

5.0. FROM CONFLICT TO COMPROMISE:

IMMIGRANT FAMILIES AND THE PROCESSES OF ACCULTURATION.

Michaela Hynie

McGill University

There is a tendency for psychological researchers to examine the issue of acculturation in broadly based terms. Where these broad forces are typically acted out, however, is in the family. Not only are families the central social unit for most immigrants, but family dynamics demonstrate the interplay of individual, interpersonal and intergroup influences. This chapter will describe some of the potential sources of family conflict inherent in the immigration process and how immigrant families cope with these issues. The manner in which families negotiate the two cultures, especially when some members of the family acculturate more quickly than others, reveals a microcosm of both the conflicts and the processes of adaptation that define the immigrant experience.

5.1. Individualistic Versus Collectivist Cultures

Cross-cultural research has determined that one dimension on which cultures vary is the extent to which they endorse an individualistic or a collectivist value system (Bond, 1988; Hofstede, 1980). Cultures which differ on the collectivism/individualism dimension vary on a number of important attributes (Schwartz, 1992; Triandis, Bontempo, Villareal, Asai, & Lucca, 1988; Triandis, McCusker & Hui, 1990). In particular, they differ with respect to the importance of the rights of individual and those of the collective.

Individualistic cultures are those which prioritize the individual and value independence, privacy, and personal fulfillment (Triandis et al., 1990). The United States, Canada and Australia are the countries with most individualistic orientations (Hofstede, 1980).

Individualistic cultures are also associated with greater industrialization and wealth. Thus, individualistic cultures are more likely to be characterized by high levels of immigration (Triandis et al., 1990).

Collectivist cultures tend to stress group harmony, obedience, and strictly hierarchical relationships. Individual desires are subordinated to the well-being of the collective and individual differences from the ingroup are repressed (Triandis et al., 1988). Collectivist

cultures are associated with less wealth and thus with higher rates of emigration. As a result, most immigrant families are more collectivist than the societies to which they are immigrating.

One might anticipate that family migration from a traditional collectivist culture to a highly individualistic culture, could be extremely disruptive to family relationships. Within the collectivist family, the father is unquestionably the head of the household, sex roles are clearly defined, and men typically have greater power and status than women (Triandis et al., 1988). In contrast, individualistic cultures, like Canada and the United States, espouse egalitarian marital relationships and have relatively flexible sex roles. Immigration to an individualistic culture and exposure to the culture's egalitarian values could destabilize the immigrant family by undermining male authority within conjugal relationships.

Similarly, as immigrant children are immersed in the individualistic culture at school and among their peers, they may take on the new culture's values more rapidly than do their parents. The potential for intergenerational conflict would be enormous. In collectivist cultures, childrearing emphasizes reliability, proper behavior, and obedience to authority, most notably to one's parents. Furthermore, parent-child relationships are expected to take a precedence over peer and sibling relationships. Individualistic cultures, however, de-emphasize vertical relationships (e.g., parent-child) and encourage independence and self-reliance in their childrearing. Thus, children who absorb the new culture's individualistic values may find themselves in direct conflict with their parents' values and expectations.

The potential for family disruption in immigration is clear, but is it necessary? In this chapter, I will argue that family disruption in migration is minimized because most immigrant families have access to psychological mechanisms for coping with acculturation that ease them through the transition to the new culture and maintain family harmony. Thus, the concern for policy makers is to identify what factors interfere with these mechanisms, how these disruptive factors can be prevented or overcome, and how to proceed if these adaptive mechanisms break down.

5.2. Acculturation and Interspousal Relationships

In most cultures, but especially those with strong collectivist values, women's roles revolve primarily around the domestic sphere (Bottomley, 1976; Brouwer & Priester, 1983; Chimbos, 1980; Dasgupta, 1992; Gilad, 1984; Haddad & Lam, 1994; Kibria, 1990; Lipson & Miller, 1994; Meintel, Labelle, Turcotte & Kempineers, 1984; Pessar, 1984; 1986; Richmond, 1976; Stone, 1983; Xenocostas, 1991). In rural societies, domestic labour can be broadly defined to include care of livestock and gardens and sometimes includes domestic production of goods or services which can contribute to the family income (Brouwer & Priester, 1983; Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1992; Kibria, 1990; Meintel et al., 1984). Nonetheless, women are perceived as economically dependent on the men in the family, and are expected to be solely responsible for household chores and childcare. The men in the family are responsible for their family's economic upkeep (Bottomley, 1976; Gilad, 1984; Haddad & Lam, 1994; Kibria, 1990; Lipson & Mijller, 1994; Pessar, 1986; Stier, 1991). Men typically engage in marketing and labour outside of the home and handle the family's finances. Perhaps because of their role as the economic head of the family, in most collectivist cultures the senior male (usually the father) holds the final word on family decisions and other family members are expected to obey him (Chimbos, 1980; Gilad, 1984; Kibria, 1990; Meintel et al., 1984; Sinha, 1982).

Immigration holds a potential threat to the hierarchical power relationship that exists between spouses from collectivist societies. Power relationship between spouses are typically measured in two ways: with the division of household tasks, and patterns of decision-making (Haddad & Lam, 1994; Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1992; Richmond, 1976; Vazques-Nuttall, Romero-Garcia & de Leon, 1988; Ybarra, 1982). Both of these variables can be profoundly influenced by immigration. Two aspects of immigration that are particularly likely to these variables are spousal separation during the process of migration, and spousal employment patterns following migration.

5.2.1. Family Separation

The process of immigration for some families involves a family separation. Although some women do immigrate first (Pessar, 1986), it is more common to observe the man immigrating alone and establishing himself before sending for his family (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1992; Lamphere, 1986). In her husband's absence, the wife not only has to take

care of the home and children but she may have to deal with family finances and business with the outside world (Brouwer & Priester, 1983; Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1992). Having realized their ability to make family decisions on their own, wives may be unwilling to allow their spouses to make family decisions without consulting them, making them less willing to yield to their husbands upon reunion. Thus, one would predict that the very process of immigration would unsettle the pattern of domestic relations between a married couple.

Surprisingly, the influence of family separation on the division of domestic labour appears to be minimal, even after one or two year separations (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1992). Despite the fact that both spouses have been obliged to take on some other-gender typed responsibilities, many of these families revert to traditional household roles upon reunion. However, Hondagneu-Sotelo (1992) found that prolonged separation, lasting more than two or three years, can induce husbands to acquire domestic skills and that men can come to enjoy their proficiency at domestic chores such as cooking or laundry. These husbands show a tendency to continue to do some domestic chores once the spouses are reunited. Prolonged separation may therefore influence not only decision-making patterns between couples, but also the distribution of household labour.

Lone male immigrants who arrive into well established immigrant communities, however, or join other relatives who are already established in the new country, are often supplied with domestic services (Lamphere, 1986). Thus, a man arriving without his spouse and children may be offered laundry services and home cooked meals by other women in the community, thereby sparing the man from having to acquire these domestic skills himself. In these cases, a long separation would do little to influence the husbands domestic skills.

5.2.2. Women's Employment

Perhaps the greatest external threat to paternal dominance in the family is immigrant families' economic situation. Immigrants often find themselves in jobs with low income and low status (Amaro & Russo, 1987; Hicks, Lalonde & Pepler, 1993; Stier, 1991; Stone, 1983). To the extent that the father's role in the family is to be a provider, men's relegation to low status, low paying jobs may be perceived as a failure to fulfill their

familial obligation (Gilad, 1984; Kibria, 1990; Meintel, 1984). The importance of the husband's income and status is reflected in studies that show that husbands have the most control over decision-making when they have a good income and a high status job (Pessar, 1986; Richmond, 1976). In these situations, the husband is also found to contribute the least in terms of domestic labour. An immigrant man's authority within his family is therefore often undermined by economic hardships in the new country. This challenge to the husband's authority is exacerbated if the couple agrees that the wife should find external employment to help support the family. With her increased economic contribution, the woman now has greater independence from her spouse and a greater say in family decisions. Employed wives' ability to contribute economically to the family's upkeep often bring women feelings of accomplishment and pride which they find greatly empowering (Amaro & Russo, 1987; Gilad, 1984; Hondaagnew-Sotelo, 1992; Meintel et al, 1984; Stone, 1983; Naidoo & Davis, 1988). However, employment outside of the home and feelings of empowerment do not guarantee women a greater say in decision-making. The extent to which women gain increased decision-making power and increased assistance in household chores seems largely determined by their income, relative to their spouse's. One is most likely to observe a complete sharing of both chores and decision-making in situations where the wife earns more than her spouse (Haddad & Lam, 1994; Richmond, 1976). In other economic arrangements, men continue to dominate decision-making and contribute little or nothing to domestic chores. When both women and men are employed outside of the home, husbands do generally tend to contribute somewhat to domestic chores, but husbands' contributions are primarily in the realm of childcare and are typically necessitated by parents' work schedules (Meintel et al., 1984; Pessar, 1986; Ybarra, 1982). When there are no longer young children in the house, or when a daughter reaches an age when she can take over the domestic duties, the men's contributions tend to diminish (Haddad & Lam, 1994; Meintel et al, 1984; Pessar, 1986). Moreover, husbands' contributions to domestic chores rarely match wives' contributions, even when both spouses are engaged in full time work outside of the home (Meintel et al, 1984; Pessar, 1986; Richmond, 1976). Remarkably, this disparity in the division of labour is justified by how the couples' conceptualize their roles. Even when both spouses are employed full time, husbands'

contributions to household work are perceived as "helping" the wife, underscoring the notion that domestic chores are her responsibility. Furthermore, even when both spouses earn full time wages, the women's income is typically seen as an additional salary, whereas the man's salary is seen as central (Meintel, et al., 1984; Stone, 1983). It is this characterization of women's outside employment and men's domestic labour that allows couples to continue to uphold traditional values regarding sex roles in the face of greater egalitarianism in their actual behavior.

Husband's dominance in family decision-making is reinforced by the way in which the spouses' incomes are allocated. Wives' salaries tend to be allocated to buying food and children's clothing, whereas husbands' salaries are used for major expenditures such as cars and vacations (Meintel et al, 1984; Pessar, 1986). In this way, the wife's income is tied up in domestic purchases, underscoring her domestic role. Because the husband's income is the one used for major purchases, he continues to have a greater say in important family decisions. When wives are given decision-making power, it tends to be limited to the domestic arena, an area that is of little importance or interest to men (Dasgupta, 1992).

Thus, despite some changes in patterns of decision-making and the sharing of domestic labour, immigration does not appear to pose a serious challenge to traditional sex roles. Furthermore, segregated roles appear to be valued by immigrant women, who would stand to gain the most from a more egalitarian norm, as well as immigrant men. In fact, the majority of immigrant wives who are employed outside of the home still continue to endorse a gendered division of labour (Kibria, 1990; Naidoo, 1980; Naidoo & Davis, 1988; Pessar, 1986; Ybarra, 1982). Many women report that they would rather fulfill their duty to stay at home with their children than work, and that they would stop working if their family did not need the income (Meintel, 1984). Moreover, immigrant women are sensitive to the fact that their employment can be perceived as a threat by their spouses, and they report being concerned with protecting their spouses' egos (Gilad, 1984; Pessar, 1986). To this end, some studies have reported that employed immigrant women explicitly try to make their husbands feel that they are the head of the family so as to protect the man's honour and maintain family harmony (Gilad, 1984).

Given that the majority of immigrant wives who are employed full time outside of the home continue to do the bulk of the housework, and that the jobs available to immigrant women tend to be low status and low paying (Amaro & Russo, 1987; Passar, 1984; Lipson & Miller, 1994; Stone, 1983), immigrant women's preference for their traditional roles is understandable. However, it appears that the difficulty immigrant women encounter in their daily lives as a result of the double burden of housework and wage labour is not the sole reason for their continued preference for traditional values. Why do immigrant women retain their traditional beliefs about gender roles rather than change their expectations to match their new roles and responsibilities as wage earners?

One explanation for immigrant couples' continued endorsement traditional gender roles is that there is little acculturation pressure to change these beliefs. North American cultures are by no means fully egalitarian with respect to gender roles. North American women's increasing involvement in the work force and men's and women's endorsement of the principal of equality between spouses has not guaranteed Canadian or American women equality in the division of household labour (Luxton, 1986; McDonald, 1980; Ybarra, 1982). Immigrant women are therefore not alone in continuing to shoulder the bulk of the domestic work when they are employed outside of the home. Thus, immigrant women's acceptance of this double burden does not conflict with the norms of mainstream North American culture.

However, the extent to which immigrant women claim to prefer traditional roles in the face of contradictory behaviors may also be the result of their collectivist values. Maintaining family harmony is likely to be a greater priority for immigrant families than achieving egalitarian status for individual family members because collectivist cultures place a great emphasis on family harmony and tradition, and membership in their family is central to the members' identities (Triandis et al, 1988). Moreover, spousal support and co-operation may be particularly important after immigration, when couples may find themselves relying more exclusively on one another than they would have in their homeland (Cerroni-Long, 1984; Dasgupta, 1992; Noda, Noda & Clark, 1990). Thus, immigrant women from collectivist cultures may place a greater emphasis on avoiding spousal conflict than on achieving egalitarian status.

This is not to say that there is no conflict between spouses in immigrant families. Rather, the literature suggests that immigrant couples do experience conflict regarding control of wife's earnings, labour division, and decision-making (Meintel et al., 1984; Pessar, 1986; Stone, 1983). However, the level of conflict between immigrant couples may in fact be less than that between couples with individualistic backgrounds (Hartman & Hartman, 1986), perhaps because of the manner in which disagreements are resolved or because there is greater emphasis on the collective good than on the individuals' desires.

5.2.3. Policy Issues

Many immigrants appear to be willing to change pragmatic values, such as those regarding women's employment outside of the home, in order to succeed in their new culture. How they conceptualize and interpret these changes, however, serves to protect their families' core values. This pattern of adaptation may function well for immigrant couples, especially if they have the support of an established ethnic community. By reinterpreting their behaviors to fit into their existing belief structures, immigrant couples can acculturate behaviorally without threatening the mutual support they can offer one another in a new and potentially difficult environment.

The desire to maintain family stability, however, may also have serious costs for immigrant women. The double burden of housework and employment is exhausting and can take a serious toll on women's health and well-being. Ways in which this burden could be lightened need to be explored. For example, setting up community centered women's groups which allow women to share household tasks, as they would have in their country of origin, could be helpful. Providing adequate, affordable childcare is also an obvious necessity, as it is for all dual-income families.

The pressure to place family unity over personal well-being may also lead women from collectivist cultures to remain in difficult or abusive relationships. A community based organization which could offer support and advice for these women would be helpful. Individuals from collectivist societies tend to be reluctant to discuss family difficulties with outsiders and would therefore benefit more from access to support within the community. Furthermore, the understanding and encouragement of other women in the community would ease the difficulty in deciding how to cope with difficult marital

situations. Where counsellors are not available from the community, cultural sensitivity in the services which are offered is crucial (Baptiste, 1990; Hicks, Lalonde & Peplar, 1993).

Finally, many of the difficulties that immigrant couples face could be alleviated if their employment status and income were in keeping with their expectations (Woon, 1986). For example, the threat to husbands' status would be reduced if they could secure adequate employment, and women who wanted to leave abusive relationships would have more confidence in doing so if they were securely employed. Having control over their living arrangements and lifestyles would make a significant contribution to the ease with which immigrants make the adjustment to their new home.

5.3. Acculturation and Intergenerational Relationships

Collectivist cultures place a strong emphasis on the nature of the relationship between parents and children. Children are expected to be obedient and respectful, and to avoid behaving in a way that could bring shame to their family (Harrison, Serafica & McAdoo, 1984; Stopes-Roe & Cochrane, 1990; Sung, 1985; Xenocostas, 1991). As adults, children are expected to continue placing their responsibilities to their families ahead of their own desires. In fact, the bond between parent and child is expected to supercede that between spouses or between siblings (Kim, Kim & Hurh, 1991; Kim, Hurh & Kim, 1993; Triandis et al., 1988) and marriage is viewed in terms of the social and material benefits it brings to the two families, rather than in terms of romantic love and personal fulfilment (Cerroni-Long, 1985; K. K. Dion & K. L. Dion, 1996). It is clear that, in a number of areas, collectivist family values may be in conflict with those of the individualistic cultures in which immigrant children are raised.

The conflict between old and new cultural values is brought to a head in immigrant families because children acculturate more quickly to the new culture than do their parents (Baptiste, 1990; Georgas, 1991; Kim, 1980; Szapocznik, Scopetta, Kurines & Aranalde, 1978). Immigrant parents fear that their children will acquire undesirable aspects of the new culture, and that their children will lose their own culture (Wakil, Siddique & Wakil, 1981; Xenocostas, 1991). At the same time, however, immigrants actively encourage their children to acquire the characteristics of the new culture which

will lead to success (Baptiste, 1993; Markowitz, 1994). Success in the new culture means establishing successful peer relations, learning the language and doing well in school. In keeping with these goals, the children of immigrant parents are usually fluent in the language of the new culture, have friends and peers who are from the new culture, and are knowledgeable about the culture's norms and values, which, in turn, increases the likelihood that immigrant children acquire the new culture's values.

Parent's conflicting desires and expectations for their children can be extremely frustrating for their children. The potential for conflict is especially salient in adolescence, where the issues of separation and individuation, identity, and sex role formation are most likely to bring family conflict to the surface (Baptiste, 1993; Lee, 1988). Not surprisingly, several researchers have explored the hypothesis that immigrant children must necessarily find themselves in conflict with their more traditional parents (e.g. Georgas & Kalantzi-Azizi, 1992; Heras & Revilla, 1994; Landau-Stanton, 1985; Segal, 1991). It is not clear, however, if this assumption is true. In particular, it is not apparent that immigrant children experience any more conflict with their parents than do children from non-immigrant families (Aronowitz, 1984).

In a manner similar to immigrant couples' negotiation of changing gender roles, immigrant parents' concerns regarding acculturation reflect the multidimensionality of the acculturation process. The number of different ways in which acculturation can take place is a question whose answer may depend, in part, on the level of analysis imposed by the inquisitor. Nonetheless, most investigators agree that one can separate out a behavioral component and a more central value component, at the very least, and that acculturation does not progress at an equally rapid pace in all aspects (Feldman & Rosenthal, 1990; Pierce, Clark & Kaufman, 1978; Rosenthal & Feldman, 1992; Stopes-Roe & Cochrane, 1988). Rather, acculturation may occur at different rates with respect to behavior and values.

Thus, immigrant parents would like to see their children achieve behavioral acculturation in order to be successful, but to retain many of the traditional values. Likewise, children need to behave in culturally appropriate ways in order to fit in with their peers, but need to show respect for their parents' values in order to achieve their parents' support and approval. The difficulty is that even if children could achieve pure behavioral

acculturation without any change in their beliefs, the resultant behaviours could easily suggest to concerned parents that their children were abandoning core family values.

5.4. Dating and Marriage

Individualistic societies emphasize independence and self-reliance (Rosenthal et al., 1989; Stopes-Roe & Cochrane, 1990). Immigrant children's peers are therefore allowed far greater freedom than would be permitted in a traditional collectivist culture. In order to socialize with their peers, immigrant children are likely to desire similar levels of freedom but immigrant parents often balk at allowing their children the kind of freedom that their children's peers expect. As a result, one of the most common issues over which immigrant children and parents disagree have to do with autonomy and control (Rosenthal, 1984; Segal, 1991; Xenocostas, 1991). For example, immigrant children complain that their parents do not allow them enough latitude in choosing and going out with their friends (Rosenthal, 1984; Segal, 1991; Xanocostas, 1991). For their part, parents often fear that giving their adolescent children as much freedom as they like will result in delinquent behavior (Segal, 1991; Xenocostas, 1991) and, in particular, sexual activities.

In fact, dating is the issue that is the strongest source of conflict between parents and children (Lee, 1988; Lipson & Miller, 1994; Segal, 1991; Stopes-Roe & Cochrane, 1988; Rosenthal, 1988). In most collectivist cultures, dating is not practiced, or leads shortly to marriage. Marriages are often arranged by the parents or a match maker, who may select an appropriate spouse for a child well before adolescence. Immigrant parents are typically uncomfortable with the notion of dating, are often strongly opposed to exogamous marriages, and fear that their children, especially their daughters, will engage in sexual intercourse in prolonged dating relationships (Naidoo & Davis, 1988; Segal 1991; Stopes-Roe & Cochrane, 1988; Xenocostas, 1991). Despite their discomfort with North American dating and marriage practices, however, immigrant parents do appear to be willing to cede some control over their children's marriages.

Although immigrant parents will express preference for spouses of similar cultural heritage (Segal, 1991; Stopes-Roe & Cochrane, 1988; Wakil et al., 1981), and in some families may even threaten to shun family members who marry outside of the ethnic

group (Xenocostas, 1991), the strict rules for endogamy that were practiced in the country of origin are often relaxed in the new country. For example, issues of class or caste, and sometimes even religion, may no longer be salient (Wakil et al., 1981). Interestingly, despite the tendency for immigrant children to endorse the individualistic ideal of marrying for love (Kurian, 1991), immigrant children tend to offer some endorsement for their parents' values regarding marriage (Feldman & Rosenthal, 1990; Xenocostas, 1991). There is some research, for example, that suggests that South Asian immigrant children believe that children and parents should both have an influence on marital decisions (Wakil et al., 1981). In fact, these adult children will often agree to a form of arranged marriage, provided that they have some say in the final choice of spouse.

In keeping with these findings, immigrant children's conception of love may differ from that of their more individualistic peers. K. L. Dion and K. K. Dion (1993) found that university students of Asian origin were more likely to endorse companionate love than did Anglo-Saxon students, a conception of love that is more in line with Asian collectivist models of marital relationships. Finally, despite claiming the right to marry outside of their ethnic group, many immigrant children, and especially female children, do, in fact, seem to co-operate with their parents' demands that they marry and date within their ethnic group (Arrendondo, 1984; Stopes-Roe & Cochrane, 1988; Xenocostas, 1991).

5.4.1. Gender Differences

Parents seem particularly concerned about controlling their daughters' behavior, especially with respect to dating (Georgas, 1991; Kim, 1980; Kirkland, 1984; Rosenthal, 1984; Sharma 1984; Wakil et al., 1981). As a result, immigrant parents place greater restrictions on their daughters' social activities than on their sons' activities. In many collectivist cultures, women's and girls' modesty and chastity are the keys to the family's honour (Kirkland, 1984; Wakil et al., 1981; Xenocostas, 1991). Thus, immigrant girls may be made to feel particularly pressured to protect their families' honour by not engaging in inappropriate behavior.

Because of women's domestic and maternal roles in collectivist societies, women and girls are often seen as responsible for the maintenance and continuations of the family's values and traditions (Danziger, 1974; Sharma, 1984). There are also greater expectations that women should value family ties (Danziger, 1974). Perhaps because so much is invested in women's place in the family, immigrant families appear to be very concerned about enforcing appropriate sex roles for their children (Burns, Homel & Goodnow, 1984; Danziger, 1974; Sharma, 1984) and, as a result, more pressure is likely to be brought to bear on daughters to conform to parental expectations.

In the face of all these pressures to conform, it is not surprising to find that girls' behavioral acculturation has been found to be less than that of boys and more in line with parental desires (Arrendondo, 1984; Ghaffarian, 1987; Szapocznik et al., 1978).

However, in contrast, some studies have also found that, with respect to values, immigrant girls are actually more acculturated than boys (Ghaffarian, 1987; Lalonde & Cameron, 1993; Nguyen & Williams, 1988), particularly with respect to their attitudes towards women.

Given that girls in individualistic cultures may be made aware of how collectivist values give higher status to their brothers, immigrant girls would have more reason to be attracted to the values of an individualistic culture (Georgas, 1991). Girls may come to resent the inequality they perceive within their family, but still feel bound to adhere to familial expectations. Unable to take action to resolve the conflict between their behavioral and value acculturation, immigrant girls and women can express their dissatisfaction by vowing to raise their own daughters differently (Gilad, 1984).

However, the alienation that seems to be apparent between immigrant girls and their parents regarding family values may not be any greater than that found in non-immigrant families (Feldman & Rosenthal, 1990; Kim, 1980). Studies which have compared immigrant and non-immigrant families suggest that the differences between immigrant parents and their adolescent children are no greater than those found within non-immigrant families (Stopes-Roe & Cochrane, 1988; 1990; Rosenthal, Bell, Demetriou & Eflkides, 1989; Rosenthal & Bornholt, 1988) although the source of the intergenerational conflict revolves around different issues (Rosenthal, 1984). Thus, whereas it may be true that immigrant children face a unique set of problems in negotiating their relationship

with their parents on the one hand and the new culture on the other, expectations of intergenerational conflict may be greatly exaggerated.

Immigrant children do acquire the values of their new culture, but these value changes may be very subtle. Second and third generation immigrants often continue to show values that fall between those of their own parents and of non-immigrants (Feldman & Rosenthal, 1990; Kim, K., Kim, S. & Hurh, 1991; Kim, K. Hurh & Kim, S. 1993; Maykovich, 1980; Rosenthal & Bornholt, 1988; Stopes-Roe & Cochrane, 1988; 1990). Moreover, while children are continuing to endorse their parents' values, immigrant parents are themselves starting to change. Because the family is of great importance to both immigrant children and their parents (Stopes-Roe & Cochrane, 1988; Verkuyten, 1988; Xenocostas, 1991), and parents recognize the necessity of some role changes in the new culture, family differences are often resolved through mutual compromise. Thus, children's acculturation may pull their parents' towards greater acceptance of the new cultures' values whereas parents' attachment to traditional values may rein in the pace of children's acculturation. The correlations that have been found between immigrant children's support of traditional values and attitudes and their parents' endorsement of these attitudes (Lalonde & Cameron, 1993) may reflect the bi-directionality of parent-child influences.

Thus, the behavioural changes that are required of children to fit in to the new culture may result in some value acculturation, but the impact of the family's traditional values cannot be overstated (Georgas & Kalantzi-Azizi, 1992). Children in collectivist cultures depend a great deal on their parents' positive regard (Verkuuyten, 1988). They will therefore be likely to internalize their parents' beliefs. Furthermore, immigrant parents want their children to succeed and therefore need to alter their expectations to allow their children to behave in ways that guarantee success, even if those behaviors may violate some of the family's traditional values. In this way, acculturation proceeds more slowly than might be expected given children's exposure to the new culture, and immigrant families adjust to their children's greater acculturation and still protect their integrity and stability.

5.4.2. Refugee Families

There has been one body of research, however, which has reported relatively high levels of intergenerational conflict. Specifically, research conducted on Vietnamese refugees has found that, as children's acculturation increases, value disagreement increases and intergenerational conflict becomes more acute (Lee, 1988; Nguyen & Williams, 1989; Rick & Forward, 1992; Woon, 1986). In an excellent comparison of Vietnamese and Sino-Vietnamese families in Victoria, British Columbia, Woon (1986) identified several factors which lead to intergenerational conflict and cultural difficulties. Specifically, intergenerational conflict was determined by the parents' willingness to adjust to their new environment, which, in turn, was predicted by their attachment to their homeland, and the extent to which their living conditions resembled those which they left behind in their homeland. Another factor which predicted adjustment and intergenerational conflict was the parents' knowledge of English, which was related to parents' socio-economic class.

These findings suggest that family characteristics play a big part in determining intergenerational conflict and family adjustment. Most immigrants are highly motivated to come to the new country. Perhaps most importantly, the families who choose to leave their community behind in order to improve their lot are likely to be more individualistic than their compatriots who prefer not to leave. Moreover, many immigrants are relatively skilled or well educated and may have had the resources available to them to learn the language of the culture to which they were immigrating. All of these factors improve the chances that the family will adjust to their new culture.

In contrast, refugees may come to their new country unwillingly and often with little preparation. Not only are they likely to have suffered extreme hardship, ranging from starvation to violence and war, they are likely to be of lower socio-economic status than willing migrants. For these reasons, refugee families may find themselves in a more difficult position than other migrants. Parents who are unwilling or unable to adjust to their new home may cling to traditional values and shun the values of the new culture, including learning the language of the new country.

Parents' lack of fluency in the new language not only interferes with their ability to adjust to the new culture, it can also cause problems within the family. When parents fail to learn the language of the new culture and depend on their children as intermediaries,

children are placed in roles of increased power (Shibata, 1980; Woon, 1986). They are often privy to information that would normally be withheld from the children in the family, thereby upsetting the expected family hierarchy (Baptiste, 1993). Children who act as intermediaries for their parents are often forced to take on responsibilities that may be inappropriate for their age, but are then expected to act as obedient and passive children in other situations. These children may be resentful and confused about the inconsistencies regarding their role in the family.

Children can also be frustrated by their parents' lack of knowledge regarding the new culture. Because the children are often more knowledgeable about the new culture than are their parents, children may feel that their parents are unable to provide appropriate adult role models (Baptiste, 1990; Lee, 1988). This can result in a decrease in the respect children show their parents, particularly as the children are trying to negotiate the various adult role possibilities during adolescence. Children may dismiss their parents as irrelevant and seek role models elsewhere. Parents, in response to their children's abandonment of the family's values, may then try to impose even stricter controls upon their children. As a result, both parents and children experience further conflict and alienation.

5.4.3. Policy Issues

Immigrant families generally do seem to find ways to negotiate the different levels of acculturation of their members. The success that they achieve in coping with these differences, however, depend upon the circumstances of their migration. Situations that undermine parents' well-being can hinder their adjustment to the new culture. In these situations, parents may be unwilling to accept their children's changing behaviors and children may be less able to seek their parents' guidance (Woon, 1986). Ensuring that all immigrants and refugees have access to language training is not only essential for assuring them access to the labour force, but also for smooth family functioning (Hicks et al., 1993). In addition, providing immigrant families with detailed information about the culture, including information about the youth culture, would allow parents to act as resources and role models for their children. When difficulties do arise, the opportunity for parents and children to discuss these issues in organized community based support

groups may be highly beneficial. Finally, when families encounter problems that require intervention, the presence of community based counsellors who understands the difficulties facing both the children and the parents, and who may be able to offer solutions that are acceptable to both, is essential.

5.5. Summary

Migration, under certain conditions, can lead to severe family strain and alienation, but this seems to be the exception, rather than the rule. Immigration does not need to result in levels of family conflict any greater than that found in non-immigrant families. The manner in which families adjust to their new culture suggests that acculturation is a gradual and multifaceted process, which occasionally results in contradictory values and behaviors. Non-traditional behaviors are often required by immigrants in order to succeed in their new culture but these behaviors may not coincide with the immigrants beliefs. The success of a family's adjustment to the immigration process may depend on their ability to respond to the necessities of the immigrant situation in ways that maintain the family bonds and provide a stable and supportive environment (Noda, Noda & Clark, 1990). Maintaining traditional beliefs while engaging in non-traditional behaviors is one way in which immigrant families manage to protect themselves from disruption. The conflict between immigrants' actions and their beliefs may be temporarily overcome by interpreting non-traditional behaviors in a manner consistent with the traditional values. The processes involved in this negotiation of meaning reveal the complexity of coping strategies that are available to individuals in challenging situations. Over time, immigrants' values move towards those of the new culture but, even after several generations, immigrants continue to show some endorsement of traditional values. Thus, the importance of the family as a socializing agent for immigrant children cannot be understated. The results of the studies summarized in this chapter underscore the need for both governments and social scientists to consider immigration in terms of not only individuals, but also the families and communities to which these individuals belong.

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