouraged from expressing clearly their wishes, preferences and desires. Their conversational style can be portrayed as "I think you know what I want to say" and "I think you would say the same" (Wierzbicka, 1991). In contrast, Western culture, such as, in America, encourages people to say what they mean such as, "I would / would not like this and that". The underlying cultural values in Japanese culture emphasize interdependence more highly than autonomy, while American culture emphasizes presenting the message. In short, talking differently can make one feel like a different type of person. Psychological motives are internal and amorphous, while talking or conversation is internal and concrete. It is essential to learn different styles in order to make better communication.

Apart from cultures, boys and girls are socialized to use language differently. This can be understood by language socialization where children learn to use language in a way that fits their culture's norms of appropriate feminine and masculine behaviour (Tannen, 1993). Girls (and women) use language more cooperatively, acknowledging what others have said, showing more verbal organization of group behaviour, taking turns to speak more often than boys and expressing agreement more. Girls show more interest in what other people are saying

by asking more questions, making more supportive comments and by working harder to keep conversations going. Closeness has been proposed as a central theme for girls whereas separation is a theme for boys (Tannen, 1993).

*3.4.3 Nonverbal communicatio*n

Nonverbal communication can supplement verbal communication in five ways. Firstly, nonverbal communication may agree with words, such as when you say “left” while pointing to the left. Secondly, a verbal message may be nonverbally contradicted. For instance, the statement “I’m all right” would be contradicted if someone were crying while saying this sentence. Thirdly, nonverbal behaviour may complement verbal communication by underlining a verbal message. For example, the statement “I never want to talk with you again” is more forceful if accompanied by a threatening glare. Fourthly, we may use nonverbal behaviours to replace verbal ones. You could shrug your shoulders rather than saying “I don’t know”. Lastly, nonverbal communication may highlight verbal messages and tell us which parts are important (Wood, 2001). Couples in cross-cultural marriages often use gestures or non-verbal communication to supplement their verbal words. Non-verbal signals are often used in Indian culture. An example is the eyebrow flash. Europeans, Balinese, Papuans, Samoans, South American Indians and Bushmen use a rapid raise of the eyebrows to show they are giving approval, seeking confirmation, flirting, thanking, or when they are beginning or emphasizing a statement. This is similar to saying “yes” to social contact. Smiles and nods sometimes accompany this gesture. However, Japanese suppressed it because it was indecent behaviour. This behaviour indicates disapproval, indignation or admonishment. These “no” eyebrow signals are often accompanied by a stare or head lift with lowering of the eyelids, signaling cutting off of contact (Knapp and Hall, 2002)

Nonverbal communication can establish the relationship level of meaning. The three primary dimensions of relationship level communication are responsiveness, liking and power. The nonverbal cues of responsiveness include lively gestures, eye contact, inflection, smiling, head movements and attentive body posture (Barry, Lewicki and Saunders, 2007). For instance, making eye contact is one way to show another you are paying attention and listening, and that you consider them important in general. It is important to make eye contact when delivering the most important part of a message, not looking a person in the eyes can be interpreted as dishonesty. These patterns are especially characteristic of Western society. However, keeping one's eyes down while the other is speaking is considered a sign of respect in some Asian societies. In Chinese culture, too much eye contact can be regarded as bordering on the confrontational (Waters, 2005). Cultural difference is one of the reasons. Gender difference is the other reason. Women are socialized to be affiliative, and they tend to engage in responsive nonverbal communication which indicates empathy, emotional involvement and engagement with others. Examples are maintaining eye contact and smiling in order to show that they are approachable, interested and friendly. Women are better at reading feelings and interpreting others' emotions. In contrast, men are socialized to focus more on status and power; they are encouraged to assert themselves rather than listen and respond. The second dimension is liking. We may use nonverbal behaviours to signal that we like or dislike the other person. Touching, vocal warmth, standing close to the other and holding eye contact while face-to-face are important nonverbal cues of liking. At the same time, crossing arms, bowing the head, furrowing and squeezing eyebrows together all show strong rejection or disapproval of the message (Barry, Lewicki and Saunders, 2007). Generally speaking, Western people tend to use the above gestures

directly if they disagree with other stand points. Apart from that, females tend to use more nonverbal communication that signal liking than men do. For example, women stand and sit more closely in conversation and engage in eye contact more with the other than do men (Wood, 2001). The third dimension is power or control. Nonverbal behaviours that convey control messages include touch, use of space and vocal qualities. Of these three categories, men generally engage in nonverbal behaviours which exert control more than women do. When compared with women, men tend to use greater volume and stronger inflections to highlight their ideas and sustain their position. Also, men tend to touch women more in aggressive ways to reinforce status differences. Moreover, men tend to use more personal space than women, for example, by taking up more space in sitting or standing (Wood, 2001).

3.4.4 Gender Differences in Interaction

Although cross-cultural couples come from different cultural backgrounds, interaction between men and women across cultures are somewhat similar due to gender difference. Beliefs between men and women in a relationship are asymmetrical. Women seek intimacy and connection in a relationship to create a sense of community. Girls do not give orders, they express their preferences as suggestions and their suggestions are likely to be accepted. They hold the belief that "We are close and the same". Women will reframe their directions as "just a suggestion" rather than "giving an instruction" (Tannen, 2001). Women also tend to use "uh-huh" or "mhm" to show they are listening and understand (Tannen, 1986). In contrast, men tend to use them only to show they agree (Tannen, 1986). Men are more likely to seek independence and status in a relationship. This creates hierarchy. Boys give orders and are more competitive in a group. They hold the belief that "We are separate and different". So, men tend to tell others what to do and how to do it

(Tannen, 2001).

Considering relationships within peer groups, little girls tend to play in pairs or in small groups. Their social lives usually center on a best friend, and friendships are maintained by talking, especially telling secrets. The secrets themselves may or may not be important, but the fact of telling others is important. If a girl tells her secrets to you, she may believe you to be her best friend. It is hard for newcomers to get into these tight groups, but anyone who is admitted is treated as an equal. Girls like playing cooperatively, otherwise the group will break up. By contrast, little boys tend to play in larger groups and their activities are often held outdoors. They spend more time doing things rather than talking. It is easy for newcomers to get into the group, but not everyone is treated as an equal. Once in the group, boys must strive for their own status. Their talk is often competitive, talking about who is the best and in what aspects (Tannen, 1986). In other words, girls are more concerned with the resolution of issues of equity and distributive justice than boys. Under the condition of inequity, females are less cooperative than males. While under the condition of equity, females are more cooperative than males (Rubin and Brown, 1975).

As far as reactions towards heart-to-heart talks are concerned, women and men behave differently. To many women, relationships work as long as they can talk things out. But to many men, a relationship will not work if they have to keep talking in order to save the relationship. It goes without saying that one’s efforts to preserve the relationship may appear to the other as reckless endangerment (Tannen, 1986).

With regards to the dominance and affiliation between men and women in a demanding interaction, Luxen (2005) proved that men showed more dominance,

especially head shaking, sitting in a closed posture, using closed questions and giving directive remarks. In contrast, women showed more affiliation, especially in the frequency of laughing, sitting in an open posture and posing open questions.

Regarding the relational view of others, women are aware of the complete relationship among the parties negotiating. As a result, they are more likely to gain value from the relationship itself and perceive conflict episodes in relationship terms. Women are highly sensitive and reactive to the interpersonal aspects of their relationships with others. By contrast, men tend to be task oriented. They want to resolve the problems and not concentrate on other parties' feelings or perceptions. They orient themselves not to the other, but to the impersonal task of maximizing their own earnings or rewards. (Lewicki, Minton and Saunders, 1999; Rubin and Brown, 1975).

Moreover, women and men perceive and use power in different ways. Women are more likely to seek empowerment where there is interaction among all parties in the relationship so as to build connections and enhance everyone's power, while men are more likely to use power to achieve their own goals, or to force the other party to accept their points of view (Lewicki, Minton and Saunders, 1999).

Women and men use dialogue in a different way. Women seek to engage the other in a joint exploration of ideas and alternatively listen and contribute. However, men use dialogue to convince the other party that their position is the only correct one and to support various tactics that are used to win points during discussion (Lewicki, Minton and Saunders, 1999).

Furthermore, men tend to use a tit-for-tat strategy more and tend to be more cooperative in response to a tit-for-tat strategy. Women are more cooperative if the other presents cooperation from the beginning. But once crossed, women are less responsive to cooperative gestures. In contrast, when a highly cooperative partner is presented from the beginning, men tend to exploit him (Swingle, 1970).

CHAPTER 4:
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the research methodology, which includes research approach, data collection, sampling methods, interviews, method of analysis and its validity.

4.1 Research Design

This research will adopt a qualitative approach as this is appropriate for developing a deeper, fuller and detailed understanding of an issue (Babbie, 2007; Creswell, 2007). A qualitative approach is especially appropriate in this study when it comes to understanding the relationships in a family. This level of detail can only be established by talking directly with people, and this approach can help us to understand behaviour and motivation (a quantitative method could only enumerate behaviour types, not explain). More importantly, it is especially appropriate to analyze the positions people occupy, such as breadwinner or homemaker, in the family and the behaviour associated with those positions, such as family roles.

An inductive approach (induction) will be adopted in this study. Induction moves from the particular to the general, from a set of specific observations to the discovery of a pattern that represents some degree of order among all the given events. In the inductive model, theories are developed from the analysis of research data (Babbie, 2007). I will use the grounded theory in my research. The grounded theory refers to the process of generating a theory from an analysis of the patterns, themes and common categories discovered from observational data. It is interesting

to know how cross-cultural couples get along and whether they are different from same culture couples. The process of doing the grounded theory includes theoretical sampling, theoretical coding and writing theories (Babbie, 2007; Bowling, 1997; Creswell, 2007; Flick, 2006). The grounded theory is well suited to the inductive model as aspects of social life are first observed, then patterns are discovered that may point to relatively universal principles.

4.2 Data Collection

4.2.1 In-depth Interviews

In-depth interviews, which are commonly used by qualitative researchers, allow instant interactions between the interviewer and the interviewee, and probe into a specific research area. A qualitative interview is essentially a conversation in which the interviewer establishes a general direction for the conversation and pursues specific topics raised by the respondent (Babbie, 2007). To obtain the data about the issues between cross-cultural couples and to examine the negotiation process between them, face-to-face in-depth interviews of around 2 hours in average were conducted from sampled respondents.

Two pilot tests of two pairs of cross-cultural couples were carried out in order to define the semi-structured questionnaire and to format the interview. The researcher compared the format and its effectiveness during face-to-face in-depth interviews. A separate interview format for the first cross-cultural couples was used. Then, they were invited to discuss an issue together so that the researcher could observe their interactions, gestures and speaking frequencies. In other words, the researcher conducted 3 interviews with that couple. A pair format for the second cross-cultural

couples was used. The researcher could directly observe their conversation patterns and turn taking, to mention but a few. In other words, the researcher conducted one interview with the second couple. By comparing the two methods, the researcher decided that a pair format of in-depth interview would be more effective. The separate format was both time-consuming and had a low response rate (couples find it difficult to commit to 3 interviews).

The researcher conducted at least one face-to-face in-depth interview with each couple (husbands and wives were interviewed together). The in-depth interviews were divided into three parts. The researcher obtained couples' general opinions about their values and attitudes in the household division of work or cultural issues in the first part. Then, the researcher conducted a small test about their personality types in order to test their understanding of each other. Individuals were given a note-card to write down their own personality type in accordance with Eysenck's Circumplex model. The individual also had to write down his or her spouse's personality type so as to compare their knowledge of each other. For the last part, the couples were free to discuss or negotiate any issues with their partner. The researcher observed their interactions and took down some field notes. The interviews were recorded for further analysis, with the permission of the respondents on the basis of anonymity.

4.2.2 Semi-structured Questionnaire

A semi-structured questionnaire was used to guide the interview. The semi-structured questionnaire, not only saves time by not having to think of questions during the interview, but also provides a clear focus for both the interviewer and interviewees. The differences in each couples' relationship may help the researcher construct a social reality to have a better understanding of each

cross-cultural couple. So, a standardized questionnaire would not be suitable in this study. The questionnaire, with both English and Chinese translations, is given in Appendix 1. The questions were derived to achieve the goals of this study, which focused on the area of household division of work among couples and addressed the reasons behind that, as well as some potential factors affecting the negotiation process. The questionnaire consisted of closed and open-ended questions. A series of close-ended questions were asked initially to immediately reveal respondents' standpoints. Then open-ended questions, with follow-up prompts, were asked to further explore their underlying values, attitudes towards certain aspects of cross-cultural marriage or differences in household division of labour. Respondents expressed their views freely and interacted with the researcher. The semi-structured questionnaire consisted of ten parts. They were demographic backgrounds of respondents, how they met, paid work, family life, work and family conflict, personality, power relationship, language, domestic helper and overview.

4.3 Samples and Sampling Methods

This study will focus on cross-cultural middle class (or above) professionals with or without children who are living in Hong Kong. Also, cross-cultural couples tend to have higher education and income. There are some criteria for the sample selections: (1) both of the couples come from different countries (2) they are now living in Hong Kong (3) they belong to the middle class or above[2] (their income is above the average income of a Hong Kong household -- $17250 per month (Census and Statistics Department, 2006)). There were no restrictions on the length of

[2] They belong to middle class or even upper middle class because their monthly household income vary from $30000 to $160000

marriage between respondents as this focus of this research is the cultural differences between inter-ethnic couples. The target couples came from different occupations, and included accountants, professors, editors, consultants, managers, ministers, and librarians.

To find the sample, purposive, snowball sampling methods, personal network and cases referrals were introduced in this study. These were convenient and cost effective ways for data collection, especially for small-scale research (Flick, 2006) and finding interethnic couples. Purposive sampling is a type of non-probability sampling in which researchers intentionally select individuals on the basis of the researcher's own judgment about which ones will be the most useful for his / her research (Babbie, 2007; Creswell, 2002). In Hong Kong, married individuals whose spouse belongs to a different ethnicity occupy 1.6% of the population (Census and Statistics Department, 2006). The researcher wished to study a small subset of the larger population, and the enumeration of them would be nearly impossible (Babbie, 2007). The advantages of using purposive sampling are finding suitable samples effectively by identifying certain characteristics from the sample and linking them with the research purpose. Hence, the researcher adopted purposive sampling to find the cross-cultural couples.

The researcher also adopted the snowballing sampling method because an in-depth interview about couples' relationship may be highly personal. Snowball sampling is a non-probability sampling method in which each interviewee is asked to suggest additional people to be interviewed. Its purpose is to identify cases of interested people who are willing to provide a number of information. The term, snowball refers to the process of accumulation, as each subject suggests another. It is

used primarily for exploratory purposes (Babbie, 2007; Creswell, 2002). The advantages of using the snowball sampling method are finding potential interviewees and allowing them to talk more comfortably, which is more possible as the researcher found them through social networks. The interviewees may not mind so much sharing their stories and thoughts with the researcher. This is the same as cases referral. It provides the researcher with the advantages that include familiarity with the respondents' marriage background and its suitability in the research. This study requires a detailed understanding of couples' relationships and hence the samples were purposively chosen from the whole population. However, the sample is limited by its' skewed nature[3] (because of snowball sampling method) so that it lowers the generalizability of the findings. For instance, the majority avoided work and family conflicts due to the nature of jobs (professionals, allow flexibility) and their family (no need to take care of children). In addition, the whole negotiation framework is subject to the respondents in this research. In other words, the findings of this research are only for these fourteen cross-cultural couples, basing on the uniqueness.

A total of 14 couples (28 respondents) formed the basis of this research, and they had all set up home in Hong Kong. The general rule of the building theory is that you gather data until each category is saturated. Theoretical saturation occurs when (a) no new or relevant data seems to emerge in a category (b) the category is well developed in terms of its properties and dimensions and demonstrates variation (c) the relationships among categories are well established and validated (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p.212). The researcher aimed to find out a common pattern of negotiation process regardless of parenting style or household division of work. Hence, the researcher did not stop interviewing cross-cultural couples until

[3] Wives are mainly Asians whereas husbands are mainly Westerners.

categories or patterns were found. Saturation occurred when the sample size reached fourteen. Each interview lasted two hours in average. The interviews were tape-recorded and field notes were taken during the interviews and served as the major data source. The age of respondents ranged from 30 to 58 years old, and the longest marriage length was 32 years, while the shortest was 3 years. With respect to the composition of the sample, five cases were recruited through Lingnan University and four other referral cases were obtained through these respondents. Five cases were recruited from the researcher's personal network.

Table 1 Ethnic Background of Couples

Countries	Male	Female
Asia		
China	1	7
Thailand	0	1
India	0	1
Japan	1	0
Philippines	0	3
Western		
Australia	1	0
France	0	1
New Zealand	1	0
Sweden	1	0
Britain	4	0
America	5	1
Total	14	14

4.4 Method of Data Analysis

The interviews were taped and transcribed into themes and paragraphs. By using the grounded theory with the inductive model, a circularity approach was used. The circularity model allows the researcher to do reflexivity about the research process in order to make comparisons and better interpretations of the sample. The

grounded theory provides a procedure for developing categories of information (open coding), interconnecting the categories (axial coding), building a story that connects the categories (selective coding) and ending with a discursive set of theoretical propositions (Strauss and Corbin, 1996; Creswell, 2007).

In the open coding phase, the researcher transcripts the conversations among couples immediately after each interview. The researcher examines the text, for example, transcription and field notes. The researcher tries to categorize the data such as Asian and Western parenting style, the central phenomenon of each couple negotiation result and negotiation strategies, to name but a few. Besides, the researcher attempts to saturate the categories or continue interviewing until the new information obtained does not further provide insight into the category. As far as the second phase of axial coding is concerned, the researcher interconnects the categories and addresses the causal conditions that affect the phenomenon (values and attitudes, culture, education level, socialization), the strategies for the phenomenon (sharing the household work), the contextual and intervening conditions that shape the strategies (the nature of work, help of domestic helpers and ageing parents, personal skills and knowledge) and the consequences of undertaking the strategies (better adjustment, care and love, increase marital satisfaction). The third phase of selective coding involves the process of integrating and refining categories to build up a model. Based on the information obtained from axial coding, a framework[4] for cross-cultural negotiation was developed to illustrate the process in a negotiation owing to the uniqueness of these fourteen cross-cultural couples. The details of the framework will be described in chapter 6.

[4] F (flexibility), A (admixture), M (managing), I (involvement), L (love) and Y (yes) (F.A.M.I.L.Y) Negotiating Approach.

4.5 Reliability and Validity

In recent years, many researchers have used triangulation to guide data collection and increase the quality of the data. Triangulation refers to the combination of different research methods in order to complement the weaknesses of each (Blaikie, 2000; Bowling, 1997; Flick, 2006). Within the same sample pool, researchers use different methods to increase the validity of the data by using face-to-face interviews and focus group interviews simultaneously. The researcher in this research appreciates the spirits of triangulation. Due to the constraints of doing cross-cultural couples research (respondents may not be willing to spend a lot of time to participate in the research because it is time consuming), the researcher cannot adopt the exact method of triangulation. Instead, the researcher infiltrated the spirit of triangulation by using different sources of data (literature addressing cross-cultural marriages, interviews and key informants' (KIs) opinion) to increase the validity of the data.

By using a variety of literature to address the issues in cross-cultural marriages, the researcher had a better understanding of the potential issues or conflicts that may occur in cross-cultural marriages, and hence, helped in the formulation of the semi-structured questionnaire. Furthermore, Key informants (KIs) interviews provided valuable insight and knowledge. Two KIs were interviewed. One of the KI – Ms. Carol McNaughton Ho is a parent coach and she has developed a parenting style which is called "Fusion Parenting". This method fuses the best values in both Chinese and Western cultures. The other KI – Dr. Dan Waters, who is a well-known scholar and expert in cross-cultural marriage research, has written a book "*One*

couple two cultures: 81 Western-Chinese couples talk about love and marriage”. By interviewing key informants, the researcher obtained first hand information of parenting style and issues in cross-cultural marriages. Their experience and knowledge helped complement the shortcomings of the researcher.

Table 2 General Profile of Respondents

Couple	Gender	Age	Nationality	Monthly Income ($)	Employment/ Occupation	No. of Children	Year of Engagement	Domestic Helper	Education Level
A.	Male	52	American	60000	Assistant Professor	D:24	16		Master
	Female	41	Filipino	/	Housewife			PT	Bachelor
B.	Male	38	American	85000	Associate Professor	/	13		PhD
	Female	37	Hong Kong	PT	Freelance translator			PT	PhD
C.	Male	58	British	98000	Professor	D:24	32		PhD
	Female	55	Chinese-Thai	/	Housewife	S:22		PT	Bachelor
D.	Male	34	New Zealander	40000	Pilot	S: 1	6		High School
	Female	41	Filipino	45000	Banking Consultant			FT	Bachelor
E.	Male	43	British	40000	Senior Teaching Fellow	/	11		Master
	Female	43	French	30000	Teacher			PT	Master
F.	Male	41	Australian	45000	Chief Editor	D: 3	4		PhD
	Female	40	Filipino	/	Housewife	S: 1.5		No	High School
G.	Male	50	British	45000	Senior Teaching Fellow	/	6		PhD
	Female	46	Hong Kong	PT	Self-employed			No	Master
H.	Male	45	American	60000	Consultant	S:2.5	3		Master
	Female	30	Hong Kong	/	Housewife	D:0.5		FT	High School
I.	Male	39	American	100000	Consultant	D:6	10		Bachelor
	Female	43	Chinese	60000	General Manager	S:2.5		FT	MBA
J.	Male	38	Japanese	/	House husband	/	3		High School
	Female	35	Hong Kong	30000	Assistant Manager			No	Master
K.	Male	55	Hong Kong	40000	Accountant	D:12	14		Bachelor
	Female	43	American	60000	Librarian	S:10		FT	MPhil
L.	Male	32	Swedish	80000	Business Manager	/	3		MBA
	Female	32	Shanghai	54000	Senior Consultant			PT	MBA
M.	Male	38	British	60000	IT Manager	/	5		Master
	Female	39	Hong Kong	28000	Project Coordinator			PT	Master
N.	Male	38	American	30000	Editor & Ministry	D: 12	12		PhD
	Female	37	Indian	PT	Minister			No	Bachelor

CHAPTER FIVE:
FINDINGS — ANALYSIS OF ATTRACTIONS AMONG CROSS-CULTURAL COUPLES AND HOUSEHOLD DIVISION OF WORK

As mentioned in Chapter 1, people obtain many opportunities to interact with others from different countries owing to modernization and globalization. This chapter discusses the attraction between cross-cultural couples, what factors brought them into a cross-cultural relationship, and what specific issues they have to negotiate, such as child raising and the household division of work.

5.1 How Cross-cultural Couples Met and the Attractions

Concerning the reasons of people cross-culturally married, they can be explained by opportunities (because of modernization and globalization), changes of values and attitudes through education, preferences about mate selection that facilitates love among each other. From the data, it can be concluded that the world is becoming more globalized. People from different countries have many chances to meet by studying overseas, meeting at University or at the workplace by joining voluntary activities or extra-curricular activities, by being introduced by friends or by teacher-student relationships.

> "Nowadays, the world is being globalized. When I worked in Thailand in the University, I met my wife. She was my student. She's special and beautiful." (Couple C, male, British, age 58)

> "I met her in the workplace, Nike. We did a project together and we talked a lot. She gave me a good impression and was full of confidence." (Couple I, male, American, age 39)

Modernization is often combined with globalization. People have to travel abroad and meet other people from different countries either in the workplace or schools, which provide ample chances to interact with each other and develop interests and activities (Hodson and Sullivan, 2002). This facilitates cross-cultural marriages.

Moreover, some of the respondents claimed that they met each other through the internet. Love through the internet is often based on the content of conversation and common interests or similarities. Strangers who met on the internet may be more attracted to each other than those who met face to face. This is because internet relationship is largely determined by the level and quality of their conversation, while face to face meetings depend on other variables as well, such as social skills or physical attractiveness, which may hamper the development of close relationship.

> "The Internet acts as a media, without seeing a face and relies on the content of conversation. We developed our friendship online. We have common interests. I was a very passive person in the beginning. It's important for me to find someone who I can feel I can talk to freely. It is because I don't usually talk to people freely." (Couple G, female, HK, age 46)

> "I knew him on the internet, through chat rooms. I practiced Japanese with him as he is Japanese. Then, we developed a friendship. We met each other face-to-face after developing our friendship for one and a half years." (Couple J, female, HK, age 35)

In fact, globalization is more than international or transnational, and it brings technology as well, particularly telecommunication and computers. Technology plays an important role in globalization (Norales, 2006). People from all over the world can communicate online. Friendships are initiated and developed through computer mediated communication (CMC) in online settings like chat rooms, newsgroups and websites. The CMC is characterized as lacking spatial features, personal appearance and actors' dynamic nonverbal cues, for example, facial expression, posture and gesture (Chan and Cheng, 2004). To a passive person (like from Couple G), it is difficult to establish a friendship by face to face interaction. Since they are not used to talking to people in daily life, they do not feel comfortable when talking to strangers. In this situation, the internet acts as a channel for people to deliver their views freely and find common interests and similarities. Internet enables introvert and shy people to develop friendships. Research has shown that online friendships grew quickly after passing a critical period at about one year. Personality traits and social skills which may hinder initial interactions are less readily apparent in CMC. It seems that the internet provides an alternative social venue for men and women from different cultures to interact continuously (Chan and Cheng, 2004). Meanwhile, it may be perceived as a safe environment for people (especially the shy people) to develop cross sex and cross cultural relationships with a lower degree of reservation

and reticence.

Romantic love is experienced in most cultures (Breger and Hill, 1998; Jankowiak and Fischer, 1992; Weiten, Lloyd, Dunn and Hammer, 2009). Data indicates that culture is not an important element in mate selection, but love is. This is because the cross-cultural couples are highly educated. Two people from different cultures may have more common than differences especially when they are both highly educated and have a professional background. Education is a secondary socialization where individuals are taught to be more open-minded and have a greater tolerance towards people from different cultural backgrounds. However, there is a gender difference in mate selection which is inline with the mainstream.

> "She's really beautiful! My first impression was that she was attractive because of her appearance and she had charisma, she was funny, nice and interesting. She's also sociable, nice and easygoing. I have no concern other than that." (Couple A, male, American, age 52)

> "He can give me financial support in various aspects. Also, we have common interests. He really respects me and takes care of me. That is what a woman wants." (Couple A, female, Filipino, age 41).

> "She looks very young, beautiful and attractive. She's cute, which is distinctive from the other." (Couple B, male, American, age 38)

> "We're both highly educated. He is a responsible man and he is nice. I know I can totally depend on him even though I don't work." (Couple B, female, HK, age 37)

> "In China, people will not object to cross-cultural marriages. People even look up to that. My parents are open-minded. They are not go against me marrying a Western man. But if I marry a Pakistani, it's different. People may look down on me. They judge not from a cultural view, but from an economic view." (Couple L, female, Shanghai, age 32)

From the above dialogue, we can see that men tend to look for both appearance and character (personality) in mate selection. There is no different from the mainstream in mate selection. Men will first look at a girls' appearance, then they will look at their personality traits, and see if they are nice, clever, understandable, active, sociable, easygoing or calm, to mention but a few. Women tend to look for desirable characteristics in men, such as a high education level, wealth, common interests, showing respect and being able to take good care of them. Personal appearance or outlook is not an important element in mate selection. One of the key

informants — Dr. Dan Waters agreed that beauty is the main asset a woman needs and that men are not concerned so much about a woman's wealth. A poor woman can marry a rich man if she is beautiful. On the contrary, women tend to consider wealth, high education, status and the ability to take care of them as important criterion in mate selection. A matching phenomenon (asset-matching process) can be used to explain this attraction. In this case, men typically offer wealth or status and seek youth and attractiveness, while women do the reverse. Men advertise their income, education and status and women advertise their youth and looks (Myers, 2007). The woman from Couple L mentioned that she was allowed to marry a Western man because her parents view Western men as economically viable compared to men from South Asia. Culture may not be a factor in determining attraction between cross-cultural couples. Instead, situational factors such as how they met, how they interact with each other and the characteristics one possesses are more important for mate selection in cross-cultural marriage.

5.2 Why did They Choose to Stay in Hong Kong?

Among 14 cross-cultural couples, half of them decided to leave their motherland and settle down in Hong Kong. There are several explanations behind this.

First and foremost, there are desirable working conditions in Hong Kong. Most mentioned that Hong Kong provides many job opportunities for foreigners.

> "When I worked in Singapore, work was very stressful! Everyone was competitive, fighting to get commissions, stress on targets and everyone pursued individual goals! But in Hong Kong, the working conditions are better. My husband got work here and the pay is better too! In Hong Kong, you can earn double. I can afford not to work. I just have a part-time job on the island." (Couple C, female, Thailand, age 55)

> "I choose to stay in Hong Kong because of the work. We work in the same place. Hong Kong is generally good. It has many opportunities compared to Britain. The pay is better and I am able to study as well. It's really a good place to live and study." (Couple E, male, British, age 43)

> "Hong Kong is a place where it is easy to find work. We have better pay, and the talent and skills level are high. It is easy for us to access better skills. I have better work development in Hong Kong than in America. That's why I stay here." (Couple N, male, American, age 38)

Hong Kong, as a global city, provides many job opportunities. Most of the respondents believe that they can have better career achievements in Hong Kong compared to their own countries. In addition, the salary in Hong Kong is very attractive as well.

Secondly, couples like the quality of life in Hong Kong which includes the overall environment and the people.

> "Hong Kong is a nice place to live. Although there is pollution, it is safe compared to other regions. In Discovery Bay, everyone is so friendly, we always chat and go shopping together. It really is a nice village." (Couple A, female, Filipino, age 41)

> "The quality of life is good here. The transport network is very convenient and nature is very close! I can go anywhere." (Couple L, female, Shanghai, age 32)

It is noteworthy to know that Hong Kong is a good and safe place to live. Couples like the quality of life and develop good friendships with other people in Hong Kong. Foreigners are generally welcomed by local people and many have good social networks.

Thirdly, couples chose to stay in Hong Kong because spouse's families and friends are in Hong Kong. This is especially applicable for cross-cultural couples whose spouses are Hong Kong residents. Among 28 respondents, 8 respondents are from Hong Kong. Hong Kong spouses tend to stay close to their families.

> "Her family members are all here. Her grandmother likes me. I'm happy to stay in Hong Kong. Also, her mum always comes to our home to help with the children." (Couple H, male, American, age 45)

> "We lived in Shanghai many years ago. But we chose to stay in Hong Kong because of some practical things. Her family is here and her friends are here. Now, my mother-in-law often visits us and helps out with the children." (Couple I, male, American, age 39)

> "It was really difficult to make decisions in the beginning. Which side should give up and leave their motherland. We discussed this and we made some comparisons. She has many connections here such as family and friends. My parents had been passed away for many years. If I stayed in Hong Kong, the opportunity cost would be smaller for her." (Couple J, male, Japanese, age 38)

Spouses from Hong Kong tend to stay in Hong Kong after marriage. This is

because they prefer not to leave their family support network. Ageing parents (mother-in-law) of Hong Kong spouse tend to help out with the household, especially in childcare. Research has shown that Chinese are regarded as interdependent. There is a tendency for people to act primarily in accordance with the anticipated expectations of each other and social norms rather than the internal wishes (Markus and Kitayama, 1991). There is a clear distinction between in-group and out-group members. They are highly compatible with in-group members. If their children get married to a Western man or woman, he or she is regarded as an in-group member of the family. Regardless of the culture or race of the spouse, Hong Kong ageing parents are willing to provide childcare. This is an important factor for cross-cultural couples to stay in Hong Kong.

On the other hand, couples chose to stay in Hong Kong because they want to escape from extended family interactions. It is applicable for interviewees in which neither of the couple is Chinese.

> "In the beginning, I thought we got on together well. But later on, I realized we didn't. I had a very bad time with my mother-in-law. I was the least loved child in her family. Meanwhile, he was annoyed with my family members. He didn't like the fact that they always talked about food or money. Well! That's a cultural difference. We emphasize work and money. He is annoyed about that! So, it's better to keep away from both families." (Couple C, female, Chinese-Thai, age 55)

> "I think that French and British have different cultural life styles. If we lived in France, he'd feel isolated, like we denied him. Same thing, if we live in England, there are also differences in communication with neighbours. In fact, I wouldn't like living too close to my in-law or my parents either. I need my own space, I don't like my family members to always phoning me. I need an independent life. Living in Hong Kong is very good – so far away from them." (Couple E, female, French, age 43)

> "Our relationship with our in-laws is fine! It's alright, with no problems and no worries. His mum always asks him on the phone whether he is coming back to Australia. In fact, I would prefer staying here (HK). We have our own style. Living in Hong Kong is good!" (Couple F, female, Filipino, age 40)

It is interesting to note that the above couples are not from Hong Kong. Waters (2005) indicates that Chinese tend to involve members of their family in own personal affairs more than Europeans do. They would like to maintain their own life style and do not want their in-laws to interfere in their lives. With respect to their cultural differences, Asians often talk about work, money and food as they are just interested and caring. However, Westerners may feel those issues are too private to

discuss (especially money and work) and the actions are controlling and interfering. The data shows that if both spouses are Westerners, they prefer to live independent lives. Sometimes, attitudes of ageing parents towards cross-cultural marriages may push the children to live far away from them.

When it comes to choosing a mate from a different race, ageing parents may have some opinions.

> "My dad is a traditional man. In the beginning, he disliked the fact that I dated a Western man. I was so afraid of telling him. I just said he was my close friend. But later, may be because of my age, he urged me to get married. Then, I told him I would like to marry him." (Couple B, female, HK, age 37)

> "In fact, they supported my decisions, but my mother wanted me to live in America with my husband. She did not want me to stay in Hong Kong. (M[5]: How did you deal with this situation?) I comforted them and said I had a long vacation and would visit them. But they still had a little bit concern about it! But I had already decided." (Couple K, female, American, age 43)

> "My parents were a little bit unhappy. My dad was more upset than my mother, not very strongly but a little bit of discomfort. They didn't expect I would marry an Indian woman, I had just come to Hong Kong for few months. However, she had left India 2 years ago and her parents had expected, there was a possibility that she would marry interracially." (Couple N, male, American, age 38)

Here we can see that ageing parents did not interfere with their children's mate selection, even though they were uncomfortable with it. The sources of discomfort for many come from traditional thinking about race, the place where their children decided to settle down and the unexpected mate selection. For some parents, they are concerned about not be able to communicate with people from other countries due to language barriers. They may not be able to speak English and hence cannot communicate with their son-in-law or daughter-in-law well. Most of the respondents claimed that they have a good relationship with their in-laws but they are not close. The language barriers limit the development of closer ties. They are always smiling at each other but the fact is that communication is not just based on smiling. They need to exchange their ideas and understand each other. On the other hand, where couples decide to stay is the issue. Most parents want their children to live close so that they can see them more often. If children choose to live overseas, parents worry about them. In the case of Couple N, their parents never knew that their child was

[5] "M" stands for the initial of the researcher (Miki) – acting as an interviewer here

dating someone outside their culture. The parents were not psychologically prepared to have a new family member from a different culture. There are many uncertainties. For instance, the cultural differences, living style and eating habits may be different. Indians eat a lot of spicy food, whereas people from another country may not be used to spicy food. Parents may consider those things as uncertainties. All of the above factors are the push factors for cross-cultural couples living far from their parents.

5.3 Child Raising

With regards to child raising, the methods of raising children in this research can be categorized into Asians (Chinese, Thai, Indian, Japanese and Filipino) and Westerners (Australian, American, French, New Zealand, Swedish and British).

It is clear from the data that Chinese parents expect automatic respect and obedience from their children, which could be due to their own upbringing. They require their children to behave well in order to get rewards, such as gifts, presents or money. These parents pay particular attention to their children's school performance, such as academic results and school work. These parents invest in children's extra-curricular activities and they are very protective of their children. Apart from Chinese, other parents from Asia (Thailand, Philippines and India) also develop good relationships with their children. These Asian parents stress that children's happiness is very important, and they hope their children will lead a better life.

The data shows that Western parents tend to empower children to develop their own talents and achieve their own goals. Children are socialized to become independent and stand on their own. They are supportive of their children's learning and independence. These parents are less authoritative, they stress equality and respects from children are earned. As a result, parents need to earn respect from their children. They explain to their children why and how their behaviour is inappropriate rather than using punishment. The differences in child raising can be explained in the following parts.

5.3.1 Asian (Filipino, Indian) versus Western Child Raising

When a Western man marries an Asian woman, they claim that their children are over-protected by the Asian partner.

> "I place more emphasis on learning but she concentrates more on protection. For example, I let the baby fall if I know he will not get hurt. I'll let him learn to walk and stand up by himself! I don't have many expectations of him, I just want him to become a good person and do what he wants." (Couple D, male, New Zealand, age 34)

> "I have to make sure he doesn't get hurt when he falls. I need to protect him! I want him to become happy and socially integrated. I hope I can share with my baby my knowledge, happiness and whatever. Also, it is important for him to have his own achievements." (Couple D, female, Filipino, age 41)

Asian partners also tend to care more about children's emotional well being whereas the Western spouses tend to focus on empowerment and discipline.

> "She's better suited to her age group and takes care of her emotions. I am in charge of the discipline. We don't punish her. Instead, I explain to her why her behaviour is inappropriate and the consequences of her actions. I explain to her and let her be responsible for her behaviour. Also, I tend to empower her to do what she wants! It's very important." (Couple N, male, American, age 38)

There may be a gender difference here. Couple D mentioned his wife is better suited to his daughter's age group and thus can take care of his daughter's emotions better. This is because women are more emotionally involved than men. Women like sharing feelings with others (Myers, 2007). Apart from that, both Asian and Western spouses emphasize friendship when they interact with their children. Asian spouse may have more expectations of their children than their counterparts.

5.3.2 Chinese versus Western Child Raising

After discussing Asian and Western child raising methods, we can see that the Chinese spouses may have more cultural differences on child raising when compared to Western spouses.

Both Chinese and Western spouses have different views about respect and obedience from children. Chinese parents in this research claimed that they expect automatic respect and automatic obedience. They view filial piety as important value. Children are expected to be told what to do. Children should not express their anger

towards their parents. In contrast, Western spouses claimed parents must earn respect from their children. Parents are role models and children will not respect them if parents misbehave. Western spouses tend to use reasoning to teach their children.

> "My daughter said: 'I hate you, Mum!' I just took this expression as anger. But my husband said 'No! That's not acceptable!' He is Chinese and stresses heavily on obedience and so he wants to punish her." (Couple K, female, American, age 43)

> "She wants our children to respect her and obey her. That's the main difference between her and myself. I don't expect automatic obedience. Instead, middle class western parents explain their children things they do. They believe that children are responsible for what they are doing." (Couple C, male, British, age 58)

> "I just expect them to respect me and listen to me! Also, I think they should earn pocket money by behaving well, or help with the housework. Money will not drop from the sky. But he's not the same" (Couple C, female, Chinese Thai, age 55)

These couples not only have different views on respect and obedience, but they also have different views on how good behaviours should be rewarded. They have different views in terms of child raising methods, which are linked with socialization. Chinese respondents are taught to obey their parents. Obedience is valued in their families. Obedience is an appropriate attitude towards parents, which is one kind of filial piety. Western respondents explained that they emphasized equality. The power distance between parents and children is rather short. Further, Chinese spouses emphasize that prizes come after effort. They want their children to earn their pocket money. Western spouses think that children have the right to ask for money regardless of their efforts and behaviours. In view of the differences, couples adopted compromising strategy. They would provide reasoning for their children and meanwhile, children still get their pocket money, but they need to behave well to ask for more.

In addition, Chinese spouses pay more focus on their children's academic results and helping develop merit of extra-curricular talents.

> "I would like my kids to acquire knowledge that kids should know, at least to go to University. Also, I'd like my daughter to learn piano, in fact, not everyone knows to play the piano. She has the talent to learn that. Her schedule is really packed. After school, she has ballet lessons, swimming lessons, piano lessons, etc." (Couple I, female, Chinese, age 43)

> "Hong Kong families burn their kids out, they schedule everything for them. I'm more relaxed, when I was in the USA, I'd play soccer twice a week, learn social skills and it

was not a structured programme. The kids are more independent. They'll look after themselves." (Couple I, male, American, age 39)

"He's a bit stricter in regards to school work, he expects the kids to achieve highly in school work. I am not so strict in this aspect." (Couple K, female, American, age 43)

It can be noted that Chinese spouses put more pressure on academic results than their Western counterparts owing to the highly-stratified school systems in Hong Kong. Western spouses pay more focus on developing their children's general talents. Cross-cultural couples negotiated with each other, making compromises that their children need to do extra-curricular activities but children have preferences.

5.3.3 Outcome of Different Child Raising Methods

With respect to the consequences of different approaches to child raising, children brought up in cross-cultural families experience some benefits when compared with children in the same culture. First of all, children are exposed to two different cultures. In a globalized world, such cross-cultural experiences will benefit these children.

"It opens their horizons more than a single race family would. They are exposed to both cultures, and both Chinese and Western customs eg. Lunar New Year, Christmas, Halloween, and different kinds of activities, for examples, skiing. Our kids will benefit. If I married a Chinese man, my activities would be different." (Couple I, female, American, age 43)

Children who were born in cross-cultural family are exposed to different cultures. These widen their horizons. For instance, children can learn different customs and cultures. They will celebrate both Chinese and Western customs, not only Christmas and Lunar New Year but also Halloween. In terms of activities, children are exposed to different activities such as skiing or turned to another country to visit grandparents.

Moreover, children brought up in a bilingual environment can benefit linguistically. They learn two different languages and their language acquisition would be better than those in a single-language household.

Furthermore, children can learn different attitudes and approaches when

analyzing things. They learn valuable Asian attitudes such as caring for others and cooperating with others. Meanwhile, they learn Western values of being independence and self autonomy. They evaluate events from different perspectives and have a greater tolerance to people from different cultures.

However, children in interracial families may be confused about their self-concept and self-identity.

> "Both my son and daughter were a bit confusion about their self-identity. When my daughter went to University, she said: What should I say if people ask me where I come from? She was born in England, moved to Thailand, moved to England again, then lived in Singapore for 8 years and has been in Hong Kong for 5 years. She really didn't know where she came from." (Couple C, male, British, age 58)

> "Sometimes, my kids ask me: 'Who am I?' They know that they are a mixture of Chinese and American, but they don't know how to answer if they are asked where they come from." (Couple K, female, American, age 43)

Initially, children in cross-cultural families may have some confusion about self-identity in general. They will ask questions such as "Who am I?" or "Where did I come from?" In fact, cross-cultural couples spent a lot of time explaining to their children that they are not from a minority group. It seems that after these children talked to their parents or met other children who are in the same situation as them, they understand they come from a cross-cultural marriage and solve the identity crisis.

5.3.4 Child Raising: A Cross-cultural Approach

It is evident that a mixture of Chinese and Western teaching styles can be beneficial to children. A parenting style called "Fusion parenting", was developed by Ms. Carol McNaughton Ho (one of the key informants in this research), a parent coach who married her Hong Kong Chinese husband when she was 21 years old. Fusion parenting, similar to the idea of fusing Chinese and Western medicine in order to find the most successful cure, tries to fuse the best of both Eastern and Western parenting styles. Ms. Ho used her western values and her understanding of the Chinese culture to develop this parenting style.

> "As the years went by my understanding and appreciation of the East deepened. I had experienced first hand the benefits and limitations of both Eastern and Western parenting

> and so when my husband and I started our own family we chose to combine the best from both of our cultures. We would, among other ways, model respect for elders and others irrelevant of age, encourage open, honest communication with our children by listening and trying to understand their opinions even when we didn't agree with their view point and we committed to eating dinner together regularly as a family at the dinner table. Our three children are the products of Fusion Parenting and though they are not perfect (I am glad to say!) they are exposed to the best of both worlds." (Ms. Carol McNaughton Ho, Key Informant, English)

She says she tries to combine the best from both cultures so as to raise respectful and well-mannered young people. They can share their parents' cultural values, as well as be able to voice their own ideas and opinions. She creates strong parent-children connections and encourages honest and open communication. This allows parents to have a positive influence on their children's future. Fusion Parenting enables parents to instill the best values in children and prepare them to act as responsible, independent young adults, while retaining strong cultural values (Li, 2008).

In addition, it is desirable to use collaborative parenting. This is also known as the equality-creating tactic or conscious collaboration. This means that partners assume the responsibility is shared and they can compensate for biological differences. Fathers also made task-relationship connections with their children by not solely depending on the mothers. Fathers were open to learning and mothers did not intervene. As a result, both mothers and fathers developed direct relational connections with their children (Cowdery and Knudson, 2005).

> "We share equal responsibility of the children. In fact, kids need both their parents, if they don't, they can't develop personally, whether on confidence or skills. People should change their views, men should not be only the breadwinner, but also the supporter of their kids." (Couple N, male, American, age 38)

Couples in this research assumed that the responsibility of looking after their children was shared and they were willing to share the task. Fathers are also responsible for childcare tasks such as taking children to school and helping them with school work. But the allocation of time is different between mothers and fathers. Sharing responsibility in childcare is also practiced in most middle class families in Hong Kong but fathers tend to involve recreational activities rather than tasks that constitute the daily grind of child rearing (Lee, 2002). In collaborative parenting,

parents consciously allocated time equally among themselves. Women in collaborative households share equal responsibility of the children with men. Men also monitored their own responsibilities and did not look for wives' directions. Furthermore, men are open to learning. The learning is not just about child care, but also include more emotionally attentive and communicative in their relationships with their wives. Openness to learning has benefits because it allows couples to develop new non-gendered skills and competencies and to learn from their mistakes. When fathers participated in childcare tasks, they reported a sense of satisfaction and were more likely to develop connections with their children (Cowdery and Knudson, 2005).

This kind of co-parenting, in which both fathers and mothers coordinate and support each other's parenting efforts has been linked to parenting behaviour, marital interactions and children's developmental outcome. Meanwhile, marital quality and parental expressiveness within a family correlates with co-parenting behaviour. Research has shown that fathers' positive expressiveness may be beneficial to family functioning. In families with highly flexible fathers, co-parenting behaviour was less vulnerable to low marital quality. In other words, men's positive expressiveness is a vital contributor to establishing supportive co-parental relationships. Positive expressiveness fostered more positive co-parental interactions between husbands and wives due to the fact that partners who are more openly expressive may be better at communicating about co-parenting issues. In contrast, negative expressiveness is associated with less cooperation and greater conflicts in the co-parenting relationship as partners who are outwardly angry toward their spouses might be less successful at relieving challenges related to co-parenting (Kolak and Volling, 2007).

5.4 Household Division of Labour

This research sought to cover eight aspects of the household division of labour, including: shopping for groceries and cooking, dishwashing, doing laundry, housecleaning, home improvement or house repair, sending children to school, tutoring children and taking care of children.

According to grounded theory, the stages of open coding and axial coding

include finding out a core phenomenon. Regarding the core phenomenon in the household division of work, all of the couples held egalitarian attitudes towards men and women. They indicated that household responsibilities should be shared and cooperated.

There are some potentially causal conditions that lead to the phenomenon. First of all, women are still expected to provide the majority of the care for the home and children. In Asian societies, such as China (Shanghai), Hong Kong, Thailand, Philippines and India, women do most of the household work such as cooking, dishwashing, laundry and caring for children. Traditionally, women are the homemakers and caregivers while men are the breadwinners. They have a predetermined role of motherhood and fatherhood. Despite some changes in fathers' involvement in child care, the work of taking care of children is still primarily done by mothers (Cowdery and Knudson, 2005). This holds true even when couples reported a preference for shared parenting and when mothers worked outside the home. Meanwhile, the traditional role of homemaker and breadwinner role still exists in western societies like America, Britain, France, Australia, New Zealand and Sweden. However, the subordinate role of women to men may be viewed differently in Asian and Western society. Western spouses stress that everyone is equal, no matter whether it is the parent-child relationship or husband-wife relationship. Everyone is responsible for the household work and they should at least participate in some kind of household work. On the contrary, it seems that women in Asian families do most of the household work.

> "My mother is a very traditional woman. She's the main supporter of my family. Most of the time, mum does everything which is a very important position in a family. I also think that mum staying at home is better for everyone." (Couple H, female, HK, age 30)

> "I don't think anybody is naturally fit for domestic service regardless of gender. Patriarchal society defined roles and gender, and just because women give birth, it is assumed that they have to feed the children and stop working for a period of time. So, people assume that's natural. But in my family, my mum goes out to work while my father stays at home to take care of us and do the domestic work. He does it well!" (Couple K, female, American, age 43)

> "I think Western guys treat their wives better than eastern guys, at least they will help out with the housework. They treat us more equally. In fact, my father wouldn't do so much. But my husband helps me a lot. I really appreciate him! I can say I am so lucky to have this man. I don't think I would have had this kind of satisfaction if I married an eastern man." (Couple C, female, Thailand, age 55)

As the above shows the mother is expected to devote more time to the family and children in Asian families. It is beneficial to everyone if the mother stays at home, from their point of view. In Asian society, people emphasize interpersonal bonds and have a greater sense and responsiveness to the needs of others than those from Western societies (Higgins, Zheng, Liu and Sun, 2002). Women and men are regarded as equal in the household division of work. Men can still help with the household work, and they do help more with housework.

Secondly, socialization plays an important role in forming attitudes toward family responsibilities. Traditionally, in Asian families, women do most of the household work. Children learn social roles by observing the roles that fathers and mothers perform in the household. They are socialized by their parents, not only about gender roles, but also about the responsibility in the household.

> "My mum does most of the housework. I am a girl, so I also need to help out eg. dish washing, cleaning, etc. When I was 9 years old, I knew how to cook. Due to the absence of a domestic helper, we were forced to learn those things" (Couple I, female, Chinese, age 43)

> "Of course! In American culture, there are the traditional values that the father is the provider of the family and gives financial support. Women do most of the cooking. But in my own family, both of my parents had to work. We were trained to be independent and take care of ourselves. I washed the dishes and cooked by myself. My parents taught us we were responsible for the household. I have to take care of the yard and cut the grass, but if I did the dishes, my brother had to care for the garden." (Couple I, male, American, age 39)

Westerners are taught to be more independent. They learn to be independent and take care of themselves. When it comes to family responsibilities, they are taught to be responsible for certain tasks. From the above dialogue, it depends on socialization and family practices, girls observe their mother's role and do housework. Children are trained to take care of themselves and to contribute to the household. Hence, they have a sense of responsibility and cooperation.

Moreover, education level is a vital causal condition for egalitarian attitudes. Most of the couples in this research are highly educated. Highly educated people hold more egalitarian attitudes towards race and roles, otherwise, they would not be

involved in intermarriages. They may respect their spouse more and have a better understanding of each other.

> "The notion that men work outside and women work inside is really traditional thinking! It's time to change. As we are both working outside and highly educated, we respect each other's needs and desires. Nowadays, people are getting higher degrees and can choose what they want to do. We share the household work and my husband (from New Zealand) has the same views as me." (Couple D, female, Filipino, age 41)

> "I'm from the West where there are quite strong feminist movements, which stress equality between men and women. We are highly educated! For me, I prefer a certain element of fairness. If one thing completely belongs to one side, I may feel uncomfortable. For example, if I work while she stays at home, there's no balance and it's not right. Or if she does all of the housework so that I don't need to, I also feel uncomfortable. Sharing and equality are important." (Couple L, male, Swedish, age 32)

It is noted that couples with high education levels have a higher sense of equality towards each other. They are more willing to share the housework and care about other's feelings. The sense of equality is especially emphasized in Sweden as there is a strong feminist movement. Students are taught to view men and women as equals (Ingoldsby and Smith, 1995). When compared with middle-class families in Hong Kong, men are willing to be involved in the housework, but the proportion is not totally equal (Lee, 2002).

As a result of egalitarian attitudes, all the cross-cultural couples share the household work, but in different proportions. This is very similar to middle class families in Hong Kong. Some intervening conditions and contextual factors led to this action. The first intervening condition is personal skills, profession and knowledge. Some of the professions of interviewees were domestic helpers or flight attendants. They are trained to serve and they have specific skills in tidying and providing a service to others. When it comes to the household, they devote more efforts, because they are more capable and it gives them satisfaction.

> "I have been a domestic helper before. I have experience in dealing with kids and housework. I am a professional. In fact, I like doing that because it can show my skills. I don't mind doing more housework than my husband" (Couple F, female, Filipino, age 40)

> "We have natural preferences or natural desires (one will do more if she can do the task well) in doing housework. Of course we will share the housework but I'll do more. It is because I have been a flight attendant. I am a professional and I have more concern about being tidy and neat. I just use my skills in my own household. It's very natural and comfortable." (Couple N, female, Indian, age 37)

Often, because of their professional background (as, say, a domestic helper or flight attendant), women do more housework. If they were trained in skills such as tidying, cleaning or dealing with the housework, they can do the tasks efficiently. Personal skills and profession are intervening conditions because they determine the action – the household work is shared but the proportion is different. Women do more housework purely because of their skills and abilities, the skills of doing things better and in an efficient way. Besides, in the case of Couple N, it suggests that there is a biosocial approach on gender roles. Biosocial approach is the theory that gender identification and behaviour are based in part on people's innate biological differences (Cherlin, 2005). Women are born to possess nature characteristics in dealing with the housework effectively. Thus, women will do more housework than men.

The other intervening condition is the social environment that the couples settle down in. Hong Kong is not the motherland of nine out of the fourteen couples. Both of them come from different countries and chose to settle down in Hong Kong. The social environment may have some effects in their division of household work.

> "Personally, I haven't tried to fit-in my own cultural rule. In general, wives mostly stay at home and do all the household work. But I grew up in a city, that's not very traditional. I have been in Hong Kong and worked for many years. I have adapted to Hong Kong's culture now. Both the husbands and wives go out to work, either full time or part time. Both of them need to share the housework, it's not just the woman who does everything." (Couple N, female, Indian, age 37).

> "It's really the social pressure! In my daughter's class, 50% of their mums don't work. When her teacher told me that my daughter had not performed well, I thought that I needed to spend more time with her and see her progress. My friend used to be in financial banking, but she quit her job even though her salary was over a million dollars, to spend more time with her 2 daughters. This case showed me that I need to sacrifice and contribute a lot if I want to have outstanding kids. And now, because I have already achieved my career goals, may be in the near future I will quit my job to spend more time with my kids." (Couple I, female, Chinese, age 43)

Social pressure or personal experience influences couples' views on household work and childcare. By referring to Hong Kong environment and social network couples know that they have to sacrifice their careers in order to adapt to social expectations. Women are expected to organize their time around their children, even

if they are working outside the home. In other words, mothers have to take continual responsibility for childcare. As a result, they developed a direct relational connection with their children (Cowdery and Knudson, 2005). In addition, respondents agreed that increased parental involvement with school is associated with better academic outcome in children. Parent school involvement includes not only attending school meetings, but also tutoring or doing homework with the children, which are the same as Hong Kong middle class families. By attending school functions, meetings and activities, parents signal to their children that their current effort at school is an investment in their future. Research studies have also indicated that parent-school involvement positively influences children's academic attainment (Oyserman, Brickman and Rhodes, 2007).

The contextual or situational factors which influence different proportion in the division of household labour are the nature of the work or working hours.

> "Due to the nature of my job, I have to travel a lot in Asia for business trips. I spend less time at home. She is a full time housewife. I am glad that she's so supportive and does more in the household. I really feel sorry to her." (Couple H, male, American, age 45)

> "I'm an editor and also a minister. I work for a magazine. I work full time and she works as a part time. We have a family business, a home business. It means the division between work and family life is almost non-exitent. I have to work long hours. She's very supportive, she helps me a lot in terms of housework. We'll share, but for the proportion, she does more than me." (Couple N, male, American, age 38)

> "I tend to work 10 hours a day. When I get home, it's about 7:30pm. Her job gives her flexibility. Actually, she is the boss, so she can go to the office at 10am and leave early. She is able to spend more time with the kids, taking our daughter to ballet classes and piano classes. My job doesn't allow me to do so. But I'll spend time with my kids, I read for them every night." (Couple I, male, American, age 39)

> "I don't have work now as I am Japanese. I am still learning Cantonese. I have lots of time at home and so, I'll do most of the housework. My wife has to work so she doesn't have much time. I'm happy with the division, but maybe we'll rearrange the division once I get a job." (Couple J, male, Japanese, age 38)

It is noteworthy to know that the proportion of the household work done by each depends on the nature of work and working hours. For husbands whose jobs require travel, wives worked hard while their husbands were away so that the family can relax and spend leisure time together when he is home. Close father-child relationships are fostered by wives' support of their husbands' work. Many wives

described their relationships with their husbands as teamwork emphasizing the coalition between the adults in the family to make their family successful (Zvonkovic, Solomon, Humble and Manoogian, 2005). Spouses who have no job (either husbands – in the Japanese man's case — or wives) or who have part time jobs may do more housework because they have more time. Time management pressures are common for families as they attempt to balance work and family. If both of the couple have a full time job, the spouse whose job allows more flexibility will devote more time to the housework. In fact, women reported lower levels of men's involvement than men did (Mikelson, 2008). In terms of responsibility for the children, fathers in this research generally took their children on outings, played games and read stories to them. This is also found in normal Hong Kong middle class families (Lee, 2002). So, regardless of culture, the practical approach or time dimension explained household division of labour.

The contextual factor which led to the proportion of housework sharing was the role of the domestic helper. Domestic helpers mediate or complement the duties of the husband and the wife. The usefulness of domestic helpers can be examined in two types: part time domestic helpers (PTDH) and full time domestic helpers (FTDH).

Couples indicated part time domestic helpers (PTDH) were supplementary. They could live without their PTDH, but they are helpful in doing the housework that they do not want to, for example, ironing, cleaning the house or mopping the floor. This can ensure they have more leisure time.

> "She doesn't interfere with our lives, but she does the things that we don't want to, for example, ironing is 100% her job. Employing a PTDH creates more time for us to do our own thing." (Couple E, female, French, age 43)

> "She's responsible for the dishwashing, laundry and housecleaning. She's very efficient in looking after our household. She is a big value for us. The value is bigger than her salary. This definitely gives us more leisure time!" (Couple L, male, Swedish, age 32)

On the other hand, some couples viewed full time domestic helpers (FTDH) as essential. They not only allow them to have more free time with their kids, but also release housework pressure. They will not feel exhausted or overburdened with the

housework. FTDH can absolutely complement their duties.

> "She's essential! It's nice to have one! This allows us to have free time. We can go somewhere at the same time, and she can take care of our kid." (Couple D, male, New Zealand, age 34)

> "FTDH is very useful! It totally releases the pressure. If we didn't have a domestic helper, like when we were living in the USA, we would be more stressed. We would have to put our children in a day care centre. And we would need to cook and clean for them." (Couple I, male, American, age 39)

> "It's great to have a FTDH! She does a lot of work, for example, shopping for groceries, dishwashing, laundry, housecleaning, etc, so we don't have to do it! It totally takes the pressure off! Work makes you very tired, but now we have more time and we can enjoy it." (Couple K, female, American, age 43)

Here we can see domestic helpers, no matter if they are full time or part time, complement the duties of couples, but the level of usefulness is different. PTDH are regarded as supplementary whereas FTDH are regarded as essential. Research has proved that couples are willing to purchase help from domestic helpers in order to alleviate their burden. Besides, they pay for the services of maids to help with the domestic work so as to have more opportunities for leisure and trade money for time together (Bialeschki and Pearce, 1997). Couples hire part-time or full-time domestic helpers depending on the household work consideration but not on financial consideration.

The role of ageing parents is the other contextual factor. From the 14 cross-cultural couples, the ageing parents of 7 couples live in Hong Kong. For couples who do not have any children, it seems that the role of ageing parents is not important. They will have social gatherings on specific holidays such as Chinese Lunar New Year, but ageing parents seldom deliver help in terms of household work. If couples have employed a domestic helper, there is no need for ageing parents to help out. However, ageing parents can complement the duties of couples when their daughters or daughters-in-law give birth.

> "My mum helps me to take care of 2 little babies. She helps me a lot and teaches me how to take care of them. She also teaches our domestic helper how to do things and to follow her standard to finish jobs." (Couple H, female, HK, age 30)

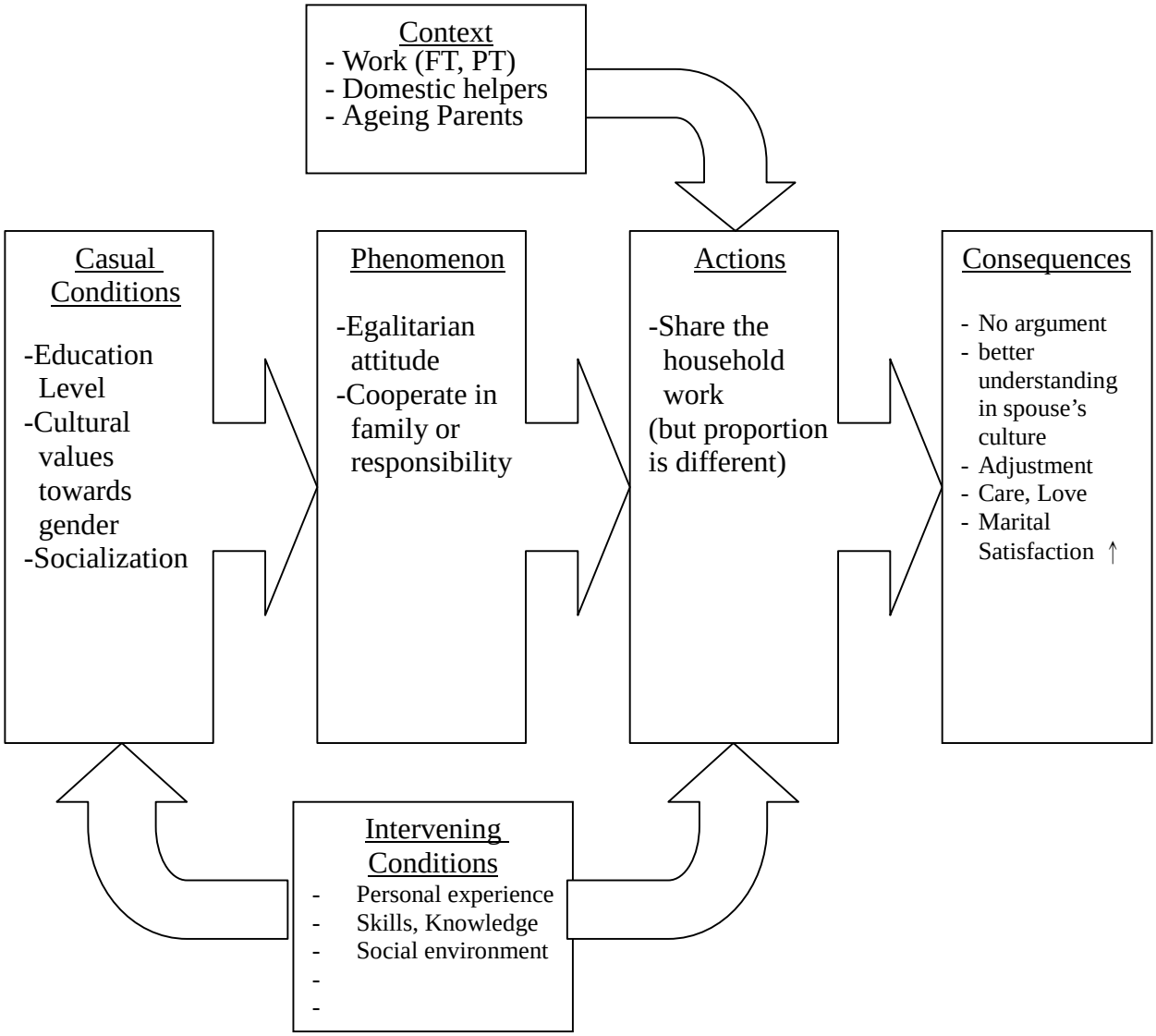
> "When I was pregnant, my mother-in-law came over and helped me. After I gave birth, she came to the hospital and made me ginger. When I went back home, she came over almost

> everyday and made me special food, made sure I ate properly and helped out with the baby." (Couple K, female, American, age 43)

Ageing parents are willing to provide postpartum service and help. They usually make ginger or some special food for the women. They will make sure women have a long postpartum rest and recuperate during the mother's first month. The other spouse appreciates the mother-in-law's help and this is one of the reasons they prefer to stay in Hong Kong.

In general, all of the couples are highly educated, they share the household work and hold egalitarian attitudes despite different proportion of household work division. Couples do not have arguments about the household work. Meanwhile, they make efforts to understand their spouses' cultures in order to make some adjustments to the household work. During the adjustment, they show care and love, which lead to increased marital satisfaction!

Figure 5.4 Household Division of Labour Framework



5.5 Work and Family Conflict (WFC)

Work-family conflict refers to a form of inter-role conflict in which role pressures from work and family domains are incompatible in some respect (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985). It is surprising to note that most of the couples do not experience WFC in their lives owing to the 3 main reasons[6].

[6] The reasons are only applicable for the cross-cultural couples in this research. They are professionals, rather rich, some of them do not have children or experience empty nest.

First and foremost, 5 of the 14 cross-cultural couples do not have children. They have relatively more free time than others because they do not have to spend time with children.

> "Actually, we don't experience work and family conflict. As we don't have any children, we don't have a family life, instead, we have a couples life!" (Couple B, female, HK, age 37)

> "I think we're doing okay as we don't have kids. Because we have no children, family and leisure activities are only between us. If we had kids, I believe that the story would be different." (Couple L, male, Swiss, age 32)

Secondly, couples who are experiencing the so-called "empty nest" do not have work and family conflict. As they are free from the responsibilities of taking care of their children and spending time with them, they have plenty of leisure time.

> "Now we don't have work and family conflict as there is no need to take care of our children anymore! All of them have grown up, they have left home and live in other countries. Instead, we are now experiencing an empty nest. We have much more leisure time." (Couple C, male, British, age 58)

Thirdly, for couples whose work is flexible, they do not have to experience many work and family conflicts. Advances in technology have allowed more employees to work from home instead of going to the office (Joplin, Shaffer, Francesco and Lau, 2003).

> "My working hours are very flexible, for example, I can go to the office at 10am and leave the office at around 5pm. Or I can bring my computer home. After my kids go to bed, I can work for 2 more hours. Actually, I can work at home and there is no need to rush back to the office. Also, I can come home early to spend time with the kids. This job gives me flexibility." (Couple I, female, Chinese, age 43)

> "I don't have too much work and family conflicts. My work is quite supportive because of the housing and education allowance. UST is a happy and familiar place for my husband; he can find me in the library and pick me up after work. My children's school is nearby, about 5 minutes walk, so they can come to my office and watch videos. The working hours are very regular. I don't have conflicts at all." (Couple K, female, American, age 43)

Here we can see that supportive working conditions such as regular working hours and flexible working conditions help to reduce work and family conflicts.

However, some couples argued that they have experienced work and family conflicts due to the long working hours and nature of their work.

> "We work quite long hours. We always have a feeling that we work too much. Hong Kong's way of living is like that: long hours, spending too much time working or studying. We do not have enough time to do other things, eg., hiking, drawing or bird watching. We had had much more free time before we came to Hong Kong." (Couple E, female, French, age 43)

> "Yea! I have work and family conflicts all the time! I work as an editor, so it's really stressful. I am always stressed. The working hours are quite long. It's very seasonal; I can work up to 12 hours a day. The average working hours per week are around 60 hours, very long!" (Couple F, male, Australian, age 41)

Couples from other countries commented that the life style in Hong Kong is busy and stressful. They were influenced by the social environment as well. People in Hong Kong are workaholics; they spend all their time on working and studying. Couple F spends 60 hours per week at work. It is understandable that they do not have much time for leisure and hence encounter work and family conflicts.

With regards to keeping a balance between work and life, couples have the following suggestions. First of all, family members should be supportive. As a matter of fact, family support is of the utmost importance. The home should be the safest place for everyone, both physically and psychologically. If spouses are considerate, they can provide a peaceful environment. It is important for couples to share, communicate and give support to each other. Family's emotional support has been shown to reduce family stress and work-family conflicts (Bernas and Major, 2000). Besides, jobs that have regular working hours, appropriate holidays, and flexible working conditions also enhance work-and-life balance.

Furthermore, disconnecting from work is one of the strategies to maintain family life.

> "People in Hong Kong tend to work 10 hours. When I leave the office, I don't bring my computer home unless I know there is something urgent to do. Otherwise, I switch off." (Couple I, male, American, age 39)

Disconnecting from work means do not bring work to home. This is a kind of direct action, which implies a problem-focused approach where individuals take specific action to eliminate the stressors (Rotondo, Carlson & Kincaid, 2003).

In addition, not allowing work to overtake marriage is the other way to reduce work and family conflicts. Most of the couples agreed that work is one of the means to sustain family life. They will regard work as the support of family conditions. Family cannot live without the money support from work. Meanwhile, it is not worth letting work dominate family life. It is better for people to keep a good balance between work, family and marriage.

Lastly, this research examines the roles of domestic helpers. Both part-time and full-time domestic helpers are considered useful in complementing the duties of household work. Couples suggested that it is good and ideal to employ domestic helpers to deal with the housework. This releases couples' pressure and allow them more free time to do family activities. This is help-seeking behaviour, and research has shown that problem-focused styles like direct action and help-seeking are likely to be more effective (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984).

5.6 Summary

To sum up, the effects of modernization and globalization have brought people from different countries to interact. Furthermore, technology facilitates cross-cultural marriages. Gender differences are important in mate selection rather than cultural elements. Women's beauty is an asset, while men's education level, occupation and wealth are the pulling criteria in mate selection.

Desirable working conditions, job opportunities and quality of life are some of the factors that attract couples to stay in Hong Kong. If one spouse is Chinese, the social support network will be the pulling factor. On the contrary, if both of the spouses are not Chinese, the family support network may be a pushing factor to leave their motherland and come to Hong Kong.

In terms of child raising, Chinese spouses adopt a stricter approach and they pay

greater importance to school performance and extra-curricular activities. They tend to emphasize obedience and respect compared to Western spouses. Asians (other than Chinese spouses) adopt an interdependent approach. Children's happiness is valued. Western spouses adopt a more liberal approach. They empower children to deal with tasks and develop children's independence. These couples are likely to employ a compromising strategy when dealing with the differences in child raising. Collaborative parenting is of the utmost importance. These cross-cultural couples share child raising responsibilities. Children benefit in cross-cultural families where they are more exposed to different cultures, activities, and languages and learning different approaches and values from Asians and Westerners, although they may have had some confusions about self-identity at the beginning.

With regards to household division of work, all of the cross-cultural couples reported that they share the responsibilities. Education level, the socialization effects and their attitudes towards men and women influence this. The proportion of doing housework depends on some contextual or intervening conditions, such as the nature of work (working hours, full-time, part-time), the help from domestic helpers and ageing parents, personal skills, experiences and professional background. Most of the cross-cultural couples did not have many problems in dealing with work and family conflicts due to the nature of their work (flexible) and no kids to take care of. Meanwhile, most of them employed problem-focused coping such as direct action and help-seeking strategies to balance work and families. The next chapter will discuss the details of the negotiation process.

CHAPTER SIX:
FINDINGS — ANALYSIS OF NEGOTIATION PROCESS

This chapter attempts to analyze several components in the negotiation process in cross-cultural families. More importantly, a specific negotiation process – the F.A.M.I.L.Y. approach derived from the data collection will be developed on cross-cultural negotiations.

6.1 Factors Affecting Negotiation Process

In order to examine the negotiation process, we have to consider many factors affecting the process, which include educational level, power (including socio-economic resources), gender, culture, personality and peer pressure.

6.1.1 Educational Level

Education is a vehicle for secondary socialization. Education involves the acquisition of knowledge and learning of skills, whether intentionally or unintentionally, education helps to shape values, attitudes, beliefs and moral values (Haralambos and Holborn, 2000). Research has found that highly educated people hold more egalitarian attitudes towards race and gender, so they are less likely to be prejudiced. Furthermore, they have more opportunities to interact with people from different racial and ethnic backgrounds in their school and workplace. Such contact may improve inter-group relations and lessen the social distance between groups. During interaction, new set of values and ideas are brought in by the intensive contact (Goldstein, 1999; Hu and Kamo, 2007; Lee and Boyd, 2008). In other words, highly educated people are more open-minded towards new ideas and values. This makes them more tolerant of each other and more flexible in using strategies of negotiation. The cross-cultural couples interviewed in this research are highly educated. The education levels of the men were mainly master's and doctorate degrees (PhD), while the education levels of the women were mainly master's degrees. This is shown in the following table.

Table 3 Educational Attainment of the Respondents

Education Level	Male	Female
Upper Secondary	2	2
Bachelor's Degree	2	3
Master's Degree	5	8
Doctorate	5	1
Total	14	14

Most of the respondents explained that they were open-minded, willing to accept new ideas and opinions and held egalitarian attitudes towards each other because of their highly educated background.

> "As we're both highly educated, we can easily understand each other. In fact, we studied for our MBA together. We learnt how to line up an argument, write down what we want to try and find a common ground so that we are both happy with the final decision." (Couple L, male, Swedish, age 32).

> "We both received higher education. It changed our mind so that we are open-minded to new ideas and events, and don't concentrate on our own points. We try to find an alternative way to satisfy both our needs or we compromise and take turns to decide." (Couple D, female, Filipino, age 41)

As can be seen from the above dialogues, highly educated individuals in cross-cultural marriages are more open to new ideas because education enhances their capabilities to receive new ideas and knowledge. People prefer to choose the win-win approach – a collaborative negotiation method in negotiation so as to satisfy both sides.

6.1.2 Power

Power is defined as "the ability to bring about outcomes they desire" or "the ability to get things done the way [they want] them to be done" (Barry, Lewicki and Saunders, 2007, p.150). Three facets of power by Lukes (1974) have been mentioned in Chapter Three and there are specific sources of power which may affect the negotiation process. French and Raven (1959) identified five major types of power: expert power, reward power, coercive power, legitimate power and referent power. Generally, all the couples claimed that they discussed most issues together and made decisions together most of the time. They need to make sure that they both have an equal say in the relationship. In fact, they have topic leadership in various aspects.

The circumstances and sources of power will be identified through the following aspects:

To begin with, the source of power is economic power (income). Those who can bring more income into the home have greater bargaining power. There is no difference from the mono-cultural family.

> "Generally, we make decisions together, for example, buying a house or which country we are planning to stay in. But for financial issues, he will make the decisions because he is the one who brings in the income." (Couple B, female, HK, age 37)

> "For day-to-day decisions, she's the main decision maker. But for the financial issues, I am the decision maker. In fact, I am the king in this home. I am the only breadwinner and bring in the income. It is practical. I can do the budget and I'm more aware of the finances all the time." (Couple F, male, Australian, age 41)

> "We try to make decisions together. If we have different opinions and not enough time, I'll probably let him decide because he brings more income to the home." (Couple N, female, Indian, age 37)

The conversations showed that the spouse who has higher economic resources has more bargaining power when making decisions. The sources of power are economic; income, individuals who earn more or the breadwinner makes the final decisions.

Besides, partners have the power to decide based upon on the information they receive. That is an informational source of power (expert power). Information is perhaps the most common source of power within the context of negotiation. Informational power comes from the negotiator's ability to assemble and organize facts and data to support his or her arguments in order to achieve a desirable outcome (Barry, Lewicki and Saunders, 2007).

> "I think it depends on who has more appropriate information. In the US or England, I have more information on the territory. When making decisions, I am the boss as I am more knowledgeable. But in Philippines, I'll listen to her because she's got more information." (Couple A, male, American, age 52)

> "She can decide the practical, I mean, the financial issues. It's simply because of her skills, ability and knowledge. She's familiar with the stock market. She is knowledgeable about handling the allocation of money." (Couple G, male, British, age 50)

> "My husband makes more of the financial decisions. He has the financial responsibility. It

is because he is an accountant. Due to his knowledge, he has information power, as he knows more about stocks and investments. I can totally depend on him." (Couple K, female, American, age 43)

From the above dialogues, it can be seen that the power of the decision-maker is based upon the adequacy of information one holds. Information is arguably the currency of negotiation. However, power derived from expertise is a special form of information power. This kind of expert power belongs to those who are seen as having a certain amount of knowledge and a mastery of a body of information. Experts' credibility is based on their study, knowledge and accomplishments. They have more power to take an active role in making decisions due to their expertise, which relates to the conversation above.

In addition, the power of decision maker may depend on personal preferences, interests or skills. Each person has different interests or preferences in different areas. Some have more interest in organizing trips while others may be keen on cooking. Spouses may let their other half to decide because of their interests.

"Each of us has topic leadership. In some aspects, I will defer the decisions to her, on topics such as food. In other aspects, she will defer it to me, when organizing a trip such as shopping, hiking or traveling. That's about geography and it purely skills driven. As I have more orientation skills, I am more interested in it." (Couple L, male, Swedish, age 32)

"For the household and day to day events about family things such as what the kids are doing and what kind of food we will eat, I'll make the decisions. He is the king of the house and I am the queen of the kitchen. That is my interest." (Couple F, female, Filipino, age 40)

Sometimes, couples make decisions based on their own preferences or interests. Spouses may defer decisions to the other if the other is happy with it.

Furthermore, the power of the decision maker comes from the personality and characters of a partner. This is known as referent power. Those who are expected to make wiser decisions use their power to decide.

"He will make the overall financial decisions. This is because I trust him, he is thoughtful and reliable. He will think deeply, from all angles and consider all the possible outcomes. He makes more secure decisions than I would." (Couple D, female, Filipino, age 41)

"I am the main decision maker in this household. Because I am more introverted,

thoughtful, and based on my personality, I can take different viewpoints into account. I can make careful decisions." (Couple H, male, American, age 45)

"She makes decision all the time, simply because she is wiser. Her personality traits include charisma and leadership. She always makes wiser decisions!" (Couple M, male, British, age 38)

Individuals have the power to make decisions because of their personality traits, such as being careful, thoughtful, a leader and decisive so as to facilitate a desirable outcome. Thus, they have the referent power over decisions.

Moreover, the power of the decision maker may simply come from the power of love over the other. Each partner wants the other side to feel happy, so they will follow the wants of the spouse in order to avoid conflicts.

"I need to make sure I don't do anything that he doesn't like. He will tell me. Mostly, he will focus on what I like or dislike in making decision. You see, it's the power of love!" (Couple H, female, HK, age 30)

"He always fulfills my needs and desires. He really loves me and wants me to feel happy. So, I am the decision maker. He says 'Yes' to my requests all the time." (Couple J, female, HK, age 35)

Love exerts control over the other in a relationship. Sometimes, people using the soft bargaining strategy use love as a tool to persuade their partner to accept one's opinion or offer. Expressions like "if you loved me as I love you, you would…" act as a tool to persuade the other side to agree with their viewpoints.

Generally speaking, men are the decision makers in terms of financial issues (it is applicable if men are the sole breadwinner or their wives' work part-time), whereas women tend to be the decision makers for the household stuff such as food, day-to-day decisions, the children and what to do at the weekend. This result is similar to typical middle class family in Hong Kong (mono-cultural marriage).

6.1.3 Gender

From the researcher's observation of cross-cultural couples' discussions, several gender differences could be identified and are shown in the following aspects. Firstly, posture can be used to examine gender differences regarding dominance and affiliation during a demanding interaction. Spouses who are dominant will sit in a

closed posture, shake their heads, speak more often, criticize others' points, summarize and use closed questions. In contrast, spouses who are regarded as affiliative will tend to sit in an open or half-open posture, use illustrating gestures, smile a lot, nod their heads, ask open questions, listen and agree with others' opinion. Men tend to have open postures (except 1 man – Japanese spouse) when sitting. But they shake their heads more often when they do not agree with their wives viewpoints or suggestions. They tend to summarize their points when the discussion comes to an end. While women sit in half-open posture, they always smile and nod their heads. They listened to spouses' words carefully and showed agreement. They did not shake their heads even if they do not agree with others' points. Instead, they asked open questions such as "What about…" to show their concerns. All in all, men showed more dominance while women showed more affiliation. Generally speaking, the result is common between men and women across culture.

Men and women used responses differently for different purposes. When men used responses such as "Yes…umum…right", this showed their agreement. By contrast, women nodded their heads to show they were listening, but not necessarily agreeing to the point. In terms of using the negotiation strategies, women tend to use the accommodating and the compromising strategies whereas men tend to use the collaborative strategy[7].

In addition, men and women developed topic leadership. Men talked more about the workplace, working conditions, values and attitudes towards events. However, when it comes to the household division of labour and raising children, women tended to speak more and have more opinions. They believed that they devoted more time in taking care of their children than their husbands did, which is similar to mainstream middle class families (mono-cultural marriage).

> "Generally, mums devote more time to the children. When I was small, my mum was like that. Now, I can say I'll also devote more time to take care of them." (Couple H, female, HK, age 30)

> "I deal with more on the relationship side with my daughter, I spend more time talking to

[7] The findings may be due to the skewed nature of sample -- Asian wives and Western husbands. Asians are more inclined towards conflict avoidance and obliging while Westerners are more likely to use solution-oriented approaches (Goh, 1996; Lim and Tan, 2004).

her and understanding how she thinks. Naturally, I do better on this aspect than him because of her age group." (Couple L, female, Indian, age 37)

"Actually, I spend more time with our children, I look after their school work and accompany them to school. I make more decisions for the children in this household." (Couple I, female, Chinese, age 43)

As we have seen, regardless of personality type, women showed more interested in childcare. Women are more emotionally involved and affiliated than men, and childcare is their first priority.

6.1.4 Culture

Culture is the shared perception of the social environment. In other words, it is the human-made part of the environment. Culture also specifies what behaviours are desirable for members, individuals' roles, the important goals and principles in one's life or values (Lim and Tan, 2004). People from different cultures will experience differences in interaction, understanding and evaluation. Not all members of a culture behave like the cultural prototype. Cultural norms for negotiation may be cued more strongly in some situations than in others. So, negotiators tend to adapt their behaviours in intercultural negotiation. Differences in cultural values offer a strategic opportunity for integrative approaches for value creation. People try to minimize cultural differences and place greater emphasis on common cultural values in order to build common ground. Negotiation strategies are often linked with culture as cultures involve norms that facilitate social interaction.

This research attempts to divide the culture differences between Asians and Westerners. Cultures in Asian societies in this research include China (Shanghai and Hong Kong), India, Thailand, Philippines and Japan, whereas cultures in Western societies in this research include America, Australia, Sweden, New Zealand, Britain and France. Asians have been said to be more interdependent. In Asian societies, the aim of human association is to preserve the social harmony. The dictates of social harmony place value on compromise and a preoccupation with the interests, not the rights of the members within a particular social unit. Asians value reciprocity, duty, obligation, tradition, dependence, harmony and obedience to authority (Goh, 1996; Lim and Tan, 2004). When the self is viewed as interdependent, self-in-relation-to-others is focal in individual experience, which means the

fundamental connectedness of human beings to each other. People are motivated to find a way to fit in that is relevant to others (Markus and Kitayama, 1991). In negotiation, Asians are more inclined towards conflict avoidance and obliging approaches. Their concern is for mutual face (primary concern is for one's own face as well as the face of other people), collective interests and cooperation rather than competition (Goh, 1996; Lim and Tan, 2004). When compared with Westerners, Chinese emphasize cooperation, interdependence and harmony, so they tend to use strategies which are less likely to cause confrontation between parties involved and disrupt group harmony (Chan and Goto, 2003; Hofstede, 1980). On the contrary, Westerners tend to be independent and emphasize self-centredness or egocentrism. It gives rise to self-expression, self-creativity and self-preservation. Independent people view 'self' as self-actualization, realizing oneself, expressing one's unique needs, rights and capacities or developing one's distinct potential (Markus and Kitayama, 1991). Westerners are more likely to be concerned primarily with self-face, confrontational and solution-oriented approaches. In terms of information sharing, the purpose of sharing information is to find out about interests and priorities in an attempt to reach integrative agreements. In other words, Westerners tend to use a collaborative negotiation strategy in negotiation. Westerners tend to communicate more directly than members from Asian societies (Goh, 1996; Lim and Tan, 2004).

Cultures are categorized as either high-context or low-context in regards to communication. Asian societies such as the Chinese and the Japanese are more preoccupied with high-context communication as they are sensitive to situational explanations and tend to attribute others' behaviour to the situation or other external factors. Verbs, metaphors, aphorisms and anecdotes are often used in high-context cultures when communicating. Most of the information is inferred from the context of a message, little is explicitly conveyed. In contrast, Western societies such as in Germany and North America are more preoccupied with low-context communication as they are sensitive to dispositional characteristics and tend to attribute others' behaviour to internal characteristics of the individual. Low-context cultures take written and oral forms of communications literally because the context is less important and information is more explicitly spelt out. High-context cultures emphasize indirectness, politeness and ambiguity in communication, while low-context cultures emphasize direct and explicit communication. In other words,

Asians tend to communicate in an indirect, ambiguous and roundabout way, whereas Westerners tend to communicate in a straightforward and direct way (Goh, 1996; Lim and Tan, 2004; Norales, 2006).

Language

Language reflects one of the cultural differences in cross-cultural couples. When it comes to communication between a couple, language is used to convey information or messages. Words convey different meanings to different people, in accordance to their perceptions. In other words, language may translate into other words, but not meaning (Goh, 1996). In the United States, language is used as a way of clarifying positions, comparing views and testing the relative merits of different opinions. Words are the primary tool of disclosure. In Japan, words are seen as less reliable guides to a complex reality. It is crucial in learning Japanese to understand what they mean without them saying it. Generally, couples in this research do not have big problems in communication. Although language is not a big problem for cross-cultural couples, some problems may occur and cause a misunderstanding. Problems with different languages include pronunciation of words, use of wording, the volume of sound and the symbolic meanings behind language.

Pronunciation is important in every language. If the pronunciation is incorrect, people may not understand what you are saying. How you word your sentences affects the content of your conversation. Sometimes, people cannot express themselves properly because of the wrong selection of words.

> "It's not very often. Most of the time, we use English to communicate. She can speak good English. We understand what each other says, but remember she may not use an accurate word to express herself! It can take on a different meaning and cause a misunderstanding." (Couple I, male, American, age 39)

Besides pronunciation and wording, the volume of sound (voice) may hinder one's understanding of their partner.

> "He really speaks too softly in the street. Because he is Japanese, he is used to speaking softly as it is a sign of politeness to show that he is considerate. But sometimes, it bothers me as I really can't hear what he's saying. I also feel sorry to him because I can't force him to speak aloud." (Couple J, female, Chinese, age 35)

In Japanese culture, giri is the core Japanese cultural value. The action of not speaking loudly in public places is due to the social conformity and collective societal responsibility. Giri is the individual's social obligation or duty to act appropriately in accordance with the norms of society (Lim and Tan, 2004). Being considerate and not disturbing others is a social obligation in public places. However, it affects the understanding of the spouse. Here we can see the cultural differences between a Chinese woman and Japanese man in the use of their voice and the underlying values behind this action.

Language carries many symbolic meanings, especially for slang and sometimes, language reflects the appreciation of things such as poems.

> "She speaks American English, I speak English English. In New Zealand, there is some slang that she does not understand. For example, when we see each other, we'll say "G'day" which means "Good day!" In other words, we say "Hello!" to each other. But actually, she does not understand." (Couple D, male, New Zealand, age 34)

> "There is no issue understanding, but sometimes is the appreciation of things. For example, Chinese has very beautiful poems eg. 君子之交淡如水. I can translate it to him in English but he can't understand the meaning. It requires an understanding of Chinese to do that." (Couple L, female, Chinese, age 32)

Here we can see that language not only carries messages or information, but also reflects cultural values. Friendship to the Chinese does not include material reciprocity. This reflects the Chinese cultural values on friendship. If a person knows little of partners' language, it limits cultural understanding and full knowledge of one's spouse, just like 'a chicken talking with a duck' (Waters, 2005).

During negotiation, a misunderstanding will occur if individuals choose a wrong word, use an improper tone of voice and misunderstand underlying cultural values behind them. Most of the couples (except one who used Japanese to communicate), used English to communicate. For spouses for whom English was not their mother tongue, they were still able to communicate, but could not always fully express what they wanted to. With regards to the tone of voice, the partner was annoyed if they needed to push their spouse to speak more loudly. Moreover, if the spouse is not familiar with the underlying cultural values behind the language, they cannot expect

the other side to understand the values behind them to avoid using technical terms in negotiation.

Ways of expressing oneself / ways of thinking

Cross-cultural marriage couples are well-educated, open-minded and willing to tolerate the differences of a partner from a different ethnic background. It is interesting to see if their ways of expressing themselves or thinking patterns are different from couples who are from the same country.

In Asian societies such as China, Japan, India and the Philippines, people are more interdependent and like doing things together. They are a little bit shy, quiet and silent, to mention but a few. By contrast, people in Western societies like America, Britain, New Zealand, Australia, France and Sweden tend to be more independent. They are more emotionally and verbally expressive. They emphasize the concept of individuality and equality. Furthermore, the verbal communication patterns of Chinese and Western people are different. Chinese tend to say more response words such as “Yes…umum…” in order to show they are listening. This action might be regarded as an interruption, or rude and impolite be Western people. They prefer to give response after one has finished talking.

When a Chinese woman married a British man, they found cultural differences when expressing themselves.

> “He is a Westerner, so he likes to express his feelings. But I am not like that. I like calming myself down when I am in a bad mood! But he keeps asking me questions: Are you all right? I feel that he doesn’t have a sense of tolerance and is demanding.” (Couple G, female, HK, age 46)

> “I don’t know why she doesn’t want to talk. You can be aggressive with passive silence. Westerners are well in emotionally and verbally expressed. We can talk about everything! Sometimes, it’s difficult to understand how the Chinese think.” (Couple G, male, British, age 50)

As we have seen from the above conversations, it can be noted that Asians (including Chinese) prefer indirectedness while Westerners prefer clarity and directedness. During negotiation, Westerners will keep asking questions for clarification and Asians may not feel comfortable and think the other side is

demanding and aggressive. Meanwhile, Westerners use more confrontational styles in order to get more information.

Another couple (a Shanghainese woman and a Swedish man) mentioned their differences in their ways of thinking.

> "There is 1 fundamental difference between us. We have different opinions about food, what beauty is and what nature is supposed to be. We have different opinions about objects, the way we think. This is driven a lot by our cultures. She takes the middle path in theory. When we make decisions, she seldom takes an extreme decision. I tend to make decisions based on black or white. When we discuss, I tend to put the problem into 2 extremes." (Couple L, male, Swedish, age 32)

> "It is called 中庸之道! We learn that in our culture. This is an advantage for people. Everything can take a middle path. You don't need to think too extreme!" (Couple L, female, Shanghai, age 32)

Chinese learn to take the middle path (中庸之道) from their cultural values when evaluating things or expressing opinions, whereas Westerners tend to evaluate things based on right or wrong. In negotiation, the Chinese may feel that the Westerners' approach is too extreme while Westerners may feel that the Chinese has no obvious conclusive standpoint.

Indians learn to communicate by using facial expressions and nonverbal cues. It is noted that they start a sentence by saying "No!"

> "We learn to communicate by not speaking. Indians can understand each other by facial expressions and being quiet. So, he doesn't understand what I think, he has to be told. Also, when we start a sentence, we say "No!" In response to his answer, I said "No!" but it doesn't mean I don't agree with him. That's the habit, culture." (Couple N, female, Indian, age 37)

> "It's too difficult to understand! I know culture has a context and non verbal communication. But I don't understand. I just force her to tell me. I can't guess. In American culture, we don't have this. We can say anything. I really want her to stop saying No! Can you just say Yes? Sometimes it really bothers me." (Couple N, male, American, age 38)

As shown in the above conversation, it can be noted that Westerners are more verbally expressive than Asians. They prefer using words rather than nonverbal cues in discussion. It is important to say yes in negotiation as this is a kind of approval and agreement. Partners may face confrontation if the other side misunderstands through the use of nonverbal cues and cultural habit.

The ways of expression are a little bit different even though they are in a similar cultural environment.

> "The British can be funny communicators as we make everything into a joke. We express our thoughts as jokes, paradoxes or ironies, not like the Americans. They say exactly what they think." (Couple G, male, British, age 50)

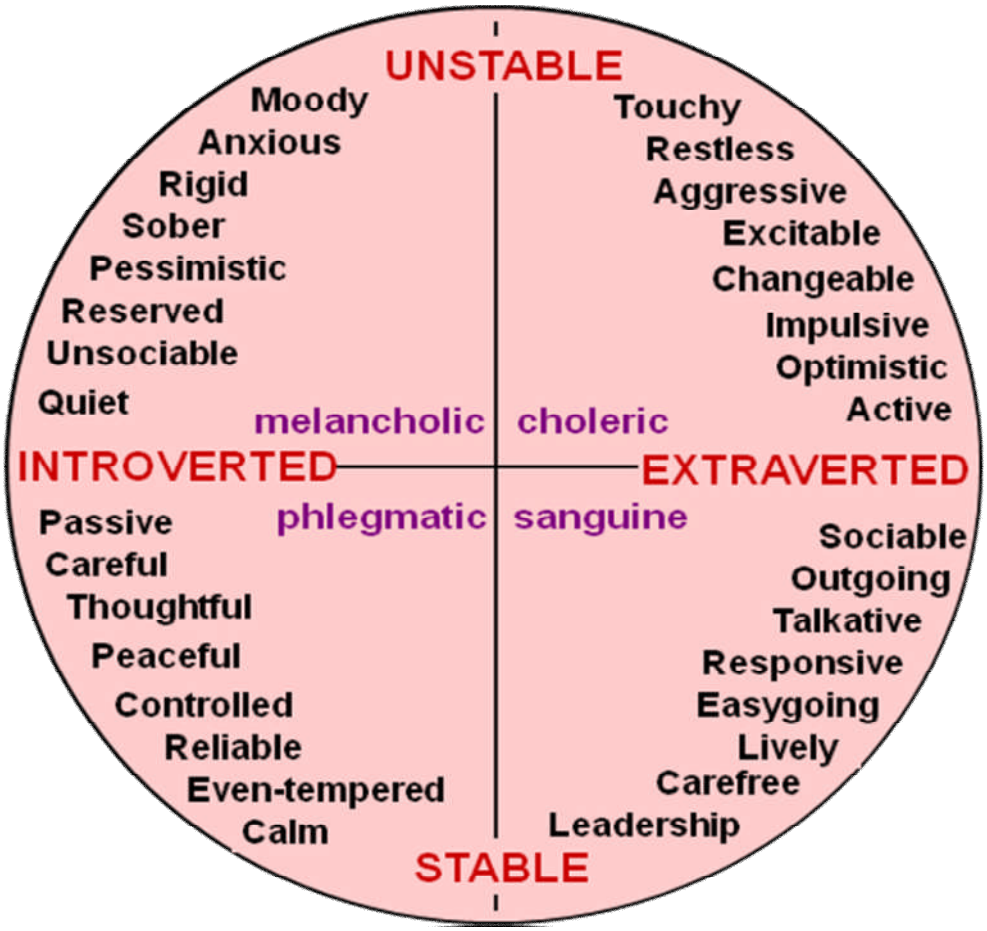
The British tend to say words which mean the opposite and they will use jokes or paradoxes to express themselves. In contrast, Americans tend to say exactly what they mean when they communicate with each other. Although they are verbally expressive, their ways of expressing themselves are different.

In a cross-cultural negotiation, there may be a tendency for a partner to be aware of the cultural differences and then try to imitate the other side. But a study of cross-cultural negotiation is not about reverse role plays. The key is to learn and understand one another, to accept differences and try to be flexible so as to achieve an effective negotiation.

6.1.4 Personality

In this research, the circumplex model, which was developed by Hans and Sybil Eysenck have been used to access couples' personality traits. Hans Eysenck and Sybil Eysenck used two primary personality factors: extraversion – introversion and stability – instability as the axes for describing personality variation (Myers, 2001). As shown in the Figure 6.1, there are four zones – choleric, sanguine, phlegmatic and melancholic. People in the zones of choleric and sanguine are extraverts, while people in the phlegmatic and melancholic zones are introverts. Choleric and melancholic are the unstable emotions, while sanguine and phlegmatic are the stable emotions.

Figure 6.1 Circumplex Model



Source: Myers (2001) "Personality" p.138

Table 4 Personality Type of Couples

Personality Type	Male	Female
Asian		
Choleric	0	0
Sanguine	1	8
Phlegmatic	1	3
Melancholic	0	1
Westerner		
Choleric	3	0
Sanguine	3	2
Phlegmatic	6	0
Melancholic	0	0
Total	14	14

There are five combinations among the cross-cultural couples: choleric – sanguine, choleric – phlegmatic, sanguine – sanguine, sanguine – phlegmatic and phlegmatic – melancholic. Of all five combinations, all of them said they complement each other. Since they see things from different perspectives, they make wiser decisions and are tolerant of each other.

> "I think we are a perfect match. If both of us were slow, we would never get the work done. Complementarity is good for us!" (Couple B, female, HK, age 37)

> "We are a kind of positive and negative. We complement each other, for example, in decision making about buying something. I know what I want; However, he is thoughtful and careful, he generates ideas and he'll think about it. If I want to buy it now, he wants to buy it later. So, we have discussions and make a list the prices, preferences, quality, etc. He makes me think deeper. It's good!" (Couple D, female, Filipino, age 41)

> "I'm an introverted person, I'm thoughtful, and have more concerns. So, I can take different viewpoints into account. She's cheerful and easy-going. I need a tolerant woman." (Couple D, male, American, age 45)

In negotiation, creating values for both parties is of the utmost importance. People with different personality traits may facilitate the discussion or even create possible alternatives or viewpoints. For instance, couples in the phlegmatic zone are associated with the following characteristics of being careful, thoughtful, reliable and calm. They tend to analyze things from different perspectives and they tend to use a collaborative strategy because they can generate more alternatives for spouses to choose from.

Furthermore, the researcher observed from the interview that the extraverts such as choleric and sanguine persons expressed more opinions and spoke more than the introverts (phlegmatic, melancholic) in the negotiation process. As part of the in-depth interviews, cross-cultural couples were invited to have discussions or negotiations on any topics that they wished to discuss. During the process, the researcher acted as an observer. Extraverts were more active and keen on opening topics by saying "let's talk about…", "what about the holidays?" or "honey, let me open a topic…" Choleric spouses express more opinions and are willing to express their emotions freely, and emotions such as like and dislike can be easily identified. They nod their heads and smile when they agree with the partner. They squeeze their eyebrow or say "No! I don't agree with that!" to show disagreement. During

negotiation, choleric spouses take a dominant and active role with any type of personality trait. Sanguine spouses are easygoing and lively. They can adapt to partners' wants and needs and thus they tend to use accommodating and compromising strategies. They take an active role when interacting with introverts.

On the contrary, when two introverts are together, phlegmatic spouses are more active than melancholic spouses. Phlegmatic spouses are thoughtful, reliable, even-tempered, controlled, calm and careful (Myers, 2001). When they have discussions with their spouses, they can make careful and reliable decisions. They provide more reasons and concerns for their spouses to consider as they present different perspectives. When they are with melancholic spouses, they take the active role in the discussion and provide thoughtful ideas in order to calm the other down. During the negotiation process, melancholic spouses appear to be anxious about decision making. They worry about things and see events in a pessimistic way.

> "After this, we should buy some food for our daughter. She likes eating strawberries and cheese cake. Tomorrow is the weekend, I have made a detailed plan and I think our children will like it." (Couple I, male, American, age 39).
>
> "What about John? Should he leave at 8:30pm or 9:30pm? Can we keep our schedule? Will we be disturbed by some unexpected events?" (Couple I, female, Chinese, age 43).
>
> "It's ok! I have asked him! Don't worry too much! He'll leave soon! We can keep our schedule." (Couple I, male, American, age 39).

We can see from the dialogue that the phlegmatic husband thought of a detailed plan for the weekend but melancholic wife was still worried about unexpected events and appeared to be anxious. It is because her personality is associated with characteristics such as moodiness, being anxious and pessimistic. The following table shows the different combination of personality traits.

Table 5 Active Role and Passive Role Combinations

	Active	**Passive**
Choleric versus Sanguine	Choleric	Sanguine
Choleric versus Phlegmatic	Choleric	Phlegmatic
Sanguine versus Sanguine	Men	Women
Sanguine versus Phlegmatic	Sanguine	Phlegmatic
Phlegmatic versus Melancholic	Phlegmatic	Melancholic

6.1.5 Peer influence / Social Network

It is surprising to note that most respondents felt that peer groups exert little or no influence on couples' negotiation process. In spite of no peer pressure in the negotiation process, peer influence has a bigger effect on women than men. Most of the men in this research claimed that they do not share their marital problems with their friends. For those who said they share, all are involved in cross-cultural marriages.

In contrast, half of the interviewed women were willing to share their problems with their friends. Sometimes, they just want somebody to listen to them and understand their feelings.

> "Yes, I'll share with them, but just for listening to me. They don't need to give any opinion." (Couple K, female, American, age 43)

> "Yea! I share with my friends, we are very open! We talk about our marriages. When they talk about their marriage problems, I was affected. They will yell and throw things. I haven't experienced it before. I always remind myself not to do that. My friends have asked me 'How can you handle it?' We talked about it. I observed them and felt sorry for them." (Couple A, female, Filipino, age 41)

> "Yes! I share with them every aspect because we are very close. I have many close friends. I am a dependent person. Sometimes, I need to seek advice and want to know things from different angles and perspectives. So, I ask my friends: 'What would you do in this situation?'" (Couple J, female, HK, age 35)

Although peer groups exerted influence on women, the extent is different between Asian and Western spouses. Western spouses just want their friends to listen.

They think independently and don't want others to interfere with them. Asian spouses are more dependent on others. They use others' experiences as references, examine how others deal with the same situations and receive different perspectives. In other words, Western spouses use their friends for listening whereas Asian spouses use their friends for self-reflection.

However, about half of the women argued that they do not share their problems with friends.

> "No! I don't share with them if I have problems. It's the rule! It may damage our marital relationship, I have to make sure only my spouse knows. Friends may not give accurate opinions or may even give a negative response. I wouldn't do that!" (Couple B, female, HK, age 37)

> "That's one rule! We don't disclose to others if we have problems. We discuss it between ourselves." (Couple D, female, Filipino, age 41)

> "No! We don't do that. In fact, we discuss it between ourselves. It is too private to discuss openly. Or I can pray to God." (Couple N, female, Indian, age 37)

The above conversations show that these women tend not to share their marital problems with friends because of their privacy. They know it will damage their relationships with their husband if their friends could not give a neutral response.

When compared with men, women are more emotionally involved. Men do not seek help from friends. If they share with their friends, they will focus on problem solving rather than sharing their feelings. On the contrary, women like to seek understanding and emotional support. They want to gain approval from others as well.

6.2 Non-negotiatable Issues or Issues That would not be Brought Up

Although half of the couples stated that "Everything can be negotiated in marriage", the other half mentioned that certain topics cannot be negotiated. Note-cards were given to the cross-cultural couples for writing down what the non-negotiable issues were. Everyone has his or her own power to not negotiate some issues. This could be considered as the second facet of power as mentioned in

components affecting negotiation in Chapter Three. One keeps this power hidden since they are afraid of making the other upset.

It should be noted that there are some differences in men and women when considering non-negotiable issues. For men, non-negotiable issues were about previous relationships, their ex-wives or ex-girlfriends. The frequency of visiting their children from their previous marriage was non-negotiable. Apart from that, they would not give up their religious beliefs or hobbies such as, music and singing, even if their spouses disliked them. For women, non-negotiable issues were personal things and habits, such as, which salon they went to, the use of cream and make-up or which books they read. It is a sign of respect. They may not bring up their own family problems as well. Moreover, they would like to maintain financial independence.

6.3 Negotiation Process — F.A.M.I.L.Y Negotiating Approach

The core phenomenon of the negotiation process among cross-cultural couples in this research is integrative negotiation, which aims to achieve a win-win situation. Integrative bargaining is known as collaborative, mutual gains, cooperative, or problem solving. The fundamental structure of an integrative bargaining situation is to allow both sides to achieve their goals and objectives. One's gain can not be at the expense of the other (Barry, Lewicki and Saunders, 2007). Both of the couple discuss their problems together, understand the situation, identify the needs and want of their partner and generate an alternative option. Couples aim at solving problems rather than competing with each other.

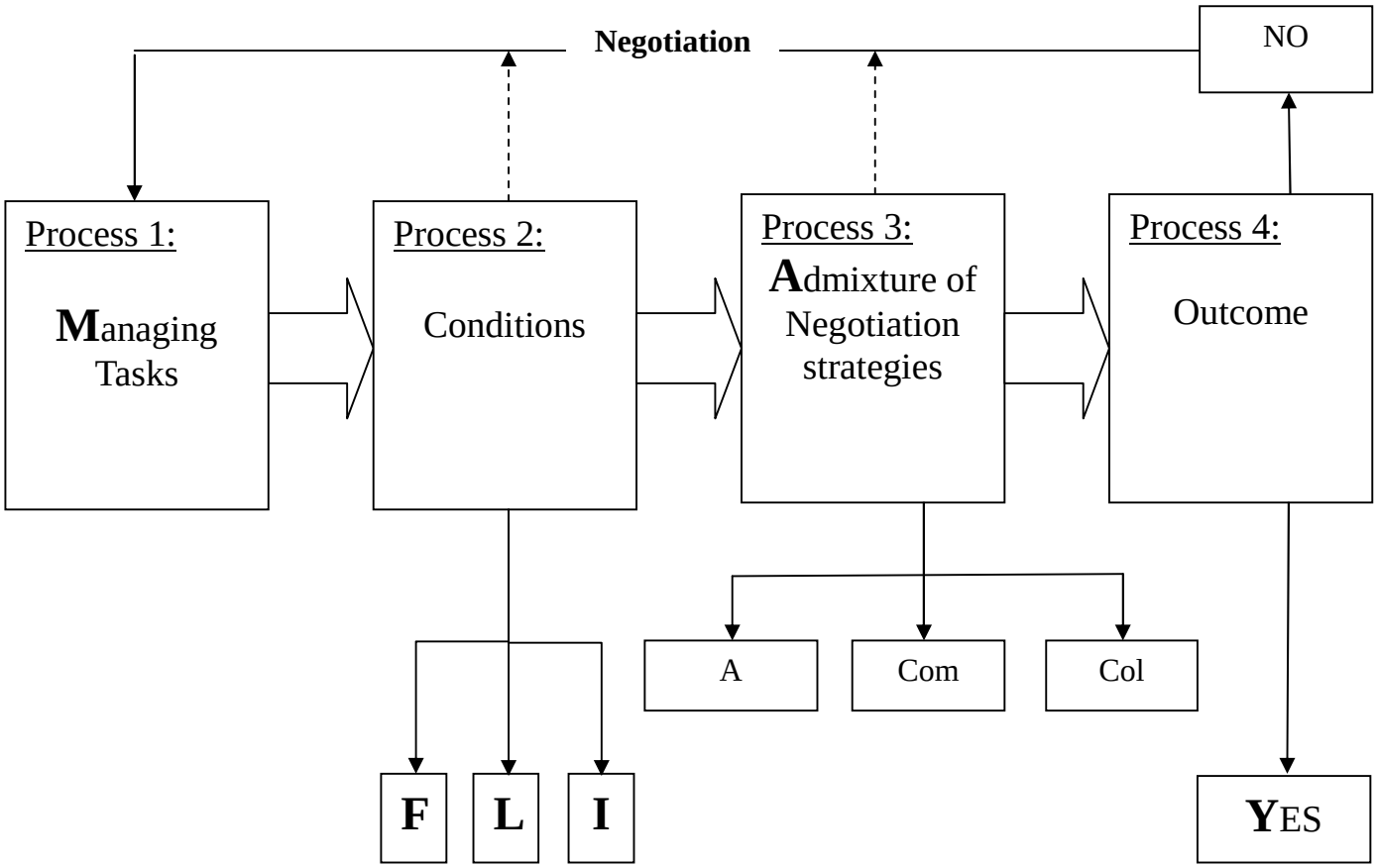
Hence, they compromise and use the strategy of collaboration (problem solving or principled negotiation). They would like to achieve an equitable outcome for both parties and they will respect each other as they want their benefits to be reciprocal. Due to the egalitarian attitudes between couples, the concept of BATNA appears. BATNA stands for the best alternative to a negotiated agreement (Lim and Tan, 2004). All the couples will find alternatives to satisfy both their needs and desires. BATNA is situational and flexible.

6.3.1 Model of F.A.M.I.L.Y Negotiating Approach

In attempt to adopt grounded theory (GT) in assessing the negotiation process in cross-cultural marriage, the *F. A. M. I. L. Y* approach has been derived from the data in developing a strategic approach to negotiations in their relationships. "F.A.M.I.L.Y" refers to negotiation strategy aiming at enhancing the benefits, interests or welfare of all family members. Decisions made concentrate on the family as a whole rather than the individuals desires. The specific meaning of each word is shown in the following figure (Figure 6.4):

As this research aims at investigating negotiation processes between cross-cultural couples, the *F.A.M.I.L.Y* approach (grounded from the data) is spitted into four stages: task / challenges, conditions, strategies and outcomes. Certain elements are included in each stage, which are reflected in the following diagram (Figure 6.4):

Figure 6.3 Model of F.A.M.I.L.Y Negotiating Approach



F: Flexibility
A: Admixture
M: Managing
I: Involvement
L: Love
Y: Yes

Process 3:
A : Accommodating
Com: Compromising
Col: Collaborative

Process 1: Task / Challenges

(M) Managing

In the first stage of negotiation, cross-cultural couples have a task to negotiate. In other words, cross-cultural couples manage a task, which can be either the household division of work or a consensus on child rearing. Managing also includes the management of cultural differences and challenges between both parties. The findings show that Western spouses tend to be more emotionally and verbally expressive than Asian spouses. Western spouses tend to state the problems or conflicts early, whereas Asian spouses, such as Chinese and Indians, need time to calm themselves and structure the dialogue.

> "He is a Westerner so he likes to express his feelings. But I am not like that. I like calming myself down when I am in bad mood! But he keeps asking me questions: Are you all right? I feel that he doesn't have a sense of tolerance and is demanding." (Couple G, female, HK, age 46)

> "I don't know why she doesn't want to talk. Actually, you can be aggressive with a passive salience. Westerners are well emotionally and verbally expressed. We can talk about everything! Sometimes, it's difficult to understand how the Chinese think." (Couple G, male, British, age 50)

Asian spouses act like this because they do not want to damage their relationship by saying the wrong thing. They prefer making decisions together as they view their lives as interdependent. They like doing things together and view family life as interconnected.

In terms of communication, Chinese spouses tend to respond with such words such as "yes", "ah-huh", "umum" to show that they are listening. Western spouses tend to be more direct and short in their response. Indian spouses communicate by using facial expressions and cues. They say "no" at the beginning of a sentence.

> "I really want to stop her saying No! No! No! No1 No! No! Can you say Yes? Sometimes, it really bothers me." (Couple N, male, American, age 38)

Thus, managing different cultural tensions is important because these can widen horizons and evaluate things from other aspects. This may stimulate thinking or

create alternatives so as to satisfy both needs.

Process 2: Conditions

In the second stage of the negotiation process, there are three conditions that have been found to affect the respondents in this research. These are the flexibility and both partners being involvement in the process.

(F) Flexibility

Cross-cultural couples in this research were flexible and adaptable throughout the negotiation process. Flexibility is necessary in all stages of cross-cultural negotiations. They made decisions based on what types of power they held. The sources of power include informational sources of power (expert power), personal preferences or skills, personality and characteristics (referent power) and economic power.

Highly educated individuals are more open-minded and open to more flexible options (Haralambos and Holborn, 2000).

> "We are both highly educated. We are both open minded and very flexible! We listen to each other." (Couple E, female, French, age 43)

It should be noted that the cross-cultural couples in this research indicated that there are topic leaders based on the different kinds of power. Spouses may have preferences to make decisions on certain topics and thus are flexible in making the decisions on other topics.

(L) Love

The other condition is love. The power of love is a great influence between couples. It is especially suitable for those who use the accommodating strategy, as it makes the other side feel happy. Love includes care, respect and understanding. In order to maintain a long lasting relationship, partners try their best effort to understand and provide a joyful environment for their spouses.

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> "I think this comes from love. If you really love someone, you'll try your best to make him happy! So, I try my best to make things good and make a comfortable home for him. I let him enjoy his time at home after work. That's my biggest joy everyday!" (Couple H, female, HK, age 30)

> "It's because I love her so much! I want her to be happy, so I give her all she wants. That's all I can do." (Couple J, male, Japanese, age 38).

Some of the respondents said that love motivates their marriages. Being concerned about spouse's feelings before making decisions enhances marital satisfaction and hence family harmony. Spouses often use expressions such as "You know I am always there when you need me, with regards to our family, it's better to…" and "Honey, if you loved me as much as I love you, you would…" to persuade others to accept their proposal.

Robert Sternberg developed the triangular theory of love. It posits that all love experiences are made up of three components; intimacy, passion and commitment. Intimacy refers to closeness, warmth and sharing in a relationship. Signs of intimacy involve giving and receiving emotional support, valuing the one you love, being willing to enhance the welfare of your loved one and sharing one's self and possessions. Passion refers to the intense feelings (both positive and negative) experienced in love relationships, including sexual desire. Commitment involves the decision and intention to maintain a relationship despite the difficulties and costs that may rise (Myers, 2007; Weiten, Lloyd, Dunn and Hammer, 2009). One of the conditions to achieving a successful negotiation in a cross-cultural relationship is love (intimacy, passion and commitment).

(I) Involving

Another condition is involvement. In joint decision making, both parties are involved in the discussions. All of the couples mentioned that they made decisions together. When they make decisions, they are goal oriented. The goals included mutual interests and mutual benefits for the whole family. In the discussions, couples lined up their arguments, discussed pros and cons. After that, they put forth their wishes and started working towards a common ground, found an alternative to satisfy both their desires.

> "We had a long discussion about the number of children we wanted. At first, he wanted to have 1 child, but I wanted to have 3 children. We discussed the reasons, pros and cons. But we didn't reach an agreement. After giving birth for the first time, I now want one but he wants 3 children. We have swapped our viewpoints. It's because the experience of pregnancy was really difficult. As I felt really sick for the duration, it really affected my work. He also knew my situation. Now, we have found an alternative, we adopted 2 more children in order to satisfy both our needs." (Couple D, female, Filipino, age 41)

> "We had to negotiate on where we live. He wanted to move closer to school. But I hated the idea of moving to Tuen Mun because I have Tuen Mun phobia. I think Tuen Mun is too crowded. I thought we should look for a consensus. It's really too far away to go to school. We discussed the pros and cons and kept finding information. I needed space and he needed to be close to school. So we chose here. And I am happy with it." (Couple G, female, HK, age 46)

The above conversations describe the negotiation process of a Filipino woman with her husband about the number of children they want. The other case shows how a cross-cultural couple negotiated where they were going to live. Decision-makers seek mutually acceptable solutions, and they are open to new and opposing information. They take the information seriously and incorporate other perspectives into their own thinking and decisions. From this, a greater awareness can be developed and solutions are created in responsive to the bigger picture. This is known as constructive controversy, and such open-minded interactive dynamics not only increase the understanding of the issues but also create useful solutions so as to strengthen the relationships (Lu, Tjosvold, Shi and Wang, 2007).

Process 3: Negotiation Strategies

(A) Admixture

Certain strategies have been selected by the cross-cultural couples in this research that are necessary for the third stage of the negotiation process. Admixture of the accommodating, the compromising and the collaborative strategies would be beneficial. The accommodating strategy is used when the relationship is more important than the outcome of the negotiation. Spouses' primary concern is about building or strengthening their relationship. Because couples are usually happy if they are given what they want, they simply avoid focusing on the outcome and allow the other to make the decision in order to make them happy. This strategy is a "lose to win" or a sacrifice of the outcome for the sake of the relationship. However, this strategy is often short term. Accommodation will create the opportunity to achieve

the goals in the near future (Lewicki, Hiam and Olander, 1996; Lewicki, Minton and Saunders, 1999).

The compromising strategy often translates to “splitting the difference” because it aims to gain something in the outcome and at the same time meeting some of one’s needs or objectives. With the compromising strategy, couples show some concern for the relationship, they demonstrate empathy by assuring that the other party also gains in the decision. The compromising strategy can be a good strategy when resources and time are limited, good options are available on each side, and one party may propose a compromise so as to obtain a concession on one of the important goals (Lewicki, Hiam and Olander, 1996). There are some principles in the compromising strategy, which are as follows:

- ✧ Goal-oriented: Have clear objectives, know what you want to fight for and what you are willing to give up, prioritize your goals and stay focused on the issues.
- ✧ Knowing the power of the decision maker: Each couple has topic leadership. Perhaps he is good at making the financial decisions whereas she is good at making the household decisions.
- ✧ Do not wait until the deadline to offer a compromise: Couples mentioned that due to time limitations, they are more likely to compromise
- ✧ Use offers to communicate where you stand: Let the other know what your views are and start with small compromise
- ✧ The split does not have to be even: Sometimes it may be difficult to make an equal concession, hence, an unequal split will occur. Couples may take turns to compromise.
- ✧ Promote the long-term benefits: Compromise can be “win-win”. There is an ongoing relationship between couples. Compromise this time may lay the groundwork for future collaboration.

Most of the Asian respondents claimed that accommodation and compromise are essential elements in marriage. It is better for couples to listen to each other and understand others’ needs and desires. Most of the couples in this research claimed that compromise is the best strategy for them when making decisions.

> "We need to compromise all the time, even if we don't agree with each other because we both have very strong opinions. Sometimes, we just have to let it be! Nobody is perfect and it's difficult to find a perfect match. By compromising, this ensures we will be happy and not want to divorce. What we need to do is compromise and takes turns." (Couple I, female, Chinese, age 43)

> "We understand each other! Mostly, we talk and exchange ideas. Sometimes, we don't agree with each other, but we take it in turns. This time I will listen to you, but next time you listen to me. He is willing to listen to me. A relationship is like that, there is no use in fighting with each other. Compromise! Accommodate each other and your marriage will last!" (Couple A, female, Filipino, age 41)

Accommodation and compromise can reduce conflicts. Couples will take turns to make decisions or will use the "let it be!" strategy. Besides, the collaborating strategy is widely used by respondents. Collaborating is also known as problem-solving, a win-win strategy or integrative negotiation because it has high concern for self and others. While the compromising strategy simply entails "splitting the difference", collaborating involves a sincere effort to find a solution or an alternative way to satisfy both needs. To collaborate, individuals have to work on clarifying differences and similarities in cross-cultural relationships. Generally speaking, this is the most productive approach for dealing with conflicts. Conflict is viewed as a mutual problem to be solved as effectively as possible. Collaborating thus encourages openness and honesty (Lewicki and Litterer, 1985; Lewicki, Hiam and Olander, 1996; Lewicki, Minton and Saunders, 1999; Barry, Lewicki and Saunders, 2007)

> "I come from the West which stresses heavily on equality. I emphasize fairness. If she fully accommodates my wants, I feel it is unfair. I prefer to think together and find an option which satisfies both of us. Of course, we compromise" (Couple L, male, Swiss, age 32)

> "I try to make both sides happy, so we keep discussing and finding alternatives. If time is short, we'll compromise." (Couple N, male, American, age 38).

Most of the Western respondents reported that they used a mixture of the collaborating and compromising strategy. This is because they want to be fair. They find alternatives so as to achieve a win-win negotiation. If not, they use the compromising strategy.

Regarding the gender distribution of the sample, most of the females were Asian, whereas most of the male were Westerners. It is interesting to note that Asian spouses

mainly used the accommodation and compromising strategies. Asians are more likely to try and preserve social harmony because they wish to avoid conflicts. In contrast, Western spouses are more likely focus on self and equality. They tend to be solution-oriented, and thus they tend to use the admixture of collaborating and compromising strategies (Goh, 1996; Lim and Tan, 2004).

Process 4: Outcome

(Y) Yes

Integrative negotiation aims to achieve a win-win situation in decision making. Agreement and approval is vital to a successful negotiation. 'Yes' connotes acceptance, agreement and support. It provides encouragement for a partner to make decisions. Saying "Yes" to a spouse's decision shows support and recognition.

> "No! No! No! No! Can you say Yes? Can we both agree on this solution? We both share the outcome and responsibility" (Couple N, male, American, age 38)

> "After we have made our decision, we both say 'Yes' to make it a deal. We should at least agree with each other in the decision made!" (Couple M, female, HK, age 39)

It should be noted that the action of saying yes is essential in negotiations. Yes not only shows agreement but also reflects an acceptance of outcomes and sharing responsibilities. Once the consensus is achieved, cross-cultural couples will implement the decision together.

6.5 Summary

From the above discussion, there appears to be five factors that determine the whole negotiation process. They are education level, power, gender, culture personality and characteristics, and peer pressure or social network. In cross-cultural relationships, couples experience language differences in expressions. These may hinder the negotiation process. Language includes symbolic meanings, and cross-cultural couples cannot expect their partner to understand all the underlying cultural values. Asians, with high-context culture, emphasize indirectness while Western, with low-context culture, emphasizes direct communication.

Education is a crucial factor in the negotiation process. Highly educated individuals are socialized to be more open-minded and have greater tolerance towards differences. Highly educated individuals tend to use integrative negotiation to achieve a win-win situation.

French and Raven (1959) identified five major types of power. The cross-cultural couples employed two of them: expert power and referent power. The sources of power also come from economic power, which means that higher earning spouses have greater bargaining power when making decisions, which is very similar to the mainstream middle class family (mono-cultural marriage). Love is often used to persuade the other to accept one's proposal.

Gender is another issue. Women are more likely to use the accommodating and the compromising strategies while men tend to use the collaborative strategy. Meanwhile, owing to the skewed nature of the sample, wives are mainly Asians whereas husbands are mainly Westerners. The data shows that Asian wives use the accommodating and the compromising strategies, and Western husbands use the collaborative strategy respectively.

Extraverted spouses are more active than introverted spouses in the negotiation process. Phlegmatic spouses are regarded as more decisive and reliable when making decisions as they are calm, reliable, thoughtful and careful.

Peer groups exert a greater influence on women than on men. They exert an even greater influence on Asian women than Western women. Our findings indicate that Asian women tend to use peer groups for self-reflection, whereas Western women want their friends to listen.

In regards to non-negotiable issues, men include previous relationships with ex-wives or ex-girlfriends as non-negotiable issues, whereas women include personal habits and financial status as non-negotiable. There are gender differences in negotiation as well. Women tend to be more affiliative (smiling and nodding their heads to show more agreement) while men are more likely to be more dominant

(shaking their heads, speaking more often and criticizing others' points).

In terms of the negotiation process employed by our cross-cultural couples, a *F.A.M.I.L.Y* approach was derived from the data. Horizontally, this negotiation process aims at promoting welfare for the whole family. Vertically, *F.A.M.I.L.Y* as a negotiation process can be categorized into four stages: task or challenges (managing cultural differences and tasks); conditions (flexibile in using power and options; love, understanding and respecting each other; involving in joint decision making); negotiation strategies (admixture of the accommodating, compromising and collaborative strategy) and the outcome (saying 'Yes' to show agreement).

CHAPTER SEVEN:
CONCLUSION

7.1 Conclusion: Discussion and Summary

The research attempted to investigate the negotiation process between husbands and wives in cross-cultural marriages with relation to their roles in the famiy (household division of labour). It also attempted to investigate whether the roles of ageing parents or domestic helpers complement the duties of couples. As the study focuses on the negotiation process between husbands and wives, key points from the discussion were derived. This chapter reviews the research findings and presents its contributions and limitations.

The thesis started off with five research questions: 1) What are the differences in the child raising methods between Asian and Western people? 2) What are the roles of factors such as values and attitudes, characteristics and personality, economic status, educational differences, power distance, peer pressure and cultural differences in affecting the negotiation process? 3) How do cross-cultural couples decide the roles in the household division of labour? 4) To what extent do people in cross-cultural marriages who have higher economic status and power distance tend to have higher decision making power in the negotiation process? 5) To what extent do the roles of ageing parents and domestic helpers complement the duties of cross-cultural couples? The following discussions and summaries will provide answers to these questions.

7.1.1 What Are the Differences in the Child Raising Methods between Asian and Western People?

In terms of the child raising, our findings show that Chinese spouses (both the father and the mother) put great emphasis on children's academic performance and extra-curricular activities. They organize a tight schedule for their children in order to develop their talents. They are concerned about their children's future. Moreover, they expected automatic respect and obedience from their children due to their own socialization when they were young. In other countries like the Philippines, Thailand

and India, they focus on their children's happiness (from their own experience and social environment) although they still want their children to do well academically. They placed happiness as their first priority. They developed a friendship relationship with their children, and their relationships are interdependent and interconnected.

In contrast, Western spouses tend to use earning respect from their children as a mode of parenting. They are more concerned about equality and want their children to be independent. They believe everyone should be equal. They train their children to be independent. They allow their children to develop their own interests and talents. They tended to explain to their children how their behaviour was inappropriate rather than punishing them for it. Despite the above, cross-cultural couples employed collaborative parenting and always revised the teaching methods and chose the best alternative for the children.

7.1.2 What Are the Roles of Factors that Affect the Negotiation Process?

There are many factors that affect the negotiation process, and these include values and attitudes, character and personality, economic status, educational differences, power distance, peer pressure, gender and cultural differences.

Values and attitudes are tied to socialization, education level and cultural values. When forming one's values and attitudes, socialization, education level and cultural backgrounds play vital roles. Individuals learn values from their parents, their personal experience, education they have received and their cultural values. Couples in this research were highly educated and thus held relatively egalitarian attitudes towards gender. They have greater tolerance towards other cultures. Otherwise, they would not be involved in a cross-cultural marriage. They tended to listen to each other's opinion so they would find a way to satisfy both partners' needs during negotiation.

Regarding character and personality, the researcher employed the Circumplex model (Choleric, Sanguine, Phlegmatic and Melancholic) by Hans and Sybil Eysenck (Myers, 2001). In general, most of the respondents said that they complemented each other in general. Extraverted spouses took an active role in

discussion compared to introverted spouses.

Research shows that individuals with a higher economic status were assumed to have a higher decision power in Hong Kong middle-class families. However, the power distance, as this research shows, does not solely depend on economic status. The power of making decisions also depends on information and expert power, character and personality, one's interests and preferences, and love.

Peer pressure does not affect the negotiation process directly. However, the effects of peer pressure exerted more influence on women than men. This is because women are more emotionally involved. They like to share with their friends and sometimes, they use their friends' experiences for self reflection. Men tend not to share with their friends but focus on problem-solving. They would prefer to solve problems by themselves rather than to ask for help from others.

When it comes to cultural differences, couples from different countries and ethnic backgrounds have differences in conversation, and ways of expressing themselves. For example, Western spouses in this research were more emotionally and verbally expressive than Asian spouses. Western spouses preferred to talk about their problems directly. However, they are also accommodating and would accept each other and accommodate to others. The skewed nature of the sample, Asian wives tend to use accommodating and compromising strategies while Western husbands tend to use compromising and collaborative strategies.

7.1.3 How do Cross-cultural Couples decide the Roles in Household Division of Labour?

All of the couples in this research espoused egalitarian attitudes. It is noteworthy to see that all of them viewed take a team approach when performing household work. They said that they would share the family responsibilities. Because of their high education level, both men and women held more egalitarian attitudes towards gender. It has been found that educated husbands tend to spend more hours on housework (Presser, 1994). Individuals in cross-cultural marriages held more equal ideologies than typical middle class families in Hong Kong. In Hong Kong,

husbands devote little time to housework, even though they are highly educated. Gender ideologies are prevalent (Lee, 2002). But the cross-cultural couples in this research knew that they should share the household work with their partners in order to maintain a functional family. Western spouses in this research were more willing to share because they emphasized equality in the relationship. When they studied or worked overseas, they got used to looking after themselves and doing the housework. They were willing to share the responsibilities with their partners after getting married.

Regarding the division of work, there were many conditions affecting the household division. The nature of work (part-time or full-time), working hours, the help of domestic helpers, one's skills or professions and personal experience affected the division of work. Time allocation is an important influence on division of household work regardless of the employment status. Professional background or skills helped to determine the tasks one did because one could do the task more efficiently. Moreover, unwanted tasks were given to domestic helpers so the couples had more time to spend with their children. Both men and women helped out with children's school work, but women devoted more time to their children in general. Men focused more on disciplining children and recreational activities which was consistent with fatherhood in Hong Kong (Lee, 2002).

7.1.4 To What Extent do People in Cross-cultural Marriages have Higher Economic Status or Power Distance tend to have More Power in Decision Making?

Generally speaking, people who earn more money in a household will have greater power in making decisions (Abhinay, 1999). This is true in middle class families where breadwinners have more power in making final decisions (Greenstein, 1996; Davis and Greenstein, 2004; Erickson, 2005; Breen and Cooke, 2005). All of the cross-cultural couples in this research discussed things together, but they did develop topic leadership. Those who brought more income to the home tended to have greater power in decisions over financial issues. In general, the power of decision making did not solely rest on their economic status, but also on their expert or informational power, character and personality (referent power) and one's

knowledge or interest in specific issues.

If an individual's occupation is an accountant or banking manager, he or she will make the financial decisions because one has the required knowledge. If one's personality is careful, thoughtful and decisive, he or she tend to make decisions as partners believe that he or she can make secure decisions. Couples tend to be topic leaders based on their own interests. Some like planning a trip, while others like cooking and preparing food. In general, women tend to make decisions about household matters and children's daily events. So, the power of decision making is not solely dependant on economic status, because on certain intervening conditions, and gender.

7.1.5 To What Extent do the Roles of Domestic Helpers or Ageing Parents Complement the Duties of Cross-cultural Couples?

It has been found that the roles of domestic helpers, no matter whether part-time or full-time, can complement the duties of cross-cultural couples although the effects were different. Part time domestic helpers, regarded as supplementary. They helped couples in doing housework by doing what couples did not want to do. Couples could live without the domestic helpers. Full time domestic helpers were very useful, as they could complement the duties of couples. Meanwhile, they released couples' pressure, let them to have more free time to spend with their children or go on trips. Full time domestic helpers were seen as an essential component for most of the couples. In Hong Kong, employing a live-in domestic helper is common practice in middle-class families. The usefulness of domestic helpers is debatable because working wives are not released from family responsibility because they need to perform a supervising role. However, couples knew that they could not maintain their lifestyles without the help of a maid (Lee, 2002). But in this research, cross-cultural couples mentioned domestic helpers were very useful in dealing with housework, whether full-time or part-time.

It was surprising to find that ageing parents did not complement the duties as much as domestic helpers. Due to the regional distance, ageing parents overseas did not give help to couples. Ageing parents who live in Hong Kong provide help to

adult children only at the birth of grandchildren. They would prepare appropriate food before and after they gave birth. Most of the housework was done by domestic helpers.

7.2 Limitations of the Study

There are inevitably some limitations to this research. First, there are regional limitations. One of the criteria of selecting this sample is that all of the couples should live in Hong Kong. The researcher has developed a model for cross-cultural couples in Hong Kong. However, it may not be applicable for those who have settled in different countries. It is due to the different environment, political systems and social systems in other countries, couples may have different cultures or socialized differently under diverse environment.

Secondly, there are methodological limitations. This research is limited by the small sample size and its representativeness of purposive sampling method. Besides, the sample is skewed in its' nature. Most of the females were mainly Asians while most of the males were mainly Westerners. People may argue that the small sample size, together with the sample bias lead to findings that cannot be generalized. Meanwhile, a different combination of Asian males and Western females may not have caused different results.

Thirdly, there is class bias. One of the selection criteria is that they come from the middle class or above. Couples in the middle class or above did not experience conflicts because they could use their money (alternative way) to pay for help, therefore they did not need to force their partner to do the household work. In addition, a large proportion of respondents who participated have jobs that are much more flexible than the average professional job in Hong Kong; they earn much higher salaries; they are highly educated, and some of them do not have to perform childcare responsibility. Owing to its uniqueness, the findings (for example, low level of work and family conflicts) are applicable to these fourteen cross-cultural couples in Hong Kong. The lack of lower class cross-cultural families may bias the data analysis as the model developed in this research may not be applicable to them. Couples in the lower class may not be able to hire domestic helpers due to their low

income level.

7.3 Implications and Recommendations of Future Research

Despite the above limitations, this research provides a preliminary and comprehensive model for cross-cultural negotiation, on the basis of fourteen cross-cultural couples (28 respondents). In this respect, this study provides a good starting point for cross-cultural negotiations. Although the nature of the sample is skewed, it provides insights for these types of cross-cultural families. This project is dedicated to identifying several negotiation strategies, investigating four processes[8] in negotiation. It is important to strengthen the interactive and communicative environment for these types of cross-cultural families.

A future research agenda could focus on comparing cross-cultural families in Hong Kong with Western societies, incorporating couples from different socio-economic groups. The scope of the future research could be extended. For instance, the researcher could conduct a larger extensive survey, perhaps by a longitudinal study with selected couples as to how things change over time. The variance of negotiation strategies in specific aspects could be investigated. It is recommended that the researcher could use some control groups of non cross-cultural marriages to make comparisons with cross-cultural families in order to identify different negotiation process and strategies.

[8] The four processes are ‘Managing tasks’, ‘Conditions’, ‘Admixture of negotiation strategies’ and ‘Outcome’.

APPENDIX I

SEMI-STRUCTURED QUESTIONNAIRE FOR IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW
Date: _____ Time: _____ Venue: _____

I. Personal Background

1. Age:
2. Sex:
3. Nationality (Where were you born?):
4. Education level:
5. Occupation & full-time / part-time
6. Monthly salary:
7. Marital status:
8. Years of marriage:
9. Have you lived with your spouse before? (And how long?):
10. Number / sex / age of children:
11. Type of housing:
12. Living arrangement (Who do you live with?):
13. Domestic helper (full-time / part-time / live in):

II. How Did They Meet?

1. How and when did you meet with your husband / wife?
2. What does he / she attract you (i.e. appearance, characters, etc)?
3. When did you get married?

III. Paid Work Life

1. Did you change your job before or after marriage? If yes, what are the changes?
2. What is your average working hours per day before marriage?
3. Why do you choose to engage in paid-work after getting married?
4. Did you set any career goals? And what are they?
5. Do you think you can achieve the goals? And why?
6. What is your average working hours per day (including overtime)?

IV. Family Life

A. Values and attitudes

1. What are your views on the notion that “men work outside and women work inside”?
2. What are your views on the notion that “women are naturally the one who perform all housework and provide care giving”?
3. Is housework yield different meaning to you before and after marriage? And why?
4. Do you think your family members have different perceptions on your roles when you get married and engage in paid work at the same time? And why?
5. What are your attitudes towards family responsibilities (i.e. housework, childcare)?

6. Why do you have such attitudes?

B. Cultural differences

1. What are the beliefs you have perceived from your culture of origin regarding your being a wife / husband in an interracial relationship? (These beliefs / messages may address your role, responsibilities, personhood, etc)
2. What are the beliefs you have perceived from your spouse's culture of origin regarding your being a wife / husband in an interracial relationship? (These beliefs / messages may address your role, responsibilities, personhood, etc)
3. How can these beliefs affect your couple relationship?
4. What are the things you and your spouse have done to overcome the difficulties generated by these beliefs?
5. What are the expectations from your spouse in terms of multiple roles (i.e. spouse, parent, provider,…)?
6. What are your marital experiences (as a husband / wife)?
7. If you were asked to give suggestions about being a wife / husband in an interracial relationship, what would you tell them?
8. Are there any cultural differences between you and your spouse on raising your children? What are they?
9. How would you sort out the solutions if there are cultural differences?

C. Household division of labour

1. What is your average working hours spend per day at home (doing housework + childcare)?
2. What are the distributions of household labour such as housework and childcare with your spouse?
3. How satisfied are you with these arrangements?
4. Have you ever asked your family members (i.e. husband, wife, parents-in-law) to perform housework? Why or why not? What was the response?

D. Children

1. What is your expectation of being a parent?
2. What are your experiences in parenthood?
3. What are the differences when compared with children having same race parents?
4. Why did you choose to give birth? (if applicable)
5. How has the fact that parents have an interracial relationship affect their children?
6. If you were asked to empower your children to handle negative reactions from persons outside of the immediate family, what would you tell them?

E. Relationship with extended family

1. Have you been living with your parents-in-law or parents?
2. Did your parents-in-law or parents provide any support during your childbearing period? Do you think it is sufficient?
3. Did your ageing parents provide any support on the household labour work?
4. To what extent do the roles of ageing parents (if any) complement the duties of you and your spouse?
5. Have you ever obtained opinion from your ageing parents when you have problems with your husband / wife? In what aspects? And why?

6. How would you describe your relationship with your family of origin when you chose to enter into an interracial relationship? Are there any differences before and after your decision?
7. How would you describe your relationship with your spouse's family of origin?
8. If you were asked to offer guidance to an interracial couple regarding the extended family interactions, what would you tell them?

V. Work And Family Conflict

1. Please describe your daily schedule.
2. What are the important things in your work and marriage?
3. How does your work life affect your family life?
4. How does your family life affect your work life?
5. How do you decide priorities among family, paid work and leisure? Are there any differences before and after marriage?
6. What is the occupational status of your husband / wife?
7. How does your spouse's job affect your family life?
8. How do you cope with the work and family conflicts in your marriage?

VI. Personality

1. With reference to the Circumplex model (Hans and Sybil Eysenck), which zone do you think you stay at? And why?
2. To what extent does your personality trait generate impacts when you get along with your spouse?
3. Is it easy for you to compromise with your spouse when you discuss with him? And why?
4. Which zone do you think your spouse stay at? And why?
5. To what extent does your spouse personality trait generate impacts when he / she get along with you?
6. Is it easy for your husband / wife to compromise with you when you discuss with him / her? And why?

VII. Power

1. Does your spouse have a consistent attitude on the household division of labour? If no, what are the differences?
2. Do you think you have an equal division of labour with your spouse?
3. Have you ever tried to negotiate with him? And why?
4. Who is the main decision maker if problems encountered? And why does he / she have such kind of power?
5. What kinds of issues would you not to bring up with your spouse?
6. What are the non-negotiate issues in your marriage?

VIII. Language

7. Have you encountered any language barriers when you communicate with your spouse? If yes, what are they?
8. Do you know the exact meaning when you talk with your husband / wife? Have you ever misunderstood him / her? In what aspects?

9. Does your husband / wife know the exact meaning when you talk with him / her? Has he / she ever misunderstood you? In what aspects?
10. How would you solve the problems with him / her?

IX. Domestic Helpers

1. How would you distribute the household work to domestic helper?
2. To what extent does the role of domestic helper (if any) complement the duties of you and your spouse?
3. Overall, do you think domestic helper is helpful in your marriage? In what aspects? And why?

X. Overview

1. Do you think you have too much / appropriate / less time for own use?
2. Have you ever shared with your friends when you encountered problems with your husband / wife? In what aspects? And why?
3. To what extent do your friends affect you most?
4. What is your ideal marital life?
5. In general, are you satisfied with your personal marital life? How would you improve it?

XI. Researcher's Note

1. Total time of the interview: _____
2. Researcher's Observation:
3. In general, the reliability of the respondent:
4. Personalities of the respondent:

   _____

   Remarks:

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

訪問日期：_____ 時間：_____ 地點：_____

一、 個人資料

1. 年齡：
2. 性別：
3. 國籍 (或在哪個國家出生?)：
4. 教育程度：
5. 職業及全職或半職：
6. 每月薪金：
7. 婚姻狀況：
8. 結婚年數：
9. 請問你何曾與配偶同住? 有多久?
10. 子女的數目、性別及其年齡：
11. 住屋類型：
12. 居住情況 (或與誰人同住?)：
13. 家庭傭工 (全職或半職及是否同住?)：

二、 兩性吸引

1. 請問你怎樣和何時與你的丈夫(或太太)認識?
2. 請問你何時結婚?
3. 請問你他(或她)有什麼吸引你的地方(例如外表、性格、特質等)?

三、 有薪工作生活

1. 請問你在婚前和婚後曾否轉工? (若有，改變的是什麼?)
2. 請問你在婚前每天平均的工作時數是多少?
3. 請問你在婚後爲何選擇工作?
4. 請問你曾否定下工作目標? (若有，它們是什麼?)
5. 你認爲自己已達到工作理想或目標嗎? 爲何?
6. 請問你現時每天平均的工作時數是多少 (包括超時工作)?

四、 家庭生活

<u>價值觀與看法</u>

1. 你認同「男主外，女主內」的看法嗎? 請詳述之。
2. 你對「照顧家人及主理家裡所有的家務是女性的天職」有何看法? 請詳述之。
3. 請問你在婚前和婚後對主理家務的看法有沒有不同? 爲什麼?
4. 當你結婚以後及同時參與有薪工作，你的家庭成員對你的角色有何看法?
5. 你對家庭責任(例如主理家務、照顧孩子)有何看法?
6. 爲什麼你有這種看法?

<u>文化差異</u>

1. 就你從小所接受的家庭教育中，作爲一位丈夫及太太該是怎樣的呢? (這些看法可衍生出個人在家庭中的角色、責任、價值觀等)
2. 就你伴侶從小所接受的家庭教育中，他 / 她認爲作爲一位丈夫及太太該是怎樣的呢? (這些看法可衍生出伴侶在家庭中的角色、責任、價值觀等)
3. 請問這些看法怎樣影響你們倆夫婦的關係?

4. 請問你和丈夫 / 太太做甚麼去解決這些問題?
5. 請問你的伴侶對多重角色(如伴侶、父母、照顧者)有甚麼期望?
6. 請詳述你作爲丈夫 / 太太的經驗。
7. 請你提供一些建議給誇種族夫婦 (關於怎樣當一位丈夫 / 太太)。
8. 請問你和丈夫 / 太太在教養孩子上有沒有文化差異? 若有，它們是甚麼?
9. 你會怎樣解決這些問題?

家庭角色分工

1. 請問你每天在家平均的工作時數(包括主理家務和照顧孩子)是多少?
2. 請問你與配偶在家庭角色分工(例如主理家務和照顧孩子)是怎樣的? 請說明。
3. 你對這種分配模式滿意嗎? 請詳述之。
4. 請問你曾否主動要求你的家庭成員如丈夫、太太、父母 / 家公、家婆參與家務工作? 爲何? 他們的反應怎樣?

孩子

1. 請問你對自己作爲父母有何期望?
2. 請問係當父母有何經歷?
3. 請問你爲何選擇懷孕(若適用)?
4. 你認爲誇種族父母怎樣影響他們的孩子?
5. 你認爲與孩子出生於相同種族的家庭有何分別?
6. 若果你需要教導孩子怎樣處理其他人對他們的負面評價，你將會怎樣教導他們?

與家族的關係

1. 請問你曾否與你的父母 / 家翁、家婆同住?
2. 請問你的父母 / 家翁、家婆曾否在你懷孕及照顧嬰兒期間提供協助? 你認爲是否足夠?
3. 請問你的父母 / 家翁、家婆現時有否在家務及照顧孩子上提供協助? 請說明。
4. 你認爲在甚麼的程度上父母 / 家翁、家婆能輔助你們倆夫婦在家庭中的義務?
5. 當你和丈夫 / 太太遇上問題時，請問你曾否徵詢父母的意見? 若有，在那一方面? 爲何?
6. 當你決定投入誇種族婚姻時，你會怎樣描述與父母的關係? 這與你的決定前和後有何分別?
7. 請你描述與家翁和家婆的關係。
8. 當提及誇種族夫婦與父母 / 家翁、家婆的相處方式時，請你提供一些建議給他們。

五、 工作與家庭衝突

1. 請簡述你每日的生活流程。
2. 請問在你工作和婚姻中，甚麼是最重要的呢?
3. 請問你的工作怎樣影響家庭生活?
4. 請問你的家庭生活怎樣影響工作?

5. 請問你如何在家庭、工作及閒暇生活作出取捨？並詳述之。這分配在結婚前、後有沒有改變？請詳述之。
6. 請問你丈夫 / 太太的職業是甚麼?
7. 請問你伴侶的工作怎樣影響你的家庭生活?
8. 請問你怎樣處理工作與家庭上的衝突?

六、 性格

1. 根據 Circumplex model (Hans and Sybil Eysenck), 你認爲自己屬於哪種性格? 爲甚麼?
2. 當你和伴侶相處時，你的性格特徵在甚麼程度上產生影響?
3. 當你和伴侶進行爭辯時，你認爲自己容易妥協嗎?
4. 你認爲你的伴侶屬於哪一種性格? 爲甚麼?
5. 當他 / 她和你相處時，他 / 她的性格特徵在甚麼程度上產生影響?
6. 當你和他 / 她進行爭辯時，你覺得他 / 她容易妥協嗎?

七、 權力

1. 你認爲你的配偶在家庭角色分工上和你有一致的看法嗎? 如沒有，差異在哪裡?
2. 你認爲在家庭角色分工上，你和配偶的分配均等嗎? 爲何?
3. 請問你曾否和他 / 她商議過? 爲何?
4. 當有問題發生時，請問誰是主要決策者? 爲甚麼他 / 她有這種權力?
5. 請問你有甚麼事情不會和伴侶傾談?
6. 在你的婚姻生活中，請問有甚麼事情是不能商議呢?

八、 語言

1. 當你和配偶溝通時，請問你曾否遇到語言上的困難 (或障礙)? 若有，它們是甚麼?
2. 當你和丈夫 / 太太談話時，請問你明瞭他 / 她的真正意思嗎? 你何曾誤解過他 / 她? 在哪一方面?
3. 當你和丈夫 / 太太談話時，你認爲他 / 她明瞭你真正的意思嗎? 他 / 她何曾誤解過你? 在哪一方面?
4. 請問你怎樣和他 / 她共同解決這些問題?

九、 家庭傭工

1. 請問你怎樣把家務工作分配給家庭傭工?
2. 你認爲在甚麼程度上家庭傭工能輔助你們倆夫婦在家庭中的義務?
3. 你認爲家庭傭工對你的婚姻有幫助嗎? 在哪一方面? 爲甚麼?

十、 總言

1. 你認爲你有太多 / 足夠 / 太少時間留爲己用嗎?
2. 當你和丈夫 / 太太遇上問題時，請問你曾否告訴你的朋友? 若有，在那一方面? 爲甚麼?
3. 你認爲在甚麼程度上朋友你的影響最深?
4. 甚麼是你的理想婚姻生活?
5. 總括而言，請問你滿意現時的婚姻生活嗎? 爲何?

APPENDIX II

NOTES TAKEN IN THE INTERVIEWS WITH KEY INFORMANTS (KIs)

Guiding Questions

1. What are the major issues in cross-cultural marriages?
2. What are the major problems or conflicts or challenges in cross-cultural marriages?
3. What are the cultural differences in cross-cultural couples?
4. How do you view the process of negotiation among couples?

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- The major problems, conflicts or challenges in cross-cultural marriages would be parenting style, expectations of roles, roles have to be defined clearly, partnership is important.
- Negotiation is workable, especially for problem-solving, couples always need to have discussions and communications, talk about pros and cons
- Introduce an idea "Fushion Parenting"
    - ✧ fusing Chinese and Western medicine, fusing the best of Eastern & Western parenting, shared cultural values
    - ✧ children are free to voice their opinion, open communication, talk about pros and cons
    - ✧ negotiate (set up an agreement) versus there is a tell (only obey, otherwise bear the responsibility)
    - ✧ train them to be an independent person
- HK parents spoil the children so much, over-protected them
- Chinese parents pay attention on children's academic results
- Chinese thinking (youngsters should respect or obedience) versus Western thinking (parents have to earn respect)
- HK students (quiet, don't ask questions) versus international students (voice out opinion, tell you what they think)
- Use appropriate approach to teach children, know their differences and always communicate

Dr. Dan Waters

- About the major problems, conflicts or challenges in cross-cultural marriages, different races may have different stories, the equation of the cross-cultural couples may be different. The world is globalized or westernized, for example, food habit
- The process of negotiation may somehow depends on one's personality, the abilities of accepting criticism
- Language is the key problems, as in-law may not know the other language. Interactions cannot just rely on smiling. Language barrier hinder communication with the extended families. That is one of the reasons why ageing parents oppose cross-cultural marriages
- About the attractions towards cross-cultural couples, women tend to marry up (look for men's financial and social status or desirable characteristics) while men will marry down (look for women's beauty but not women's wealth)
- Cross-cultural couples stay in HK may be due to the job opportunities, otherwise, they will stay at their own countries

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