

Couple Relationship Standards and Migration: Comparing Hong Kong Chinese with Australian Chinese

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Rates of international migration are increasing, which raises the question of how migration might influence couple relationship standards and impact on the standards of migrants forming intercultural relationships. We compared relationship standards in n = 286 Chinese living in Hong Kong, China, with standards in n = 401 Chinese migrants to a Western country (Australia) by administering the Chinese-Western Intercultural Couple Standards Scale (CWICSS). We also compared these two groups to n = 312 Westerners living in Australia. We first tested the structural invariance of the CWICSS across the three samples with a multigroup confirmatory factor analysis. There was marginal but acceptable fit of a model of two positively correlated latent factors: Couple Bond (with four indicators, such as demonstration of love and caring) and Family Responsibility (also with four indicators, such as extended family relations and preserving face). Within the limitations of the study, results suggest migration is associated predominantly with differences in women's, but not men's, relationship standards. Migrant Chinese women show alignment of Couple Bond standards with Western standards, and divergence of Family Responsibility standards from Western standards. Discussion focused on how migration and intercultural relationship experiences might differentially influence various domains of relationship standards, gender differences in migration effects on standards, and the implications for working with culturally diverse couples.

Keywords: Couple Relationship; Western; Chinese; Relationship Standard; Migration; Acculturation

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Epstein and Baucom (2002, p. 72) defined couple relationship standards as: "... personal beliefs about the characteristics an intimate relationship ... should have." Relationship standards show important variations by culture (Hiew, Halford, van den Vijven

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& Liu, 2015a, b) and are associated with relationship satisfaction (Hiew et al., 2015b). There are high rates of migration to Western countries by people from Eastern cultures, and high rates of intercultural marriage (International Organization for Migration, 2015). Against this backdrop, it is important to understand how relationship standards are associated with migration. Intercultural couples could experience differences in relationship standards (e.g., about overtly expressing love, or time spent with extended family), and this could be challenging for the couple's relationship. The current paper compared relationship standards between Hong Kong Chinese and Chinese migrants living in Australia. We also compared these two groups of Chinese with Australians of European Ancestry (Westerners) to test whether Chinese migrating to a Western country are more similar to Westerners than Chinese living in China, and if so, whether that similarity can be found across various domains of relationships standards.

Migration and Intercultural Couple Relationships

Rates of international migration increased markedly in the first two decades of the 21st Century relative to the 20th Century (International Organization for Migration, 2015). Globally there are about 250 million international migrants (about 3.2% of the world's population), with about half of these migrants living in 10 highly urbanized, high-income countries including the United States, Canada, Spain, United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Australia (the last being one of the two countries in which the current study was conducted; International Organization for Migration, 2015). Many of the migrants to these Western countries come from Eastern cultures such as China (3.8 million migrants annually), and India (3.4 million; International Organization for Migration, 2015), which are very different from Western culture. Intercultural couple relationships have increased in line with migration. For example, the number of interracial marriages in the United States increased tenfold between 1960 and 2002 (Zhang & Kline, 2009). The proportion of marriages identified as intercultural is around 30% in Australia and Hawaii, and over 10% in France, Germany, Canada, and some areas of mainland USA (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2012; Lanzieri, 2012; Lee & Edmonston, 2005; Statistics Canada, 2012).

Western and Chinese Cultures and Relationship Standards

We have focused on exploring differences in relationship standards between Chinese and Western people for a number of reasons. First, the vast majority of research on couple relationship standards has been with Western samples, but the generalizability of many findings to couples from other cultures is unclear (Hiew et al., 2015a). Second, people of Chinese ancestry account for one quarter of the world's population (Hoosain, 2008) and constitute the majority of Asians living in Western countries such as the United States and Australia (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2012; Shibusawa, 2008). Third, Chinese and Western cultures differ on major cultural values, such as individualism-collectivism and egalitarian-hierarchical social relations (Sagiv & Schwartz, 2007), and hence might have potentially important differences in relationship standards. Moreover, many countries in Asia (e.g., Japan, Korea, Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam) share the collectivistic and hierarchical cultural characteristics of China (World Values Survey, 2016), and hence findings on Chinese relationship standards might have relevance to couple relationships in other Asian cultures. Finally, in many countries, Chinese have high rates of intercultural marriage (Zhang & Kline, 2009).

Consideration of Chinese cultural values needs to take account of the enormous social changes that have occurred in China. For example, the New Marriage Law of 1950 eradicated traditional arranged marriages and began a new era of choice. Since then, there has been an extraordinary economic surge in prosperity, and increasing

exposure of the Chinese population to Western culture (Higgins, Zheng, Liu, & Hui Sun, 2002). Also, many Chinese people who migrate to Western countries like Australia live for extended periods (sometimes generations) in Chinese communities outside mainland China (e.g., Taiwan, Vietnam, and Malaysia); these communities have their own cultural dynamics. In summary, there is cultural diversity within China and there is further variability among those in the Chinese diaspora. Nonetheless, there seem to be some enduring influences of traditional Chinese culture on relationship standards of those with Chinese ancestry.

The Chinese-Western Intercultural Couples Standards Scale (CWICSS) was developed to assess couple relationship standards that seemed likely to differ between Western and Chinese cultures, and that were hypothesized to potentially present challenges for Chinese-Western intercultural couples (Hiew et al., 2015a). The original scale development was done with Westerners and Chinese living in a Western country (Australia) as most Chinese-Western intercultural couples live in Western countries. The CWICSS has eight scales assessing how important particular behaviors are for a good couple relationship. Four scales reflect relationship standards that are often suggested to be central to Western relationships but less strongly endorsed by Chinese: demonstration of love, demonstration of caring, intimacy expression, and intimacy responsiveness. The focus on these constructs reflected the commonly expressed opinion in the cross-cultural literature that overt expression of romantic love and self-disclosure of emotion as the basis of marriage is a Western idea that does not fit with Asian traditions (e.g., Shi & Wang, 2009; Wong & Goodwin, 2009).

The other four scales in the CWICSS assess standards that reflect traditional Chinese values, which Westerners are suggested in the cross-cultural literature to endorse less strongly than Chinese: the importance of relations with extended family, face or mian zi, relational harmony, and gender roles. In traditional Chinese culture, fulfilling one's social role, maintaining harmony and good relationships—particularly within the family—is of paramount importance (Li & Chen, 2002; Shi & Wang, 2009). Chinese couples are expected to be part of the extended family and separation of the couple from the family is much less demarcated than in Western culture (Shi & Wang, 2009). Family responsibilities include protecting one's own and others' face (social image; Cardon & Scott, 2003; Kam & Bond, 2008).

The CWICSS has a replicable two-level factor structure in people of Chinese and Western (European) ancestry resident in Australia (Hiew et al., 2015a). Across samples, all four Western derived standards are internally consistent and load onto a higher order factor of Couple Bond. The four Chinese derived standards are internally consistent and load onto a higher order factor of Family Responsibility. The individual scale scores and/or the superordinate scales can be used to test different hypotheses about cultural differences in relationship standards. As expected, Chinese endorsed Family Responsibility standards more, and Couple Bond standards less, than Westerners (Hiew et al., 2015b). Across cultural combinations of partners, high endorsement of Couple Bond standards, and high agreement between partners on Family Responsibility standards, predicted high relationship satisfaction (Hiew et al., 2015b).

In Hiew and colleagues' (2015a, 2015b) studies, both Chinese and Westerners endorsed Couple Bond standards more strongly than Family Responsibility standards. That might reflect wider endorsement of Couple Bond standards than Family Responsibility standards across Western and Chinese cultures. Alternatively, the rapidly expanding Chinese-born population in Australia (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2015) most likely includes many Chinese who identify with aspects of Western culture and self-select to come to Australia. Moreover, once Chinese arrive in Australia, the majority Western culture might influence their relationship standards. However, without a comparison to

Chinese living in China, it is not possible to evaluate Chinese migrants' relationship standards relative to their culture of origin.

Relationship Standards and Migration

There is a well-replicated finding that migrants to Western countries endorse many of the values of the majority culture more strongly than people remaining in their culture of origin (e.g., Feldman, Mont-Reynaud, & Rosenthal, 1992; Tharp, Meadow, Lennhoff, & Satterfield, 1968), although the effects of migration on couple relationship standards have not been assessed. The greater endorsement of Western values by migrants might reflect selection effects, as those who hold Western values might be more likely to migrate to Western countries. In addition to any selection effect, Western values might reflect acculturative adjustment, which refers to a process of adopting the majority values by the migrant. There is greater Westernization in values in second and subsequent generations of migrants relative to first-generation migrants (Feldman et al., 1992), which might reflect acculturative adjustment or cohort effects (i.e., social changes between generations).

There are variations across cultural domains in the extent to which migrants endorse Western values. Feldman et al. (1992) found some Westernization of all values of Chinese Americans relative to Hong Kong Chinese, but substantial differences across value domains. The largest similarity to Western values in Chinese migrants (relative to Hong Kong Chinese) was found for tradition (e.g., perceived importance of rites and rituals). The largest dissimilarity from Western values was for the importance of extended family living as a residential unit. Their study suggests that value differences between migrants and nonmigrants living in their culture of origin are domain-specific, and that certain core values persist even in second-generation migrants.

Individual differences in alignment of migrants with the majority culture across value domains might be a function of domain-specific processes of socialization. In studies of Turkish and Moroccan migrant families in Germany and the Netherlands, parents were found to transmit collectivistic values to adolescents, but not individualistic values (Phalet & Schönplflug, 2001). It is quite likely that individualistic values were transmitted by socialization agents from mainstream groups, such as peers and teachers. So, different transmission mechanisms could lead to differences in the extent of Westernization of different cultural value domains (Güngör, Fleischmann, & Phalet, 2011).

There is a tacit assumption in many studies that newly arrived migrants have preferences close to their ancestral culture and then move partially or entirely to the new culture. However, as noted previously, differences between migrants' and nonmigrants' values might be due at least partially to self-selection in the migrant group and be evident at the time of migration. Once people migrate, it has been suggested that sometimes migrants overshoot their adjustment to the new group, presumably to emphasize their link with the mainstream group (Triandis, Kashima, Shimada, & Villareal, 1986). Conversely, when confronted with rejection and discrimination, migrants can retain or even strengthen their cultural identity; for example by retaining or even strengthening their original religious identity in the diaspora (Verkuyten, 2016). To test the assumption of domain-specific Westernization of relationship standards requires comparing migrants with mainstream groups in their countries of origin and settlement across multiple domains of standards, which was done in the present study.

There are likely to be diverse influences on the development of couple relationship standards in migrants beyond the majority culture of origin and destination. Notably, being in a relationship might lead to change in standards. For example, intercultural Chinese-Western couples tend to hold standards midway between the cultures of origin of the two partners (Hiew et al., 2015b). This might reflect selection effects (Chinese and Westerners

who value each other's cultural standards might be more likely to form an intercultural relationship), or accommodation effects, where partners move toward each other's standards. Endorsement of certain relationship standards and agreement between partners on some standards are associated with couples' relationship satisfaction (Hiew et al., 2015b). Single people's standards might influence their selection of relationship partners, and relationship standards are culturally shared values inculcated in both single and partnered individuals. Hence, in the current study we examined relationships standards in both single and partnered people.

We chose Hong Kong as one of the sites to conduct the current research for several reasons. First, Hong Kong retains strong collectivistic values typical of Chinese culture (Hofstede, 2001) despite having been a British Colony for nearly 200 years. Second, significant numbers of Chinese Australians originate from Hong Kong. For the purpose of comparison, we contrast the two groups of Chinese with a sample of Australians of European (Western) heritage. A previous paper has reported on the comparison of the Australian Chinese with the Australian Westerners (Hiew et al., 2015a, 2015b). The current paper focuses on differences between the Hong Kong Chinese and the Australian Chinese, and data were collected from the Hong Kong Chinese sample specifically for the current study. It is important but rather novel to compare migrants with individuals from both their countries of origin and settlement in research on migration (van de Vijver, Berry, & Celenk, 2016), as this enables examination of changes from the standards in the culture of origin and changes toward the majority culture in the migration destination.

Aims of the Current Research

The present study had two aims. The primary aim was to study how couple relationship standards differ between Chinese living in majority Chinese culture (Hong Kong, China) and Chinese migrants to a Western country (Australia). Such knowledge can inform understanding of how cultures of origin and migration are associated with relationship standards in migrant groups in Western countries, and assist family therapists to offer culturally sensitive couple education and therapy. An additional aim was, since the CWICSS had not been used with Chinese people living outside Australia, to assess the structural invariance of the scale with Chinese living in China (i.e., Hong Kong). It is important to test rather than presume that scales have equivalent structures across cultures, for cross-cultural comparisons to be meaningful.

We assumed selection and/or acculturation to have some influence on relationship standards, and predicted that Chinese migrants would endorse Couple Bond standards more strongly than Chinese living in Hong Kong, since cross-cultural differences in this area are small and adjustment of Chinese to Australian Western standards may be easy to achieve (Hypothesis 1). However, we predicted that Family Responsibility standards would be maintained in Chinese migrants, as these standards are central to Chinese cultural identity, cross-cultural differences are larger than for Couple Bond standards, and change toward the Australian Western culture could be more conflictual (i.e., against the beliefs of other family members; Hypothesis 2). We did not have specific hypotheses about the potential association of being in a relationship with standards, but did examine whether the association of migration with standards was moderated by relationship status.

METHOD

Participants

There were three separate samples in the current study. Each was recruited through social media and approaches to community organizations for an online study of beliefs

about what makes a healthy couple relationship. Sample 1 was 286 (99 male, 187 female) residents of Hong Kong, China, who were aged 18 or older, and who reported being of Chinese ancestry. Mean age of participants was 23.8 years ($SD = 6.2$), and 139 participants (49%) had a university degree. Most participants were born in Hong Kong (82%), or Mainland China (13%), with small numbers born in other countries of Eastern Asia (3%), or in Western countries (2%). One hundred and eleven (39%) of the sample reported they were in a couple relationship.

Sample 2 was 401 residents of Australia who reported Chinese ancestry (123 male, 278 female), and were aged 18 or more. Participants' mean age was 25.4 years ($SD = 9.2$ years), and 159 had a university degree (31.6%). Participants were born in 40 different countries, and had resided in Australia for an average of 14.5 years ($SD = 15.5$ years). Two hundred and eighty-one were in a couple relationship (70%). Sample 3 was 312 residents of Australia who reported European ancestry (Westerners; 69 male, 243 women), who were aged 18 or more. Their mean age was 35.5 years ($SD = 13.5$), and 205 had a university degree. Seventy-five percent of the sample was born in Australia. Of Westerners born outside Australia, most were born in Western European countries (14.3%), New Zealand (3%), South Africa (2%), or the United States (1%). Two hundred and twenty-nine (73%) were in a couple relationship.

Measures

The Chinese-Western Intercultural Couple Standards Scale—Hong Kong version (CWICSS-HK) was used in the current study. This measure contained 60 items describing behaviors that were rated for their importance for a successful long-term couple relationship on a 6-point scale (0 = *Not Important* to 5 = *Extremely Important*). The first draft of the CWICSS contained 85 items, which after item selection were reduced to 69 items, and were reported in a paper on the development of the scale (Hiew et al., 2015a, 2015b). The 69-item version has been used in other research (Hiew et al., 2015b). However, interim analyses of the scale items had suggested a slightly different set of items. The interim version of the scale was sent to Hong Kong at the commencement of the current study, which included 60 of the 69 items in the final published version of the scale. We compared the scores in the Australian sample for each of the eight scales and the two superordinate scales of the CWICSS when using the final 69-item version of the scale, with the equivalent scores with the shortened version of 60 items. In the Australian sample, the lowest correlation was $r = .88$ for demonstrations of caring. All other scale correlations were greater than $r = .92$. The 69-item and 60-item versions of the superordinate scales very extremely highly correlated: Couple Bond, $r = .98$; Family Responsibility, $r = .99$. In the current paper, we scored all samples using the 60-item CWICSS-HK version for consistency across samples.

The items reflect eight scales assessing demonstration of love (5 items; e.g., "Express their love for each other in words every day"); demonstration of caring (4 items; e.g., "Regularly do work for each other"); intimacy expression (11 items; e.g., "Tell each other when they are feeling positive emotions"); intimacy responsiveness (6 items; e.g., "Ask each other about their thoughts"); relations with the extended family (12 items; e.g., "Do not disagree with family elders"); face (5 items; e.g., "Do not disagree with each other in public"); relational harmony (5 items; e.g., "Do not speak about things that may lead to conflict"); and gender roles (12 items; e.g., "The man financially supports his partner and children"). The test was translated from English into Chinese (both Simplified and Traditional scripts), and independently back translated to English. The original and back translated versions were compared and the translation adjusted for a small number of items to ensure accuracy of translation. Participants completed the scale in their preferred language.

Procedure and Data Analysis

Participants were not paid for participating in the study. All online answers were screened for uniqueness of IP addresses to prevent duplicate responses.

We first tested the structural invariance of the CWICSS-HK in Chinese residing in Hong Kong, relative to the two-level structure found in Chinese and Westerners living in Australia (Hiew et al., 2015a, 2015b). Exploratory factor analyses (EFA) of each of the eight scales that make up the CWICSS-HK were conducted in the Hong Kong Chinese sample. Then, we conducted a confirmatory factor analysis across the Hong Kong Chinese, Australian Chinese, and Australian Westerners with the two latent factors of Couple Bond and Family Responsibility found in previous samples. To test Hypotheses 1 and 2 about how Hong Kong Chinese might differ in relationship standards from Chinese who migrate to Australia, and to evaluate any moderating effect of relationship status, we conducted two $2 \times 2 \times 2$ ANOVAs of country of residence (Hong Kong versus Australia) by Gender by Relationship status (single or in relationship) separately on Couple Bond and Family Responsibility standards, to test the key hypotheses.

RESULTS

Structural Invariance of the Relationship Standards Scale

The EFA of each of the eight scales that make up the CWICSS-HK are shown in Table 1 for the Hong Kong Chinese, and also for Chinese living in Australia and for Westerners living in Australia for comparison. In the Hong Kong Chinese, each of the eight scales showed a unifactorial factor structure, with the first extracted factor accounting for at least 40% of the variance. Internal congruence coefficients were high, $\alpha = .76$ to $\alpha = .88$, across five of the eight scales, but modest for three scales, $\alpha = .56$ to $\alpha = .69$. For the sake of brevity, we do not present factor loadings for every item, but these are available on the *Family Process* web site. Two items loaded at .35 to .39, 58 items loaded at 0.4 or higher, and of these 50 loaded at 0.5 or above on the designated standard.

A confirmatory factor analysis was conducted of the two-level structural model as presented in Figure 2, with the two latent factors of Couple Bond and Family Responsibility. The structural covariances model was the most restrictive with a marginal but acceptable fit, $\chi^2(72) = 357.78$ $p < .001$, CFI = .927, TLI = .915, RMSEA = .063. The error terms of the intimacy expression and harmony scales were allowed to correlate (the correlation was negative, notably in the Western group, $r = -.50$). Figure 1 presents the higher order factor structure and the standardized estimates of each pathway. All indicators had highly significant, positive loadings on their factor. The two latent factors showed a significant correlation of $r = .39$. In brief, the structure of relationship standards can be represented acceptably by the same two latent factors, describing Couple Bond and Family Responsibility, in the three groups.

Migration and Couple Relationship Standards

Table 2 presents the summary of the ANOVAS of Couple Bond and Family Responsibilities scales, and Figure 2 shows the mean endorsement of standards by Hong Kong and Australian Chinese. As shown in Table 2, on Couple Bond there was a small to medium size effect of country, a small country by gender interaction, and a small three-way interaction of country by gender by relationship status. As shown in Figure 2, Australian Chinese women endorsed Couple Bond standards more strongly than Hong Kong Chinese women, whereas there was no significant difference between Hong Kong and Australian Chinese single or partnered men. The three-way interaction of country by gender by

TABLE 1
Summary of Results of Exploratory Factor Analyses of the Eight Relationship Standard Scale for Hong Kong Chinese, Australian Westerners, and Australian Chinese

Scale	KMO	Factors Eigenvalue >1	Scree factors ^a	Variance % for first factor ^a	Minimum item factor loading	Cronbach's α
Demonstration of love	.75 ; .80, .81	1; 1, 1	1; 1, 1	53.1 ; 49.8, 47.5	.55 ; .58, .51	.78 ; .81, .83
Demonstration of caring	.67 ; 84, .86	1;1, 1	1; 1, 1	43.8 ; 42.0, 44.2	.42 ; .55, .57	.56 ; .82, .80
Intimacy expression	.90 ; 90, .93	2; 2, 2	1; 1, 1	49.1 ; 57.4, 52.9	.50 ; 50, .55	.89 ; 91, .92
Intimacy responsiveness	.78 , 85, .86	2; 1, 1	1; 1, 1	46.6 ; 64.8, 60.6	.51 ; .71, .74	.76 ; .82, .86
Relations with extended family	.89 ; 91, .93	2; 1, 1	2; 1, 1	40.5 ; 41.1, 42.8	.41 ; .47, .50	.85 ; .88, .88
Face/Mian Zi	.67 ; 88, .84	1;1, 1	1; 1, 1	45.8 ; 49.0, 50.3	.34 ; 60, .58	.60 ; 79, .75
Relational harmony	.70 ; 87, .84	1; 1, 1	1; 1, 1	44.7 ; 36.5, 40.1	.46 ; 43, .50	.69 ; 72, .72
Gender roles	.91 ; 93, .94	2; 2, 2	1, 1, 1	43.1 ; 43.5, 49.5	.39 ; .52, .52	.88 ; 90, .88

The first number (bolded) in each row refers to the result for the Chinese Hong Kong resident sample; the second number is for the Chinese ancestry Australian residents, and the third number is for the Western ancestry Australian residents.

^aIn all cases where a second factor was extracted with an eigenvalue >1, the second factor accounted for <12% of the variance.

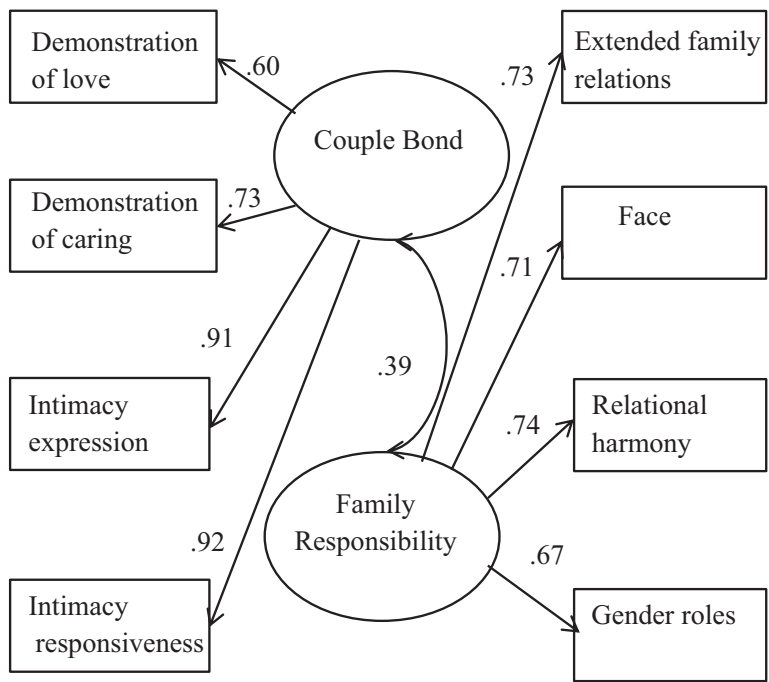


FIGURE 1. Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Chinese-Western Intercultural Couples Scale in Hong Kong Chinese, Australian Chinese, and Australian Westerners.

relationship status indicates that the country difference was salient only for women but not men, and that the effect size for women was smaller for single women than partnered women, $\eta^2 = .029$ and $\eta^2 = .184$, respectively.

On Family Responsibility, Table 2 shows small main effects of country and gender, and a small interaction of country \times gender. As shown in Figure 2, Hong Kong and Chinese men were not different on this standard, whereas Chinese women living in Australia endorsed Family Responsibility more strongly than Hong Kong Chinese women. Relationship status is unrelated to endorsement of this standard for either gender. For the purpose of comparison, the weighted mean of Australian Westerners' endorsement of Couple Bond and Family Responsibility is also presented in Figure 2. Caution should be taken in comparing the Westerners with the Chinese group, as the former were on average about 10 years older than the Chinese groups. The stronger endorsement by Australian Chinese than Hong Kong Chinese women of Couple Bond moves the Australian Chinese closer to Australian Westerners, whereas the stronger endorsement of Family Responsibility by Australian Chinese women moves them further away from Australian Westerners.

In summary, migration was associated with differences in standards primarily for Chinese women. Chinese men living in Hong Kong and Australia have more similarities than differences in their relationship standards. The associations of migration with Chinese women's relationship standards were of small effect size. Figure 2 shows that Couple Bond standards were endorsed more strongly than Family Responsibility standards across genders, relationship status, and countries of residence. Using standards as a within-subject factor in a MANOVA of Couple Bond and Family Responsibility showed a large effect size, pointing to greater endorsement by Chinese of Couple Bond ($M = 3.58$, $SD = 0.66$) than Family Responsibility standards ($M = 2.60$, $SD = 0.73$), $F(1, 676) = 944.748$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .583$. It is also evident that the difference between both groups of Chinese and Westerners is larger for Family Responsibility than for Couple Bond.

TABLE 2
ANOVAs of Relationship Standards in Chinese Residents in Australia and Hong Kong by Relationships Status and Gender

Relationship standard	Statistic	Country		Gender		Country × Gender		Relationship		Country × Relationship		Gender × Relationship		Country × Gender × Relationship	
Couple bond	<i>F</i>	27.620*	0.144	7.720*	0.852	2.630	0.904	5.703*							
	<i>p</i> value	<.001	.704	.006	.356	.105	.342	.017							
Family responsibility	Effect size η^2	.039	.000	.011	.001	.004	.001	.008							
	<i>F</i>	19.378*	12.360*	6.677*	0.152	2.192	0.079	0.069							
	<i>p</i> value	<.001	<.001	.010	.697	.139	.779	.792							
	Effect size η^2	.028	.018	.010	.000	.003	.000	.000							

**p* < .05, *df* = 1, 676 for all ANOVAs.

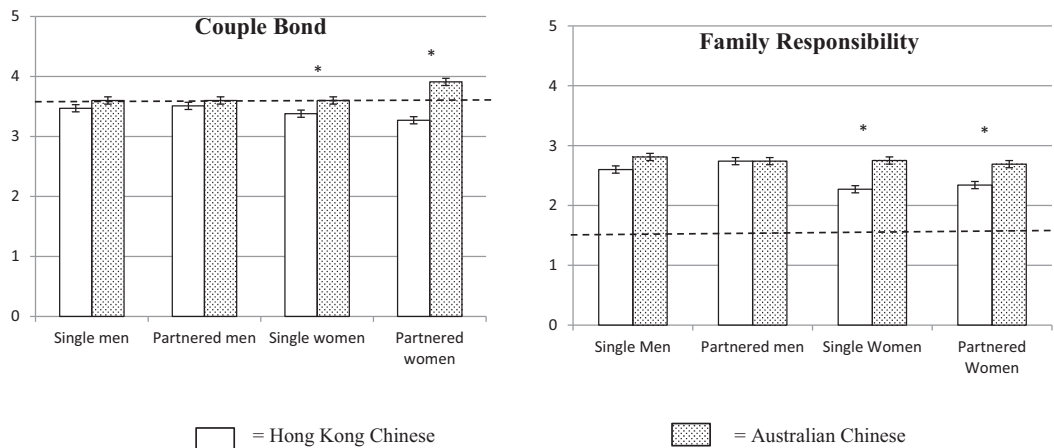


FIGURE 2. Mean Endorsement (and 95% Confidence Intervals) of Couple Bond and Family Responsibility Relationship Standards by Single and Partnered Chinese Men and Women, HK C = Hong Kong Chinese, Aus C = Australian Chinese; Dotted Line = Weighted Mean of Australian Western Single and Partnered Men and Women. * $p < .05$ that Hong Kong and Australian Chinese are the Same Mean on This Standard for the Specified Gender and Relationship Status.

The two Chinese samples in the current study were convenience samples, which could introduce biases in sampling. The Hong Kong Chinese ($M = 22.8$, $SD = 6.2$) were younger than the Australian Chinese ($M = 25.4$, $SD = 9.2$), $z = 3.337$, $p < .001$, $d = .23$ (small effect size). Age was not correlated with Couple Bond, $r = -.041$, $p = .287$, but showed a small but reliable negative correlation with Family Responsibility, $r = -.097$, $p = .011$. Two-way ANCOVAs of Group (Hong Kong Chinese, Australian Chinese) by Gender by Relationship Status with Age as a covariate on Couple Bond and then Family Responsibility showed no change in the pattern of significant effects after controlling for age. For the sake of brevity, we do not present the detailed results of these supplementary analyses, but we argue that the small effect size difference between the samples in age is unlikely to account for the observed differences in standards.

DISCUSSION

We compared relationship standards in Hong Kong Chinese and Australian Chinese to assess how Chinese who migrated to a Western country might differ from Chinese living in China. We also compared both groups of Chinese with Westerners living in Australia, as a referent for the majority culture into which the Australian Chinese had migrated. We first tested and established the construct invariance of the scale for use in a Hong Kong Chinese sample, and found marginal but acceptable evidence of invariance. Across cultural groups there were two positively correlated latent factors: Couple Bond and Family Responsibility, which each had four indicators. There was partial support for Hypothesis 1. As predicted, Couple Bond standards were less strongly endorsed by Chinese women in Hong Kong than Chinese women residing in Australia. The difference in female Chinese Hong Kong residents and Chinese migrants to Australia was larger in partnered women than single women. Contrary to Hypothesis 1, the Hong Kong Chinese men and Australian Chinese men did not differ on Couple Bond standards. Hypothesis 2 was supported. Family Responsibility was endorsed at least as strongly (and more strongly by women) by Australian Chinese as it was by Hong Kong Chinese.

Cross-Cultural Measurement of Relationship Standards

The current research found acceptable fit of the two-level factor structure of the CWICSS in Chinese people living in Hong Kong, which previously was found to have acceptable fit in Australian Chinese and Australian Westerners (Hiew et al. 2015a). The criteria that designate acceptable fit of a confirmatory factor analysis model are contentious. For example, Schreiber, Nora, Stage, Barlow, and King (2006) reviewed conventions and reporting of Confirmatory Factor Analyses and Structural Equation Modeling and suggested that $CFI \geq .95$, $NFI \geq .95$, and RMSEA of $<.06$, or possibly $<.08$ would constitute acceptable fit. However, in a widely cited article, Marsh, Hau, and Wem (2004) noted that any criteria are somewhat arbitrary, and showed in simulation studies that true models are often misclassified as poor fit using conventions as stringent as those proposed by Schreiber et al. (2006). Marsh and colleagues suggest $CFI \geq .90$, $NFI \geq .90$, and RMSEA of $<.08$ can indicate adequate fit if the model fits with a priori hypotheses drawn from theory. Against this backdrop of incomplete convergence of fit criteria, we suggest that in the current study there is adequate fit to suggest that the superordinate factors of Couple Bond and Family Responsibility can be meaningfully compared across Hong Kong and Australian Chinese.

Migration and Relationship Standards

The domain and gender specificity in differences between Chinese migrants to Australia and Chinese living in China observed in the current study are potentially important. These findings replicate prior research that migrants selectively maintain those values from their culture of origin that relate to collectivistic and family responsibilities (Feldman et al., 1992; Phalet & Schönpflug, 2001). The current findings extend that prior research by showing Chinese migrants adhere to these Family Responsibility standards as they relate to couple relationships, and that women migrants in particular show strong commitment to Family Responsibilities in the diaspora. In essence, Chinese female migrants become more Chinese than the Chinese on Family Responsibility standards.

The high endorsement of Family Responsibility by female Chinese migrants seems unlikely to be attributable to selection effects, as it is doubtful that Chinese women who strongly endorse Family Responsibilities would migrate away from their families of origin. Perhaps Family Responsibility standards strengthen while living in Australia because having limited opportunity to fulfill family responsibilities strengthens their perceived importance. The effect might be specific to women because of traditional gender roles that assign more caring responsibilities to women across Chinese and Western cultures (Xiao et al., 2014). It may also be that Chinese female migrants gain increased appreciation of their culture's traditional family values after observing negative effects of lower fulfillment of family responsibilities in their Western destination culture. The stronger endorsement of family responsibilities by Australian Chinese women might also reflect bicultural identification (adopting some valued aspects of the mainstream culture while preserving or even strengthening identification with some valued aspects of the heritage culture). Family responsibilities occupy a central position in Chinese philosophical teachings and literature, which might make Family Responsibility standards particularly salient for asserting cultural identity, and developing a bicultural identity is associated with positive adjustment to migration in Chinese migrants (Lieber, Chin, Nihira, & Mink, 2001).

Contrary to speculation that Chinese do not endorse overt expression of love and caring as important, Couple Bond was strongly and similarly endorsed by Hong Kong Chinese, Australian Chinese, and Australian Westerners. There is considerable evidence that romantic attachment evolved in humans as a means to promote shared caregiving of offspring (Fletcher, Simpson, Campbell, & Overall, 2015), suggesting that strong endorsement

of Couple Bond standards might be pervasive across cultures. That universality might make it easy for Chinese migrants to reduce further the relatively modest cultural differences in Couple Bond, although that does not explain why the strengthening effect was only evident for women.

Numerous factors might account for the greater similarity between Australian Chinese and Western women's Couple Bond standards than Australian Chinese and Hong Kong Chinese women's Couple Bond standards. One possible reason is self-selection. Many migrants from China are well-educated professionals (Cooke, Zhang, & Wang, 2013) and highly educated people tend to endorse Western, individualistic values (Hofstede, 2001). So, it is likely that Chinese who migrate to Australia value at least some aspects of Western culture, including these Couple Bond standards. Minority groups like Chinese living in Australia often acculturate in a variety of ways to the majority culture (Berry, 2004; Liu, 2011), which might influence these relationship standards. However, neither of these mechanisms explains the larger migration effect on standards for women than men.

The gender difference in the association of migration with relationship standards might reflect the larger proportion of Chinese female migrants to Australia who form relationships with Western men, compared to the proportion of Chinese men partnering with Western women (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2012). In intercultural couples, the partners often accommodate (become more similar) to each other's relationship standards (Hiew et al., 2015b; Flores, Tschann, Marin, & Pantoja, 2004). Also, the endorsement of both Couple Bond and Family Responsibility standards by Chinese women migrants could be regarded as a shift toward greater demonstration of caring in culturally distinctive ways (e.g., demonstration of love and preserving face). As noted previously, gender roles often assign primary caregiving responsibilities to women.

Limitations of the Study

There are several noteworthy limitations of the current research. First, the marginal fit of the structural invariance model for the higher order structure of the measure requires some caution in interpreting results. Relatedly, while the same 60 items were used to score standards for all participants, the Australian Chinese and Westerners completed 69 items and the Hong Kong Chinese 60 items. It seems unlikely that viewing the extra 9 items would drastically alter participants' responses, but use of the 69-item version of the scale in a replication is desirable. In addition, we used online recruitment, which enabled recruitment of large samples in different countries, and presentation of questionnaires in multiple formats (English and Chinese with simplified or traditional characters). However, it is possible both partners in a relationship might have participated, which could violate the assumption of independence of participants' responses. In online recruitment, it is almost impossible to detect or prevent this, but it seems unlikely to be a common occurrence.

Second, our samples differed on some demographic characteristics. We demonstrated that differences in relationship status and age did not account for the observed differences in relationship standards between Hong Kong Chinese and Australian Chinese. However, other differences between the Chinese samples might be confounded with place of residence. Furthermore, our sample of Australian Westerners was on average approximately 10 years older than the two Chinese samples. In a previous paper on that sample, we showed relationship standards were not correlated with age or relationship status in the Australian Western sample (Hiew et al., 2015a, 2015b). Together with our current findings of no main effect of relationship status on standards, this suggests that relationship standards might be relatively similar across the age ranges in our samples, and across relationship status, which likely reflects the development of standards by observation and internalization of cultural normative behaviors. At the same time, we did find a few

differences between partnered and single women Chinese migrants, which we discussed previously.

Third, our samples were predominantly young and highly educated and the generalizability to less well-educated samples is not clear. However, Chinese migrants to Western countries like Australia tend to be highly educated (International Organization for Migration, 2015). The Chinese residing in Australia had lived in Australia for a mean of 15 years, and were on average 25 years of age, showing many had come to Australia when children. That underscores how even Chinese who have spent the majority of their lives in Australia retain some important Chinese cultural values.

Fourth, our study was cross-sectional. We could not differentiate possible selection effects (e.g., Chinese people holding certain standards being more likely to migrate) versus acculturation processes and accommodation to Western partners. Longitudinal research following new migrants would be useful to disentangle these related processes.

A final limitation is that we researched standards in two distinctive contexts. Hong Kong has a long history of Western influence. It seems quite likely that the cultural differences we observed between Australian Chinese and Hong Kong Chinese would be smaller than the differences between Australian Chinese and Chinese living in parts of China with less exposure to Westerners. In addition, Australia is distinctive, with 28% of the population born in another country. More than 160 countries of origin are represented in the Australian population, and the most widely spoken languages (in descending order: English, Mandarin, Italian, Greek, and Hindi) are drawn from diverse cultural traditions (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2015). Australia can be described as culturally hyperdiverse, and greater acceptance of cultural minorities has been found in hyperdiverse countries compared to countries with low migration rates and a large majority drawn from a single culture (van de Vijver, Blommaert, Gkoumasi, & Stogianni, 2015). Hence, generalizability of the current findings to Chinese migrants in other Western countries needs to be tested rather than presumed.

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The current research focused on Chinese migrants. As noted in the introduction, some attributes of Chinese culture (e.g., such as collectivism and hierarchical social structure) are shared with other Eastern cultures (World Values Survey, 2016). Couple Bond and Family Responsibility relationship standards are likely to be salient in these cultures and future research should extend assessment of standards to other cultures.

The current findings have implications for couple therapy. First, therapists need to take account of relationship standards that often are not given attention in couple therapy with Western couples, such as Family Responsibility standards. Furthermore, therapists need to be aware that migrants are likely to selectively maintain relationship standards from their culture of origin, while endorsing some standards of the majority culture. As one example of paying attention to standards, a review of each partner's relationship standards, including Family Responsibility standards, is part of the Couple CARE program (Halford, 2017), which has been used as relationship education for satisfied couples, as well as brief intervention with couples with relationship distress (Halford et al., 2015). Second, when working with intercultural couples, particular attention needs to be paid to similarity and difference in partners' relationships standards; the potential association of differences with cultures of origin, and how these might be influenced by migration; and helping the couple develop shared standards that draw upon the strengths of each cultural tradition.

The CWICSS has a replicable structure across cultural groups, which makes it potentially useful for examining cultural differences in couple relationship standards. Standards vary by culture of ancestry and migration, and the extent of similarity between migrants'

relationship standards and those of their culture of origin is domain-specific; migrants are quite similar to the majority culture in their country of residence in some domains (e.g., Couple Bond), while retaining or strengthening identification with the culture of ancestry in other domains (e.g., Family Responsibility). Future research examining longitudinal changes in acculturation across domains could clarify moderators and mediators of the acculturation process. In highly multicultural Western countries like the United States and Australia, a better understanding of relationship standards among migrants can inform support for culturally diverse couple relationships.

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