

THE UNTOLD LOVE STORY: CHINESE IMMIGRANT WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN AUSTRALIA AND IN CANADA

Angeline Low: University Of Technology Sydney, Sydney, Australia
Frances Chiang: Department Of Sociology, Kwantlen University College, Vancouver,
Canada

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Contact: Angeline Low, University of Technology Sydney, School of Finance & Economics,
PO Box 123, NSW 2007 Sydney, Australia, (T) (612) 99696025, (F) (612) 9969 6259, Email:
Angeline.Low@uts.edu.au

ABSTRACT

Research on women's entrepreneurship is often conceptualized in motivational theories embedded in social and economic opportunity structures set in a male-dominant terrain. However, there are interplays of human agency and structure to entrepreneurship and of late researchers, especially of women's entrepreneurship, are interested in recognizing entrepreneurship as an individual strategy; but what drives the individual strategy? This paper attempts to reveal "love" as an emotional capital that adds to explain an individual's strategy to entrepreneurship amongst two groups of Chinese women in Australia and Canada. Love that is embedded in the relations of marriage and family, which has historically been understood as passionate and confined only to the private sphere and deems irrelevant to the instrumental public world, is found to be one of the important motivators and incentives that drives some women into business.

INTRODUCTION

This paper aims to relate a number of love stories from a group of immigrant women of Chinese background in Sydney, Australia and Vancouver, Canada that tell of their motivation into entrepreneurship. Circumstanced by families and marriage at the intersections of immigration, class, gender, race/ethnicity and grounded in historical contexts, their tales deepen our understanding of their motivation to becoming entrepreneurs.

In this paper, we attempt to use love as an emotional capital (Gendron 2004; Nowotny 1981; Reay 2004) to link patriarchy to capitalism, and the private sphere to the public sphere. As much as the influence of family has been noted as an important motivational resource for businesses (Anthias et al. 2003; Chu 2004; Collins et al. 1995; Lever-Tracy et al. 1991) little attention has been paid to the sentimental value of love. It is postulated that Chinese women under study have acquired love as an emotional capital through socialization, influenced under the Confucian patriarchal value of women submissiveness to men, as well as the value of filial piety, that is, obedience to their parents, prioritizing families over selves. Though under constant challenges of western influence over the years, the Confucian legacy still persists and is very much alive in the minds of many Chinese men and women. As Chu (2004, p. 33) indicated, "Chinese women view their family as a unit and their husband the head of the unit, [so] it is natural for them to support the head of the family in becoming successful for the sake of the entire family." It was also observed that women were "commonly conceptualized as the "trailing wife" prioritizing the economic role of the husband (Waters 2001, p.11). Further, we argue in this paper that some Chinese women would use their love as a form of emotional capital to sacrifice themselves for their husbands and families. As love is what love acts, seeing self-sacrifice as a sign of love, these women would translate this emotional capital into action,

ending up assisting their husbands, fulfilling their parental wishes, or catering to their children in the process of making entrepreneurial decisions.

Concentrating on the aspect of motivation to business start-up, we will document the importance of love with a number of stories in both the Australian and Canadian studies. As diverse the samples of these studies are in terms of origin, class, education, language skills, and immigration backgrounds, serendipitously the Australian and Canadian studies converged. The studies found similar patterns among these women in using love to make entrepreneurial decisions.

THE LITERATURE

Motivation for Women's Entrepreneurship

To-date, the 2004 Global Entrepreneurship Monitor's (GEM) assessment on women's entrepreneurial activity for 34 countries is the largest cross-national research undertaken. The GEM researchers classified two main reasons for women's entry into business to be either an opportunity or a necessity reason (Minniti et al. 2005). Opportunity entrepreneurship represents those who entered business to take advantage of an opportunity, while necessity entrepreneurship arose because of the absent or lack of other employment options. The study revealed that 77.9% of men and 71.4% of women chose entrepreneurship to exploit an opportunity. A higher proportion of women (24.8%) and a lower proportion of men (19.4%) chose entrepreneurship because of necessity and this phenomenon typifies low-income countries. Both Canada and Australia ranked high in opportunity reasons, but Canada ranked higher than Australia (Minniti et al. 2005, p. 18-19). Other researchers used the term "pull" and "push" (Hughes 2003; Orhan et al. 2001) which are in many ways similar to the opportunity and necessity reasons. Pull reasons referred more to the attractions of entrepreneurship that may include opportunity factors, while push referred to negative factors that often included labour market barriers. In a Finnish study, reviewing motivations and entrepreneurial intention by sex, it was found that women had significantly higher values in push factors than men in their motivation to enter into entrepreneurship (Pihkala et al. 2000).

Between these two sets of reasons, there is a diversity of factors that give rise to a variety of complex reasons for any entrepreneurial pursuit. For example, the causes of dissatisfaction are mainly the result of employment barriers and limitations to independence. Often these arise from their unsatisfactory financial positions. Embedded in these obstacles are personal needs that act as motivators, such as the need for greater control over the direction of one's life; the need to escape from unsatisfying jobs or intolerable domestic situations; the need to reject gender stereotyping and sexism; and the need for flexibility in balancing the many demands of being a woman (Bennett et al. 2000; Brush 1992; Buttner et al. 1997; Caputo et al. 1998; Carter et al. 1992; Hughes 1999; Hughes 2003; Hughes 2006; Rosa et al. 1994; Stevenson 1986; Still 1997; Still et al. 1999).

Compressing women's motivation to entrepreneurship into either opportunity versus necessity, and either pull versus push is not only reductionistic, but may ignore the gendered realities of women's marital and family lives. Often, studies have found that marriage and children impact on women's entry into entrepreneurship (Anthias et al. 2003; Chu 2004; Goffee et al. 1985). For example, 96% of a sample of female entrepreneurs with dependent children, compared with 54% of men indicated that they chose self employment for the flexibility it brings to their lives (DeMartino et al. 2003). It was found that the more small children a woman has, the more likely she is to be self-employed (Caputo et al. 1998). This flexibility consideration also ranked high in the study carried out by Buttner and Moore earlier (1997). A Canadian study found that 31.9% of women cited "work-family" reasons as a primary motivator compared to only 7.9% of men (Hughes 2006, p. 113). While all these studies agreed that marriage and dependent children impacted dramatically on women's career choices, none have theorized the heavy investment in emotional capital that these entail.

Moreover, several studies have noted the connection between entrepreneurial intention and family background. For example, Matthews and Human (2000) observed in a study of business administration students that those with a family background in business showed higher interest in pursuing an entrepreneurial career. These differences appeared to be related not to education but to family background, as those intending had entrepreneurs in their family (Pihkala et al. 2000). Similarly, in an Australian sample of female entrepreneurs, 45.7% of those studied had self-employed parents which is found to be significant (Bennett et al. 2000). They also found that about two-thirds

(64.8%) of the sample nominated their parents as a role model, suggesting that the values instilled by the family can significantly impact entrepreneurial intentions.

Furthermore, entrepreneurial profile studies also indicated that female entrepreneurs were generally married. Several researchers have explained this feature in terms of the human capital resources that a marriage can provide. For example, in a British study, it was found that both men and women in business relied heavily on the assistance of their spouses and this assistance could take a variety of forms, from office cleaning to technical assistance (Rosa et al. 1994). It was also found that female self-employment was strongly correlated with having a spouse who was self-employed (Caputo et al. 1998). This may be either because of technical and business assistance available, the presence of a role model or possibly because of the support available. As the husbands' earnings from self-employment increased, so did the propensity for wives also to be self-employed, while an equally strong relationship was not found for self-employed women with husbands in wage employment. Caputo and Dolinsky concluded that it was not marital status itself that was a correlate of female entrepreneurship, but the expanded access to human capital resources that a marriage involved.

Our studies agree with the literature that women's movement into entrepreneurship is motivated by a rich variety of reasons, produced by interactions between the personal, gender, class, family and economic spheres. There can clearly be no one motive that propels women into business ventures, as gendered experiences are diverse. In this regard, motivation into entrepreneurship for immigrant women would become even more complex when the aspects of race/ethnicity and immigration are taken into consideration. As studies on ethnic and immigrant entrepreneurship have found, minorities consider starting their own business when they face racism in the general labour market in the forms of unemployment, underemployment and/or discrimination at work (Collins 2002; Collins et al. 1995; Lever-Tracy et al. 1991; Light et al. 2000; Rath 2000; Waldinger et al. 1990), and together with ethnic resources and favourable opportunity structures, they enter entrepreneurship (Light et al. 2000; Waldinger 1995; Waldinger et al. 1990).

However, existing literature is weak to recognize the interaction of race/ethnicity and gender of entrepreneurship, focusing either on ethnic/immigrant or women entrepreneurship. It would be useful to understand entrepreneurship as a gendered activity (Mirchandani 1999), and this is more so when class, ethnicity and immigration intersect. Moreover, the mobilization of gender resources and their vital role in ethnic entrepreneurship has not been widely studied (Dallafar 1994). Even when they do, an important motivator, love, has been missing. We will argue in this paper that love, as an emotional capital and a gendered resource, shapes the individual strategy of immigrant women's motive for entrepreneurship.

Conceptualizing Love

"In a society we are embarrassed by love. We treat it as if it were an obscenity. We reluctantly admit to it. Even saying the word makes us stumble and blush..." (hooks 2000). Not only is love rarely discussed in open conversations, it has not been a common research topic for academic scholars. Other than in psychology and pop-psychology, love is rarely discussed from a social perspective let alone from an economic or business point of view. Only in the 80's have feminists started to use the "labour of love" to explain women's domestic labour (Luxton 1980; Rose 1983, 2004), referring it to unpaid emotionally demanding labour that women selflessly give themselves to their husbands and children based on love relations in the family. Even Bourdieu brushed aside the idea of emotional capital, but acknowledged the existence of labour arising from emotional concepts, such as "devotion" as a gender related form of relationship maintenance (Bourdieu 1998). Further, Gendron argued that "emotional behaviour has to be taken into account in economic theory as it has a major impact on economics" through enabling human capital formation and optimizing its exploitation in the labour market (Gendron 2004). Despite so, applying emotional capital in the form of love to explain economic behaviour is still unprecedented.

What is love then? Love is not just a feeling but is also an action. "Love is as love does", and it involves the expression of "care, affection, responsibility, respect, commitment, and trust" (hooks 2000). Hence, love, like any other emotions, can act as a driving force for people to respond to each other and to situations in particular ways (Turner et al. 2005). From a sociological point of view, love is socially constructed and culturally determined. The meaning and behaviour of love is learned from socialization, from a number of agents including the family, the school, peer groups, religion and the media. More specifically, love can be expressed as a form of emotional capital, which is primarily

learned in the family from mothers (Reay 2004), as a gendered resource that women have in greater abundance than men. Emotional capital is highlighted by the key role women, normally mothers, play in affective or love relationships in the family. It is largely used by women in family investments in children and husbands, as wives and mothers, to manage the emotional life of the family, maintaining the emotional aspects of family relationships, responding to others' emotional states and also acting to alleviate distress (Reay 2004). Emotional capital is thus perceived to be confined to the private sphere and stand outside economic interpretation, lacking value in the public sphere of work.

As emotions are culturally determined, the expressions of love are subject to change. According to Cancian and Gordon (Turner et al. 2005) in their research on love between the sexes in marriage, the expressions of love are subject to changing norms governed by structural events. They noticed that, for example, during the period of social liberation, power relations between the husbands and wives would be more equal, leading to open expressions of love. In contrast, when traditional norms and values prevail, the balance of power would tip in the male direction emphasizing self-sacrifice as a sign of love in order to meet the needs of the powerful (p.35-36). In parallel, it can be argued that among a group of women whose ideologies are governed by traditional culture of male dominance and female submissiveness, they would likely put a great emphasis on self-sacrifice as an act of love to the men in the family, be it the fathers, husbands, brothers or the sons.

METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLES

Methodology

The malestream essentialist approach has dominated the literature of entrepreneurship, which limits the study of motivation to survey research and aggregate data, quantifying motivational factors in a linear and additive fashion. In this way, there has been an oversight on the complexity of intertwining driving forces behind entrepreneurs to starting business. Moreover, quantitative research strategy, lacking in accounts of experiences and nuances of meanings, and considered culturally insensitive and gender biased, does not address the unique experiences of women and minority women. It is believed that women should be allowed to relate their experiences and values in their own ways using their own language, hence qualitative methods would be a relatively more reliable research strategy despite its lack of generalizability. In this regard, we adopted a case study approach focusing upon qualitative data.

In-depth interviews with open-ended questions and non-directive questioning were undertaken with two groups of women entrepreneurs: Asian-born Chinese women in Sydney, Australia (hereafter referred as ACWEs) and Hong Kong Chinese immigrant women in Vancouver, Canada (hereafter referred as CCWEs). We identified eight women from each group to analyze the emotional capital of love as motivators for entry into entrepreneurship. From these sixteen women, we chose four cases to unpack further their biographical experiences, in particular in order to document how love is one of the important driving forces to enter entrepreneurship and how love is manifested in entrepreneurial pursuits. As indicated earlier, love is rarely mentioned and discussed openly it is understandable why the word was likewise rarely mentioned in the interviews. The researchers have to look closely at these women's stories to uncover its impact. Submerged under marital and family life, for the Chinese women, love in public was expressed in an implicit, covert and latent manner. It requires careful reading of the biographical processes and the researchers' sensitiveness to cultural and social structures within Chinese societies, to have an understanding of the action of love that correlates in the choices these groups of Chinese women make in their pursuit of entrepreneurship.

In both studies, the interview participant lists were built through a snowballing of referrals. The CCWEs interviewed were acquired by referrals from relatives, friends, association leaders and business acquaintances, while the ACWEs were acquired mainly through the researcher's contact network in banking and in business. For the CCWEs, almost all the interviews were conducted in Cantonese, the principal dialect in Hong Kong, with an average of two hours per interview. Interviews with the ACWEs were all conducted in English with a few exceptions, where interviews were conducted using a mix of Cantonese and English. All names of the women entrepreneurs used in this paper are pseudonyms to protect their identity.

Both studies are parts of the researchers' PhD dissertations. The authors were unaware of each other's work until one had submitted her thesis for examination and the other was at the stage of final writing. Uncovering each other's serendipitous findings prompted closer interrogation of the interview

data as to the motivation for entrepreneurship. "Love" emerged from both data sets as an important driver of entrepreneurship that prior entrepreneurship literature had not put a pulse to.

The Samples

A sample of sixty-seven women entrepreneurs of Chinese parentage or heritage were extracted from the Australian study and classified as a data set of ACWEs. Of these, eight were born in Mainland China, nine in Hong Kong, four in Indonesia, eight in Laos, ten in Malaysia, three in the Philippines, four in Singapore, six in Taiwan, nine in Thailand and six in Vietnam. The Canadian study comprised a data set of fifty-eight CCWEs mostly born in Hong Kong. The subjects included those Chinese women who have alone or with one of more partners, started up, bought or inherited a business in or outside their homes, and were actively participating in the firm's day-to-day operation.

A majority of the ACWEs are married or had been married before. They have family and domestic responsibilities in addition to work in their business enterprises. Thirty-two (48%) of the ACWEs have completed tertiary education, 72% having at least one university degree, 19% having two, and the remaining 9% holding three university degrees. This higher education of ACWEs is well ahead of the 21% of Australian women above the age of fifteen who have a university qualification (ABS 1998). In addition, many of the ACWEs possess skills and competencies in specialized work and professions. Compared with the ACWEs, the CCWEs were relatively less educated: majority (61%) has achieved an intermediate level of education (with high school or some post secondary training), 21% have completed university, and only 8% have graduate degrees or professional qualifications, which explain their concentration in small businesses. Like the CCWEs, most of the ACWEs run small businesses, but there are a number in the ACWEs' sample that operate medium-sized businesses, with one employing more than 200 people.

All the ACWEs are multilingual, a valuable human capital in business dealings. They can speak English in addition to their mother tongue. Some can speak more than four languages, including several Chinese dialects and the language of their country of birth, such as Lao, Malay, Tagalong, Thai and Vietnamese. On the contrary, the CCWEs are mostly Cantonese speaking and less likely than the ACWEs to speak fluent English, and therefore their businesses are more likely targeted at co-ethnics in the Chinese community.

Around 95% of the ACWEs arrived in Australia since the end of the White Australian Policy era, that is, since 1972. All ACWEs from Laos and Vietnam arrived in Australia through the humanitarian program for refugees. One of the ACWEs from China was granted a special visa on humanitarian grounds and was allowed to stay on after the Chinese Tiananmen Incident of 1989. Together, the ACWEs who were admitted into Australia on humanitarian visas comprise 22% of all of the ACWEs studied. The other 78% of ACWEs came under better circumstances and of their own free will. They brought skills, education and personal savings with them, thus giving them a head start in settling down. In addition, some had the support of relatives and friends in Australia to help them in the initial settlement process and had access to their social networks. Unlike the ACWEs, many of the CCWEs were relatively new immigrants in Canada, arriving in the early 90's, mainly for the fear of the 1997 reversion of Hong Kong to Chinese sovereignty. Most came with husbands or fathers as principal applicants under the independent family category or the entrepreneurial program. None of them came under the refugee program like the Australian counterparts. Majority of these women were middle-aged, between 35 and 49; married mostly to middle-class or entrepreneurial husbands of the same ethnic background; and had few children who were mostly adolescents.

While the CCWEs were more likely than the ABWEs to be raised in middle-class families with fathers and mothers as business owners, managers or professionals, the families in both groups, in which they were raised, seem traditional: characterized by large family size, mothers as housewives and rare divorces. Some of these traits have been transformed in their own marriage and family patterns. These women, hence, are less likely to be single or live alone, to be divorced or live in a common-law union. Yet unlike their mothers, these women have a career, and raise a much smaller family. The importance of the family is particularly notable when their pattern of residence is considered. Regardless of age or marital status, almost all except a few live with a family: either in their own established family, with or without the presence of a husband or children, or if they are single, with their maternal family. Given the traditional and entrepreneurial backgrounds from which these women were raised, there is reason to believe that strong family values and family influence

would have important implications on how they perceive their economic role and their business relations.

THE UNTOLD LOVE STORY: CHINESE IMMIGRANT WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN AUSTRALIA AND IN CANADA

The stories told by Chinese immigrant women in both studies revealed complex interactive reasons for entering business after immigration. These women were drawn into entrepreneurship by one of or a combination of the following individual, marital, social and structural factors: their personal entrepreneurial spirits and financial rewards, previous training, business and work experiences, influence from family and friends, work-related barriers, market conditions and state policies. Both studies have noted interplays between immigration policies, opportunity structures (demands in ethnic and non-ethnic markets), barriers in the labour markets (classism, racism, and sexism) and the possession of ethnic and gender resources (friendship and family networks) along with individual class resources (human capital and the spirit of entrepreneurialism) as motivating factors for entrepreneurial pursuit.

Among the various motivational factors in business startup, in this paper we will focus on the discussion of the family as an important motivational/ethnic resource contributing to the Chinese immigrant women's decision. Brought up in traditional middle-class families, the sexist Confucian (Confucius 1992) teaching of the obedient wife is very much embedded in the husband-wife relationships. In addition, the influence of Confucian filial piety and duty to the family is evident. These Confucian ideologies of family cohesiveness, filial piety and female submissiveness would have significant impact on these women leading them to make business decisions around the family, which may encompass beyond the nuclear unit. It was found that both ACWEs and CCWEs were supported and encouraged by their husbands and parents to embark on entrepreneurship as a career. Both studies revealed that family and marital support included being able to talk through the process of business start-ups, giving financial support and being their business partners, and parents in particular helping with child minding and sharing some of the unpaid domestic work.

While the importance of the family has been noted in the literature, rarely was it put into the perspective of love as an emotional capital. Indeed, since the open expression of love has been uncommon and considered irrelevant to economic activities, there has been a general oversight in past research relating love to entrepreneurial behaviour despite the heavy emphasis on the family. Yet, in both the Australian and Canadian studies, we have found that love, though not explicitly expressed, has been a significant motivator embedded in women's role as wives, mothers, daughters and daughters-in-law, among which the role of the wife has been predominant.

Our studies found much evidence that the obedience and submission of a woman to a man in marriage is expected and interpreted as love as is embedded in Confucian teachings. Many women have been pulled or pushed into entrepreneurship out of self-sacrifice for the husbands, expressed as a sign of love. Some of them did so to "give face" or "save face" for their husbands while others through contributing their "labour of love." In the Australian study, the ACWEs from Hong Kong, Laos and Taiwan most frequently referred to the "husband" reason as contributing to their move into business. For the women from China, the frequency of reference is second, from the Philippines it is third and from Indonesia and Thailand it is the fourth most frequently identified reason. The husband reason is the fifth most important reason for the ACWEs from Singapore and Vietnam to go into business. The CCWEs in the Canadian study also demonstrated the dominance of the husband factor when compared with other family members including parents and children.

Other than the husband factor, our research indicated that some women started their own business out of the motivation of their love for their children and parents. This phenomenon is especially prevalent among women who were "husbandless," that is, single or divorced with children. Hence to these women, the business project is a project of love, a sentimental investment growing out of love as mothers and daughters. These women, as obedient daughters, were motivated by their parents to use entrepreneurship as a career choice; or as loving mothers, to create a business around their responsibilities to their children.

With respect to love as a motivational resource, these women's entrepreneurial pursuits can be classified into five different categories demonstrating love for the husband and the family. The first

three categories have to do with love for the husband and therefore protecting his “face”. The fourth category deals with women starting their own business as a result of love that is expressed in fulfilling the wishes and encouragement of husbands and parents. The fifth category is about women starting business catering to the needs of the family, again an expression of love for one’s family as influenced by the Confucian ideology.

First, some of the women, for the love of their husbands, decided to start a business for their unemployed husbands to “give face” to their husbands. For these Chinese husbands, to be seen to be unemployed or even seen by their friends and families to be helping out their wives at home, by hanging out the laundry, for example, would result in a “loss of face” for them. Newly arrived male business, professional and skilled immigrants who have track records of economic and social success before migration are more worried about the image perceived by their relatives and friends if they remain unemployed. In addition, there may be a situation where a husband needed to “save face” after unemployment, so that the woman had to establish a business to give him employment. She may be able to do so because she has the qualifications, professional registration license or skills required to establish a business where her husband may not have equivalent attributes. In so doing she is actually giving him face and at the same time allowing him to save face. In the Confucian context, a woman who protects her husband’s face, is deemed to have performed an act of love. Our research projects showed that some women were reluctant entrepreneurs and their entry into entrepreneurship was motivated by their need to protect their husbands’ faces. Exploited for their emotional capital of love, they gave up their own employment to create a business for their husbands as the following examples showed:

“I go into business because of husband, he wants it, not me. Actually, he got redundant. . . he was out of work. . . It was a big decision for me because I was really happy where I worked and my boss treated me really well, I got good pay and I was happy, I liked my job. My husband said, ‘Why don’t you quit and we start the business together?’ I just want to help him and support him. . . I am the technical person.” (Gen Vieng, Australia)

“When we first came here, I had no intention of starting my own business. I had a job and I was happy. But my husband could not find work for two years. So I decided to set up a [skin care wholesale] business. It was because of him. At least then he would have some place to stay during the day, and help me to do some deliveries, or drive me around... work to do... If I stayed in my job, he would continue to stay unemployed. So I finally decided to quit and start up this business...” (Adrienne Wong, Canada)

“I saw the business opportunity because I was concerned about my husband. Because for a man to come into this country to look for a job isn’t that easy.” (Jessica Yang, Australia)

Secondly, out of love, a woman may all by themselves start a business for their absent husbands, or is pushed into the business that is started by her husband who will subsequently leave to return to his original country for a period of time. These women were pushed into business selflessly for the wellbeing of their husbands in a way that when their husbands return, there will be a business and job waiting for them to step into. This is clearly another manifestation of an act of love in an endeavour to ensure the protection of the husband’s face, as articulated below:

“My husband has to stay in Hong Kong to make money to support us. He cannot give up his business just like that. He will not be able to find the kind of work he likes if he comes over. He’s been his own boss for so long that no one would hire him as a worker. Besides, he will not be willing to start all over again at the entry level. So there is no chance of getting work ... He wanted me to start a business so that when he decides to come over, he would have something to do...” (Gail Chan, Canada)

In another case, Julia Hing was a reluctant entrepreneur. Julia’s husband was still heavily involved with his family’s businesses in Hong Kong, although he had started another business in Sydney and that included heavy investments from his family. Julia was coerced or pushed into stepping in to manage the business her husband started in Sydney as he was spending his time in Hong Kong. On migrating to Australia, she thought she could stop work and spend more time with her children. However, she had no option, as an act of love to her husband and as an act of love expressed in filial piety to her in-laws, she dutifully accepted responsibility for the business in Sydney.

“Actually, I’m not interested in this property business. Frankly speaking, actually I want to retire... I’d rather have my children here. I’d like to stay with them.then here, they started the development business. Then we’re so busy overseas and then, you know, they just want me to help here, to look after the business. It’s actually harder for me ‘cause it’s new to me, and I had to start to learn it and it’s a hard task.” (Julia Hing, Australia)

Thirdly, there were those who went into business for love to provide their husbands with their labour in support of the businesses that their husbands had established. Research into ethnic entrepreneurship only goes so far as to acknowledge “family support” and “family labour” to be significant in the success of most immigrant small businesses (Chu 2004; Collins et al. 1995; Ip et al. 1992, 1999; Kermond et al. 1991:88; Lever-Tracy et al. 1991; Strahan et al. 1988). However, there is a need to unpack this notion of family labour, especially given by a wife to a husband. In our research projects, most of the women we observed did not have limited career choices and most were well educated and economically independent, yet they sacrificed their careers for entrepreneurship. One would have to ask, why?

We found evidence that the two groups of Chinese women entrepreneurs went into business as a result of their labour of love. To express her love, the woman may find the need to sacrifice her chosen career to satisfy her husband’s wishes. Her husband who has established a business requires her labour. To refuse his request to assist him in business is to put her love and marriage to the test. So she “obediently” submits to the call of her husband and provides her labour for love. Many an immigrant’s business is built on “love labour” as reflected in the words of these women:

“My husband started the business first when I was still working in the bank. He asked me to resign to give him a hand. So I had to resign, give him a hand to establish a new line. I have to be supportive to my husband.” (Sara Liew, Australia)

“This [travel agency] business used to be his. But I guess he gets very tired. So when I quit my work, he asked me to come to help him. At that point, my intention was to come to do some bookkeeping. I never expect me ended up sitting up front and do all this sales work... I hate selling...I quit my previous job because I hate to sell... But I ended up being a sales person all day... eight to nine hours a day working in sales. I guess people change [their attitudes]. After I’ve done it, I became a major support to my husband. He can take it easy now.” (Ophelia Lee, Canada)

“Actually, I did not set up this company. It was my husband. I was meant to just help him out like on a secretarial basis. He said, “Can you come in a few days a week?” And I said, Oh that is fine”, , but it did not work out that way and it became full time.” (Sally Tang, Australia)

These women and others like them similarly going into business by providing love labour to their husbands found that eventually their contributions were so significant and indispensable that they became equal co-decision makers in the business. A number of the women had shown that by providing love labour they in time gained control of strategic parts of the business and, without them there, their husbands were unlikely to be able to operate alone. Like true entrepreneurs, they had turned the tables around and took control, and their husbands were in turn dependent on them.

Fourthly, there were those women, as obedient wives or daughters, were encouraged by their husbands or parents to start their own businesses. Usually, the influence of the husband was more prevalent among married women while the influence of the parents occurred mostly among single women. Out of love, respect and submissiveness, they would follow their husbands or parents’ advice to enter entrepreneurship. Hence it was not uncommon for these women to repeatedly show deference with words like “my husband says this and that” or “my father says ...”, as indicated by these women:

“My husband always said if you wanted to do business, it’s better to do food business because everyone has to eat. When my partners bought this business, they asked me to join. I didn’t say OK. It was my husband who wanted me to join. I know this person too well. I told my husband if I am going to do business with him, I might lose a friend. But my husband is very good in persuading me...” (Joyce Cheung, Canada)

"I didn't make the decision (on going into the business). . . It was my father who made the decision. That was ten years ago. I was 27 then. I was managing one of his trading companies and I took over his business four years later." (Sarina Ha, Australia)

"I decided to take up this business because of my dad. My dad always encouraged us to do business. He always said that it's useless to work for others. You cannot make it big. I am very proud of my dad. He doesn't have much education and he doesn't speak English. He went out to work when he was very young and supported the entire family, the five of us, all by himself. He's very aggressive, goal-oriented and determined..." (Chelsea Ho, Canada)

Finally, there were those women who were pushed or pulled into starting a home-based business as a result of their love for the family as wives and mothers. Influenced by the patriarchal values of wifehood and motherhood, these women considered their love and care for the husbands and children as essential, overriding their self-interests. As one woman remarked,

"A successful woman has to know how to maintain relationship with her husband and be a caring mother. If your business failed, you could just wrap things up and leave; but if I lost my husband and my children, I'll lose everything." (Gail Chan, Canada)

These women would therefore take family as a priority over their career. Their choice to enter business was motivated by the flexibility it entails, which would give them time to act out their love by taking care of their husbands and children, as articulated by these women:

"The most important reason is my husband. He's retired now. If I go out to work or operate a business [elsewhere] working for ten hours a day, he will be left alone at home. I can't take care of him. If I left him alone in the house, he would feel very lonely. He would feel depressed." (Isabelle Au, Canada)

"Yes, I have flexibility. I am able to control my time, look after my children and do business from home." (Evelyn Wee, Australia)

"The biggest motivation was that I could work from home. I had a daughter who was very young then. I had to give her time. I hoped that when she came home from school she would see me there. The biggest attraction of this business was that I could work from home. I had complete control over time ...to be with my daughter." (Vera Chow, Canada)

THE INTERSECTIONS OF LOVE AND OTHER MOTIVATORS

It would be conceivably biased and limited if we attribute love as the sole motivator for entering business. Motivation is a complex phenomenon and should not be treated as static but processual (Kontos, 2003). It requires a process of self-awareness and self-deliberation that leads to becoming an entrepreneur as a coping strategy or the best possible alternative (Kontos, 2003). Hence, early research on entrepreneurship that analyzes motivational factors in an additive and quantitative fashion faced the drawback of simplicity and reductionism. Our studies show that various factors intermesh with each other in complicated ways, and the weight of each factor varies depending on individual experiences and structural circumstances. While motivation to do business can emerge in different ways, in this section, we will focus on the analysis of love and the process of how it integrates and intertwines with other factors in business pursuits. In the following, we shall illustrate the various patterns and processes using the live stories of four Chinese women, two in Australia and two in Canada.

The Story of Gen Vieng (Australia): Creating Employment for the Unemployed Husband

Gen Vieng is a refugee from Laos who arrived in Australia at the age of fourteen with her parents after having lived for four months in a refugee camp in Thailand. She completed a university degree and majored in accounting. After graduation, she went on to work in a public accounting firm and obtained the Certified Public Accountant (CPA) professional qualifications. She said of her job, "You know, you don't have to worry about anything and every week, you just come in and get your wage and I'm happy."

Her husband studied accounting too, but at a vocational level and worked as an accounts clerk until he was made redundant. Unemployed, he started working from home doing simple tax return compliances for friends, and Gen would help him with the more complex and technical problems while keeping her regular job as a CPA. Gen realized that “you can’t do two jobs.” Being unemployed and doing unprofitable tax work from home, Gen’s husband then requested her to quit her job. Her husband was dependent on Gen to start a professional accounting firm as she had the qualifications to do so. Her reaction was: “I have to support him. It was a big decision for me because I had a very good pay and I was happy.” Gen was also pregnant with their first child at the time. When her son turned one, she quit her job, started her accounting firm and employed her husband.

She talked lovingly of her husband and is proud of his work achievement as her business partner. She said:

“He’s good too, he’s good in the people skills but talk in the technician part, I know more because I have been through it but when people come they would prefer to see him, rather than me. But I like that too. I always think yes, yes, go and see him, leave me alone.”

Gen’s story was embedded in biographical and social structures, one where a husband needed to “save face” after unemployment or retrenchment so that the wife had to establish a business to give the husband employment. In this case, Gen was able to do so because she had the qualifications, professional registration license and expertise required to establish a professional business while her husband did not have equivalent qualifications. In so doing she was actually “giving him face” and at the same time allowing him to “save face.” Another important element in this Chinese cultural phenomenon of “giving face” and “saving face” is that by doing so, Gen also managed to “gain face” as her husband was seen as a successful person in his community and that had kept her love and marriage healthy. So in this case, it is a win-win love story when Gen sacrificed her well-paid job and as an act of love, invested her emotional capital to start a business so as to employ her husband.

For Gen and likewise many other ethnic immigrant women their motivational experiences cannot be expressed quantitatively or linearly. There are the multi-dimensional aspects of motivation that are quietly intertwined with love within marriage and family. Together with love, the unfavourable labour conditions for the husband due to lack of qualifications and his ethnic minority refugee status intermeshed with Gen’s qualifications and work experiences that had motivated her entrepreneurship. Since Gen did not go into business because she needed the money, and she was qualified and happy with her well-paid job, it became evident that love acted for the emotional wellbeing of her unemployed husband. In this love stood out as a primary motivator.

The Story of Gail Chan (Canada): Creating Employment for the Absent Husband

Gail is a forty-one year old woman who was raised in a large traditional family with father as the sole breadwinner working as a seaman. Though Gail was a high school dropout, she was an achiever: hard working, motivated, constantly upgrading her skills, and answering to excessive demands from her superiors in order to make good. Starting out as an unskilled factory worker, she eventually was able to land a receptionist job in a large manufacturing company. After marrying to a businessman, she tried very hard to fit in and mingle with women from the “upper-class circle”.

Gail is the kind of woman who loves and admires her husband, referring to him as “smart” and “successful”, hence in many ways, is willing to satisfy his wishes. For example, when the issue of emigration came up, even though she was reluctant to leave, anticipating the hardships of going to a foreign place with little social support, she eventually succumbed to the idea. The major reason for immigrating to Canada was that “my husband likes Vancouver very much and would like our children to be educated there”. In order to continue to provide the family financially, the initial plan was for the husband to stay in Hong Kong and continue with his business while Gail stayed in Vancouver to take care of the kids. Despite her fear of having to settle down and raise her children by herself alone, she was convinced to support her husband’s plan. This *astronaut* (Waters 2001) situation would continue throughout the eight years of Gail’s life in Canada.

In the first few years in Canada, working as a housewife Gail spent her spare time taking English lessons and floral arrangement courses. Then she started to look for work. The job search experience had been painful. Language barriers and a lack of connections were among the main reasons for her failure to find a job in the mainstream economy. Eventually, she turned to look for

factory work, and this time she found work in a chocolate factory. Her own work search experience led her to believe that it would be impossible for her husband to find work when he decided to join them in Canada for good, given the unfavourable employment opportunities for minority immigrants. In fact, the situation would be worse for her husband, knowing that he would refuse to take on any job lesser than his current one. After discussing the grim job opportunities with her husband, she was persuaded to start a business so that it would be ready for him to take over once he decided to move to Canada.

Without any business experience, Gail did it the hard way, by trial and error. She took a job waiting in a Japanese restaurant to learn about the restaurant business, and decided against it. Then she tried selling women's clothing at home but soon found out that she could not tolerate customers invading her privacy. Then she decided to open a gift shop, but with the care of her children as a priority, she unwisely looked for a location more for comfort than for business needs: "I was looking for a place that was big enough to make a room so that I can put a TV and a bed for my son... so that I could take care of my son [who was sick all the time] and run the business at the same time". As expected, without much entrepreneurial training and experience, the business failed and she closed down the store.

In the interest of love, she acted with a mindset to open a business for her husband, Gail continued to look for ideas and opportunities. This time, she decided to do it from home to save cost. She decided to sell chocolates and flowers. Gail contacted her previous employer, the chocolate manufacturing owner, to supply her with chocolates, and used her skills to make floral arrangements for customers, who would order chocolates and flowers from her for parties and functions. This home business was short lived when she realized that it would not be appropriate for her husband, not to mention that he would also be unwilling to work from home. Ultimately, she relocated this business to a Chinese shopping mall and with her husband's connections in Asia, imported Ceylon tea and other gift items. Despite losing money all along, she expanded her business to get involved in the wholesaling of Ceylon tea and chocolates with the attempt to hit the mainstream market. The pushing force behind these business decisions again was for the husband, who would rather run a bigger business than a small retail store when he eventually joined them in Canada.

The story told here reflects the complexity and processual nature of motivation. Gail's love for her husband keeps motivating her to go through different hurdles to set up one business after another. However, love alone would not be enough to pull her into entrepreneurship. Barriers such as the lack of job opportunity for minority immigrants in the labour market, together with resources such as previous training in floral arrangement, the availability of financial support, local and transnational business connections, as well as her entrepreneurial spirit all contribute to push as well as pull Gail into entrepreneurship.

The Story of Sara Liew (Australia): Entering Business Out of Labour of Love

Sara Liew migrated to Australia from Hong Kong where she had always worked as a secretary. She tried to continue working as a secretary when she settled in Australia, but with a three year old child in day care it was an impossible mission of juggling between work and family. She stopped work and rejoined the workforce when her daughter was seven. Meanwhile, her husband started a printing business, but the business did not do well and he wanted to change the nature of his business. Like most small business start-ups operating on tight cash flows, he needed his wife's labour (as this is usually provided with little or no payment). Sara's husband requested her to leave her paid job. She said she did it "because have to give him a hand. That's why I resign and helped him, give him a hand in establishing new line" in the business. She added, "I have to be supportive to my husband." Such is her love obligation. Together, they ventured into a new business taking advantage of the endless hours of Sara's "labour of love". They had built a successful business and had moved into bigger premises a few times. They now own the large warehouse and office-showroom, which are prime real estates in Sydney.

However, love can be tested. Sara soon found that "working with husband is more difficult than working with others. Now you have full time dealings with him including business and family conflicts." The line between the relationships as husband and wife and a relationship between a boss and secretary is blurred and can be difficult at times. Sara explained,

“... now 24 hours, you are with your husband. If you are dealing with friends, you will keep a different courtesy to control your language and your behaviour. But if you are working with your husband, he won't becauseat that time when he lost his temper, he will think you are his wife. But if his secretary he can't do it because you are just a colleague actually, your status in the office.”

For love and to preserve marital harmony, she explained, “That's why you have to be very patient and control yourself.” Sara's story shows that love is about “giving face” to her husband. However, she had also to “save face” for herself from the way her husband treated her and appeared to undervalue her labour. She said further,

“You have to be very strong. As a business woman, you can't show that you are scared, you still have to show your face that you can take it. Actually, down inside you are so frightened and so scared, but you just don't want to show others. Have to be strong. Because you don't want to ruin your image in front of other colleagues. Nobody can help you with that.”

In labouring for love, she recognized,

“you have to sacrifice yourself, your own life if you want to be a business woman. Because it's hard choice between the family and the business, you always have to give and take.”

Sara, like some of the Chinese counterparts, found that they were motivated in their entry in entrepreneurship through the love they had to show for their husbands and therefore the need to help their husbands get ahead in business. Though they laboured for their husbands out of love, they may not have done it wholeheartedly without resistance. Like Sara, they were caught in the struggle between the traditional Confucian values of women subordination and the feminist ideology of equality. While they provide love labour and give face to their husbands, simultaneously they also fight back to regain control of their lives. We observe that Confucianism and feminism constitute two contradictory forces that explain why some of the women choose entrepreneurship. In addition, as minority immigrants, to overcome the barriers of settlement means that both husband and wife need to combine their labour resources and work more closely together to achieve favourable financial and socio-economic outcomes for themselves and their children.

The Story of Julie Wu (Canada): Starting a Home-based Business for the Love of the Children

Julie is a 29-year-old young woman who immigrated to Canada when she was young. After graduating from high school she had no interest to pursue further education but to work and start making money. Influenced by a friend who owned a successful beauty salon, she decided to take a similar course. After doing some research, she learned that it would only take 10 to 12 months of training to become an aesthetician. Out of filial piety, an obedient daughter would act out love by seeking the advice from her parents about her future prospects. Julie chose to discuss with her father about taking this training course. Her father in return acted out his love by supporting her idea and pointing to her the possible business opportunity derived from it. With the support from her father, Julie eventually became a licensed aesthetician, working in the following years in a number of beauty salons, she said:

“I wanted to know how different salons operate. Every salon has its own way of operation. I wanted to know what contributed to the success of these businesses.”

Julie continued to work after marriage for financial reason, but with the birth of her son, she changed from full-time to part-time employment. She would have to put her son in day care and pick him up after work. Due to lack of flexibility at work, she eventually decided to start a home-based business doing facial for women. While a home-based business had never been in her original plan, in order to exercise complete control over work around the love she could provide by caring for her son, she had to compromise for something less. As she commented:

“Of course I always wanted to open a beauty salon [outside of home]. But the timing is not right... My son is still young [5 years old] and I have to spend time taking care of him, driving him back and forth, here and there. Even by the time he gets to elementary school, I still have to take him to various lessons, such as piano, swimming, etc... He is definitely my

top priority now. If my client wants to come at a time my son needs me, I would definitely stay with my son and refuse the client."

Starting a home-based business, therefore, would satisfy Julie's needs to juggle between work and mothering responsibilities. Though it is a financial necessity to work and make money, Julie would prefer to schedule appointments with clients around her son's activities risking the possible loss of business. In Julie's case, starting a business arose out of a number of reasons through time: having a friend as a role model, encouragement from her father, financial necessity, and the love of her son. Most importantly, maternal love, an emotional capital internalized by many women like her, has become one of the motivational resources that pushed Julie to start a home-based business.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The Australian and Canadian Chinese immigrant women's entry into entrepreneurship is a complex phenomenon. Motivation for entrepreneurship can be better explained through a biographical process of immigration experience that is embedded at the intersections of self, marriage and family, class, race/ethnicity, settlement process, labour market experience, and the opportunity structures around them. In a qualitative research of this nature, we are reminded that a careful reading of the biographical processes and the researchers' sensitiveness to cultural and social structures within Chinese societies are integral to understanding the action of love that correlates in the choices these groups of Chinese women make in their pursuit of entrepreneurship. Submerged under marital and family life, for these Chinese immigrant women, love in public was expressed in an implicit, covert and latent manner. We found that the two groups of immigrant women in Australia and Canada were quick to act love by sacrificing themselves and giving in to the demands of their husbands and their families as an important underlying reason for entry into entrepreneurship, and this has not been detailed and fully recognized in earlier research literature.

The existing entrepreneurship literature in general is weak in its recognition of the gendering of entrepreneurship. Women's entrepreneurship literature, on the other hand, is often blind to the diverse ethnic and cultural aspects of minority women's entrepreneurship. The telling of these stories contributes to knowledge of both ethnic and women's entrepreneurship by demonstrating love, being culturally determined, as a gendered resource in entrepreneurship. The stories illustrate, under cultural influences, the importance of untangling family relationships and unpacking the way family impacts on immigrant women's entrepreneurship that is lacking in current literature. This paper has produced a more careful and complex analysis of how love, an emotional capital, motivates and shapes the individual strategy of immigrant women's entrepreneurship by highlighting the importance of marital and family relationships.

The impact of love on motivation to entrepreneurship was a serendipitous finding in both the Australian and Canadian studies and therefore, the relationship between love and other motivators was not explored in greater depth than the authors would have liked to given their research constraints. More importantly, the processes of these women's struggle between the sacrifices they made for love of the husband and family and their self-fulfillment and personal goals were missed. Hence, for future research, it will add more knowledge if the processes of struggles these women face, amidst the contradictions between subservience and empowerment in the choice of entrepreneurship are delineated and unfolded. Even though the experiences of our women entrepreneurs do not justify a universal framework of validity, we suggest continuing research along this line to substantiate our knowledge claim. It would also be useful to investigate how patriarchal values of women submissiveness would reflect the impact of love on entrepreneurship in women of diverse cultural backgrounds. In this regard, a comparative approach is also much needed in future research. Considering the gaps in research, we recommend that future research into ethnic women entrepreneurship take account of love as an emotional capital that has long been ignored in entrepreneurship literature.

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