

# **A Visual Interpretation of Chinese Immigrants' Identity Dilemma in New Zealand**

*Nuo Zhang MA&D 2008*

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Chinese Immigrants' Identity Dilemma in New Zealand**

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### **Attestation of authorship**

'I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which to a substantial extent had been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma of an university or other institution of higher learning, except where due acknowledgment is made in the acknowledgement'.

*Nuo Zhang*

Signed:.....

## **Acknowledgements**

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## **Abstract**

This thesis explores the notion of identity dilemma and its visualisation in the context of New Zealand Chinese immigration. It focuses on interpreting and visualising New Zealand Chinese immigrants' thoughts and feelings and their struggle to adapt to the environment as well as their ambivalent negotiation to balance their in-between identity of being a New Zealander (Westerner) and Chinese. It is a practice-based project and is presented by means of photography, with illustration as the supporting medium.

The predicament of identity is explored through interviewing members of the New Zealand Chinese community. A semi-constructed interview<sup>1</sup> is designed and introduced to canvass 20 Chinese participants' opinions of their cultural beliefs and sense of belonging in a Western society. The data is collected and analysed to investigate the informants' thoughts and feelings in their daily routine in a multicultural community. I, as an art and design practitioner, visually interpret and transcend my opinion of identity dilemma of Chinese immigrants into my practical works.

The participants' thoughts and feelings are transferred into my artwork through creating patterns of visual elements. Employing a heuristic visual research method, my explorative work attempts to transfer social research findings of the idea of identity dilemma into my artwork for initiating contemporary visual discourse.

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<sup>1</sup> Ethics Approval

This thesis had obtained formal ethics approval from the university (Ethics Application Number 08/168).

# Introduction

## Rationale of this study

In recent news, Brown (quoted by anonymous author, 2008) says that the increasing number of Asians immigrating to New Zealand will form their own mini-societies that is detrimental and will lead to division, friction and resentment in society. In addition, New Zealanders will be inundated with people who identify themselves as Asian and have no intention of integrating into society.

Chinese have always been New Zealand's largest non-Polynesian ethnic group (Ip, 1990, p.13). By the end of 2001, the Chinese population had reached 105,057, which equates to almost half of the total Asian population and 2.8% of New Zealand's total population. (Statistics New Zealand, 2008).

Do Chinese consider themselves New Zealanders? Do Chinese feel a sense of belonging in New Zealand? Do they have any intention of integrating into New Zealand society? And the key question: how do I communicate Chinese immigrants' identity to the New Zealand community through visual discourses? Through the questions I ask, I intend to engage with the community of New Zealand Chinese and inquire about their sense of belonging, in terms of adapting to the New Zealand (Western) community<sup>2</sup>. Potentially this research will visually translate my own view of the Chinese immigrants' cultural identity and communicate through my practice to the New Zealand (Western) community. Thus the research will bridge the cultural gap for attaining a more harmonious society.

## Aim

This practice-based research focuses on visualising the predicament of identity dilemma of Chinese immigrants in New Zealand. The main aim is to explore through visual elements and representations to interpret New Zealand Chinese immigrants' ambivalent cultural identity. The research can potentially

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<sup>2</sup> The culture of New Zealand is a synthesis of homegrown and foreign cultures. The country's earliest inhabitants brought with them customs and language from Polynesia and developed their own Maori and Moriori cultures. British colonists in the nineteenth century brought their culture and had a dramatic effect on the indigenous inhabitants, spreading their religious traditions and the English language (Wikipedia, 2001). More recently Chinese immigration has been part of the development of the New Zealand culture.

contribute to the academic discourses of visual representation of social research findings in the context of cultural identity. It can bring an awareness of Chinese immigrants' cultural identity to the New Zealand community through visualisation.

I attempt to approach my findings on the predicament of identity dilemma of Chinese immigrants through social research. These findings are unfolded through my practice, and are contextualised by the exegesis. The key challenge is to create visual elements that reflect Chinese immigrants' ambivalence and their struggles when negotiating and adapting to the New Zealand (Western) environment.

The approach of using photography, supported by illustration is intended to create the aesthetics of in-between document and fiction to accentuate the cultural ambivalence of my informants.

In addition, the project attempts to explore alternative methodological approaches that can connect qualitative social research methods to inform creative research in visual practice to arrive at a confluent position in contemporary art and design discourses.

### **The structure of the exegesis**

The exegesis contextualises my understanding of New Zealand Chinese immigrants' cultural identity, the methods of doing both social and practical research, and the practical development for transferring the social research findings into visual form. The research project can be divided into two parts: sociological and practical research. The sociological research plays an important role in the development of my project. It contributes to establishing my notion of identity dilemma through a series of theoretical arguments and social investigations. However, the project is practice based. The main research question is how do I visually interpret my own notion of identity dilemma in order to communicate with the New Zealand (Western) community. The exegesis emphasises the practical developments of my project.

There are three major parts in my practical development: Heuristic methods, an 'in-between document and fiction' aesthetic approach and practical analysis. The heuristic methods introduce discipline to my research process. The aesthetic approach of 'in-between document and fiction' is developed based on the different nature between photography and illustration, and their effective integration to inform my practice. In the practical analysis, I discuss how my practice responds to the social research findings.



# **Chapter one: The theoretical study of cultural identity**

## **A. Cultural identity**

How do you define culture? What is cultural identity? To find answers to my questions, I have reviewed a series of theoretical literature.

Kitayama & Cohen (2007) defines culture as being integrated systems consisting of widely shared social 'norms' ('rules,' 'theories,' 'grammars,' 'codes,' 'systems,' 'models,' 'worldviews,' etc.) (p. 616).

Hall (1996) argued the following:

Cultural identity in terms of one, shared culture, a sort of collective 'one true self,' hiding inside the many other, more superficial or artificially imposed 'selves,' which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common. Within the terms of this definition, our cultural identities reflect the common historical experiences and shared cultural codes, which provide us, as 'one people,' with stable, unchanging, and continuous frames of reference and meaning, beneath the shifting divisions and vicissitudes of our actual history (as cited in Braziel & Mannur, 2003, p. 236).

In my opinion, identity is how we feel in a particular cultural tradition or 'root' we belong to. Our identity is associated with a sort of collectivity through personal experiences of learning cultural traditions. Such learning and acquiring does not directly influence an individual's identification, but is indirectly associated with one's identity or preference of deciding one's identity. As part of social and cultural study, identity research aims to understand an individual's thoughts and feelings in regards to their cultural respects and identification.

## **B. Identity in-between**

My research is located in a cross-cultural context to investigate New Zealand Chinese immigrants' identity. The theoretical study aims to analyse minority groups and their sense of belonging when trying to adapt to living in a 'host' community. Bhabha (1994) gives an insight of immigrants' identity through generating his concept of hybridity. "Hybridity is defined as a space, in-between the designations of identity... A passage between fixed identifications opens up the possibility of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy" (p. 4).

Bhabha (1998, as cited in Coles & Timothy, 2004, p. 43) also argues that hybridity is composed of those transnational and transitional encounters and negotiations over differential meaning and value in 'colonial' contexts.

In addition, Crossberg (1996) states that hybridity is used to describe three different images of border existences, of subaltern identities as existing between two competing identities (p. 91).

In my opinion, an immigrant's identity exists in a space of ambivalence and struggles between their 'original' and 'host' culture. Crossberg (ibid., p. 89) also states that struggling against existing constructions of a particular identity takes the form of contesting negative images with a positive one.

### **C. My view of identity dilemma**

Based on theoretical research, I attempt to explore and establish my own view of Chinese immigrants' identity dilemma.

My research targets the first generation of Chinese immigrants who have grown up in China then migrated to New Zealand. This target group used to follow traditional Chinese culture and identified themselves as Chinese before coming to New Zealand. During their transition, they have had to confront the boundaries made by cultural diversities between West and East. On the one hand, they needed to learn to negotiate the New Zealand (Western) culture in their daily routines such as Western customs, habits, food etc. The process of learning Western culture is a sort of collectivity, which may influence their identity shift. They may identify themselves as either a New Zealand Chinese or Chinese New Zealander. On the other hand, they may also have an internal conflict in regards to their 'original' identity and try to find the cultural root they belong to. Sometimes, they tend to emphasis their Chinese identity in the Western environment. However, they cannot easily adapt to living in China any more. They feel confused about their identities and cannot easily feel a sense of belonging in-between Western and Eastern cultures. Their identities exist with ambivalence between Western and Eastern cultures. These phenomena contribute to the identity dilemma of an individual.

My research investigates the Chinese immigrants' cultural identity through analysing their decision-making process when adapting to the New Zealand (Western) community. It aims to understand the Chinese immigrants' thinking patterns and how they struggle to negotiate the New Zealand community during their process of attaining the knowledge to adapt to the Western culture. The theoretical research gives me an important orientation in human central inquiry for discovering social research finding.

## Chapter two: Research methods

This chapter starts with designing a structural diagram (chart 1) of research methods to illustrate how I connect my theoretical approaches and the data collected with my creative practice. There are two major procedures: human centred inquiry and heuristic inquiry on visual art and design practice.

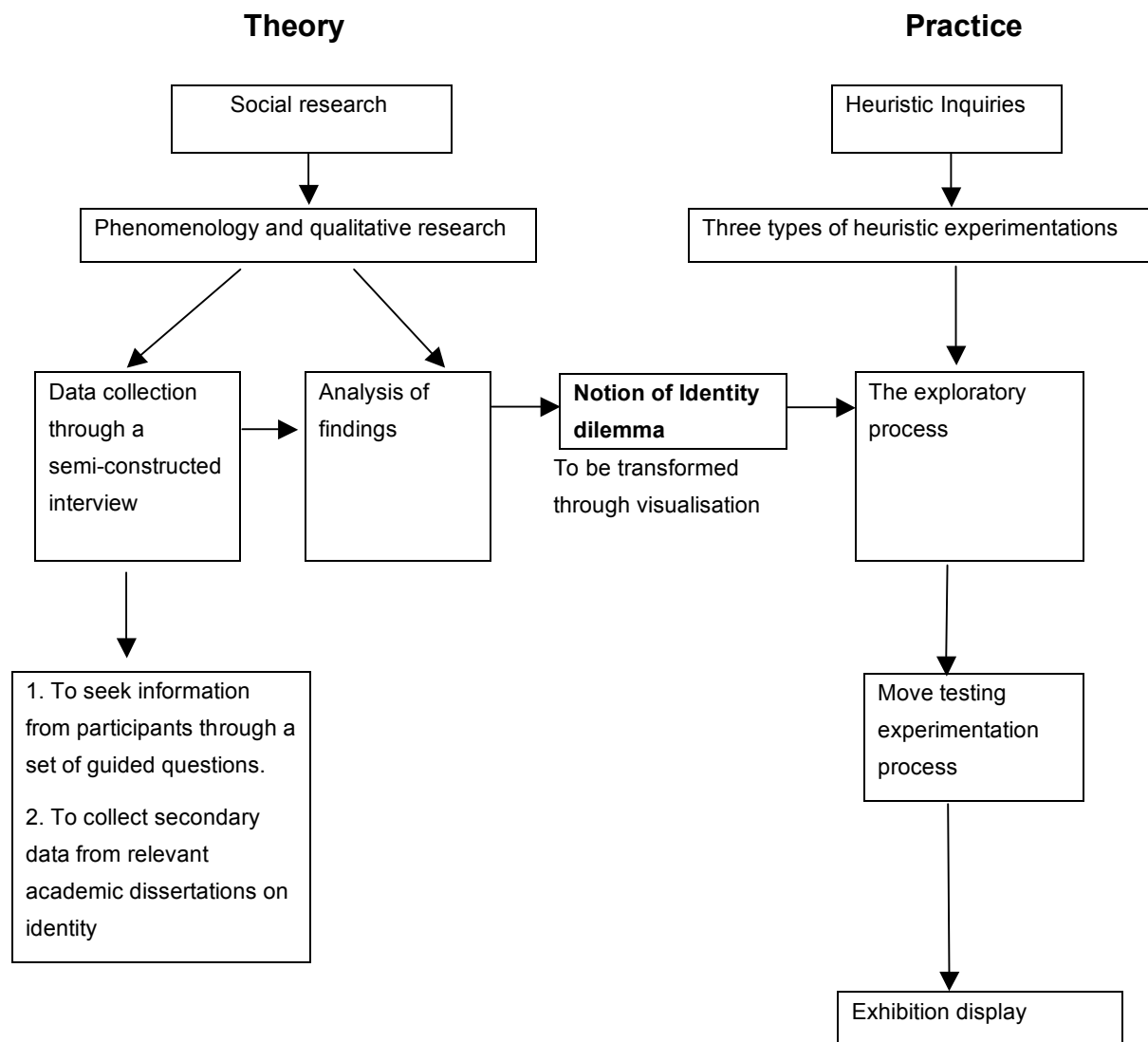


Chart 1: Structure of the research

### A. Social research:

Social research refers to research conducted by social scientists (primarily within sociology and social psychology), but also within other disciplines such as social policy, human geography, political science, social anthropology and

education. Qualitative research is a field of inquiry in social research that crosscuts disciplines and subject matters. Qualitative researchers aim to gather an in-depth understanding of human behaviours and the reasons that govern human behaviour. Qualitative research relies on reasons behind various aspects of behaviour. Simply put, it investigates the why and how of decision making, not just what, where, and when. Hence, the need is for smaller but focused samples rather than large random samples, which qualitative research categorises data into patterns as the primary basis for organising and reporting results (Wikipedia, 2008).

Culture and identity study is located in the area of sociology. In the research, I have employed a qualitative research approach to investigate the how and why of their decision-making process for developing my notion of identity dilemma in the context of New Zealand Chinese immigration.

According to Lawrence (2005):

Qualitative researchers use a language of cases and contexts, examine social processes and cases in their social context, and look at interpretations or the creation of meaning in specific settings. They look at social life from multiple points of view and explain how people construct identities (p. 157).

By introducing a qualitative approach, I aim to discover meaning and theory through inquiring, analysing and interpreting the Chinese immigrants' thinking patterns and emotional feelings of their cultural beliefs and sense of belonging. A semi-constructed interview is designed to canvass 20 Chinese participants' opinions of their cultural identity. This will be sufficient for exploring the Chinese immigrants' sense of belonging from multiple perspectives.

I have introduced Lawrence's description (2006, pp. 14-15) of Denzin and Lincoln's steps in the qualitative research process (2003) to design the survey (see appendices) and develop my notion of identity dilemma (See Chart 2 below).

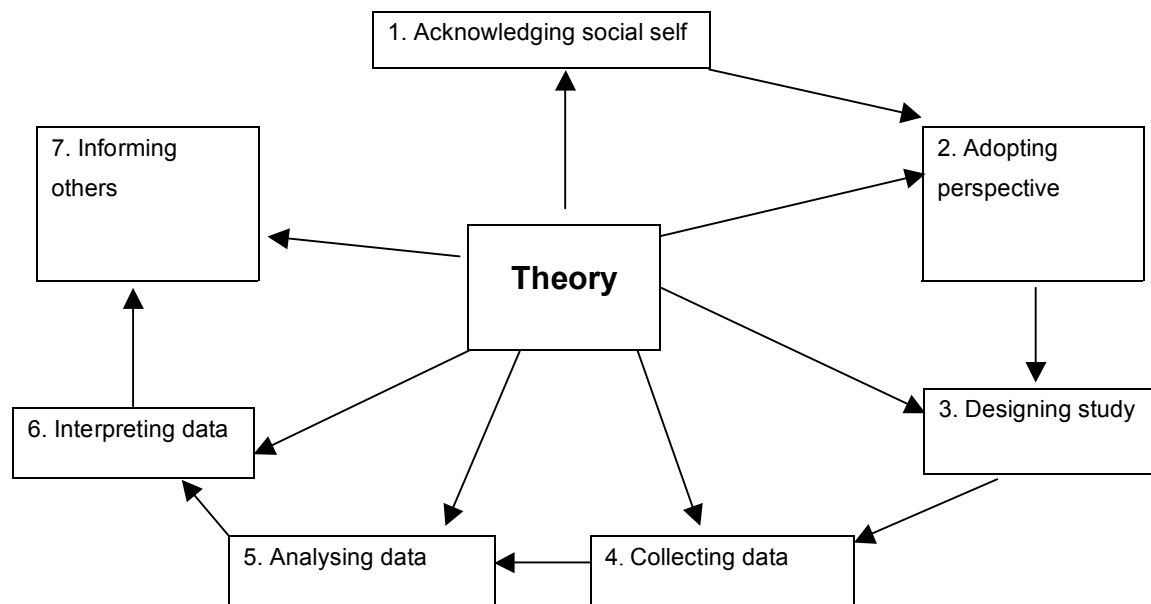


Chart 2: Structure of the survey

### A.1 Acknowledging social self

Denzin and Lincoln (as cited in Lawrence, 2006, pp. 14-15) state that “Qualitative researchers begin with a self-assessment and reflections about themselves as situated in a social and historical context”.

I am a Chinese international student who came to New Zealand three years ago. English is my second language. In my daily life, I have close relationships with the New Zealand Chinese community. Making friends with Chinese immigrants allows me to understand their thinking patterns and daily habits. I study graphic design at the Auckland University of Technology and used to work in a Chinese restaurant and a design studio along with some other part-time jobs. These experiences have provided me the opportunity to observe the New Zealand Chinese community from different perspectives in different environments.

### A.2 Adopting perspective

I position myself as both an insider and an outsider to the New Zealand Chinese community. Even though I have not immigrated to New Zealand, my community role brings me into closer contact with the Chinese community. This facilitates the establishment of an in-between East and West perspective to examine and analyse the research data. During the process of researching, I have also positioned myself as both a social researcher and a graphic

designer. I have tried to design the study by making connections between social research and creative art practice.

### **A.3 Designing study**

Four topics are introduced to inquire about the informants' decision-making process through interviews. In the first topic, I directly ask about the Chinese immigrants' identity in order to gain an overview of their sense of belonging. In the second topic, the questions are designed to explore the Chinese immigrants' performed identity through their preference on traditional costume. The third topic intends to inquire about the Chinese immigrants' dining habits. The inquiry does not directly reflect on the Chinese immigrants' identity but it is connected with their ability to adapt to the new culture. In the fourth topic, I intend to look at the Chinese immigrants' identity through the way they sign formal documents.

Many questions asked in the interview may not directly reflect on identity, rather they reflect on immigrants adapting to an environment. However, an individual adapting to a new environment is indirectly associated with one's identity. The participants' feedback contributes to my understanding of how the Chinese immigrants construct their identities. As a designer, I attempt to explore visual elements to interpret the social research findings (see heuristic inquiry).

### **A.4 Data collection**

In the research, I introduce semi-structured interviews to achieve the data collection. A semi-structured interview is a method of research used in social sciences. While a structured interview has formalised, limited set questions, a semi-structured interview is flexible, allowing new questions to be brought up during the interview as a result of what the interviewee says. The interview in a semi-structured interview generally has a framework of themes to be explored (Wikipedia, 2008).

According to Oppenheim (1992):

The purpose of the standardised interview in the typical large-scale survey is essentially that of data collection... the interview schedule and the wording of the questions have been exhaustively tried out in pilot work; the sample has been drawn; the force recruited (possibly); and arrangements made for coping with refusals and otherwise unobtainable respondents, with fieldwork checks and the return of the completed schedules for data processing (p. 66).

I explained my project to the participants that I interviewed. They were asked to answer a set of semi-structured questions. The respondents were chosen through my network of Chinese immigrants, such as flatmates, friends,

schoolmates and co-workers. The recruitment criteria included those who were educated in China; and/or who are currently studying in New Zealand; and/or who are currently working in New Zealand. The exclusions were those aged younger than 20; those who were unemployed; and those who have resided in New Zealand for more than 15 years. The rationale is to select those who are actively involved in the community, are mature enough to give sensible opinions, and are still in the progress of establishing their career. The samples of the respondents' opinions have been drawn for data analysis.

### **A.5 Data analysis**

Gray and Malins (2004) states that:

The main intellectual tool of analysis is comparison. The aim is to discover similarities, and/or differences by the use of comparison and contrast. Also analysis is a reflective activity, aiming to move from the data to a conceptual level (p. 133).

In the analysis, I seek to collect the participants' thoughts by comparing their different decision-making processes. Seven situations are introduced to generate raw data for in-depth analysis.

Similarity is a key factor in the analysis process. It directs me to connect the daily visual elements with the research data. I constantly reflect on the data in the creative processes.

### **A.6 Data interpretation**

The results of the analysis constitute higher-level synthesis and interpretation. The final goal is emergence of a larger consolidated picture, for example a composite summary, a description of patterns/themes or a new concept (ibid.).

Through the analysis of informants' thinking, their struggling and negotiating in between different cultural beliefs is significant among the participants. Identity dilemma is reflected in their choice of permanent residence, dining habits, clothing and naming customs. It reveals their ambivalent thinking, which is embedded in their decision-making process and sense of belonging in-between West and East. I analysed the phenomena, supported by theoretical research, to establish my own notion of identity dilemma of Chinese immigrants.

### **A.7 Informing others**

The social research findings are distributed through visualisation to viewers. I employ heuristic inquiry as practical method to approach my project, which will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

## **B. Heuristic inquiry:**

### **B.1 Practical focus**

To transform the social research findings from human centred inquiry, heuristic methods have been employed.

According to Moustakas (1990):

The root meaning of heuristic comes from the Greek word *heuriskein*, meaning to discover or to find. It refers to a process of internal search through which one discovers the nature and meaning of experience and develops methods and procedures for further investigation and analysis...The focus in a heuristic quest is on recreation of the lived experience; full and complete depictions of the experience from the frame of reference of the experiencing person (pp. 9-39).

In the practical study, I try to engage with the social research data and visually recreate and reflect my interpretation of the participants' ambivalent thinking of identity. The question I ask is how do I visualise my view of identity dilemma with a focus on expressing the Chinese immigrants' conflicts and struggles when adapting to the New Zealand Western culture.

### **B.2 Reflecting in action**

To visualise my notion of identity dilemma, I attempt to gain ideas through reviewing literature and visual resources on art making, creativity and patterns of visual elements. The practical development is also derived from an experimental exploration by introducing Kleining's and Witt's (2001, pp. 2-3) basic rules to optimize the chance for discovery. During the experimentations, I interact with my works from both the author's and the viewer's perspectives. According to Barthes (1977), a text's unity lies not in its origin but in its destination. It has value because of its readers (p. 148). The approaches are also tested through peer discussions with classmates and tutorials with supervisors in the studio. I usually invite my peers and tutors to review my work in process. Their critiques are effective in reconsidering any unattended potential. This has unveiled any gaps in my practical resolution.

### **B.3 The exploratory experiments**

According to Kleining and Witt (*ibid.*), a researcher must be open to new concepts. In my practical research, I have developed the contents and the methods of my project to see what emerges. For example, when responding to wearing Chinese garments in a Western environment, I try to look at the possible situations such as in a school, a wedding ceremony or a Western restaurant. Before photographing, I design the models' pose, their costume and the background environment. I direct and capture their facial expressions in order to visually reconstruct and interpret the thoughts and feelings of



Chinese immigrants. Another example that is based on my data is the informant wanting to use chopsticks when dining in a Western restaurant. I decide to choose a very typical Western restaurant in Mission Bay. The model was asked to wear a Chinese garment and to eat a dish of steak by using a pair of bamboo chopsticks. I intended to capture images of the model eating with both joyful and awkward facial expressions. This was to suggest the joy of using chopsticks and yet the embarrassment of this behaviour in public.

Japanese artist Morimura (1991) in his work 'Blinded by the light'<sup>3</sup> (Figure 1) has made reference of Bruegel's oil painting 'The blinded leading the blinded' as a metaphor to express his cultural identity crisis. The artwork successfully transfers his thinking into visualisation for communicating with Western viewers. After analysing his work, I also approach Western viewers by making reference to Western visual resources to inform the visual reconstruction of my practice. This approach is used in a series of my works (e.g. Figure 5 & 6).

I have also explored other visual approaches in my creative practice, such as recurrence, reflection, and montage and cubism concept. By referring to Escher's practice (Figure 2), I intend to express the struggles that immigrants face in between two cultures (Figure 3). Reflection is also frequently used to interpret identity (e.g. Figure 4). Montage is used to express the feeling of the Chinese immigrants' negotiations or their making compromises.



Figure 1. Morimura, Y. (1991). *Blinded by the light*.

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<sup>3</sup> The artist introduced Bruegel's oil painting 'The blinded leading the blinded' as a metaphor to express his identity crisis. 'The blinded leading the blinded' is a visual interpretation of an idea from the Bible (Matthew 14:14): "if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch."



Figure 2. Escher, M. C. (1947). *Another world*.



Figure 3. Zhang, N. (2007).

#### B.4 Practical analysis

Kleining and Witt (ibid.) also suggest that a researcher needs to discover similarities and patterns by frequently asking questions of the material, locating similarities, analogies or homologies within the diverse data that are collected and processed. As a practitioner, I reflect on my practical works by comparing the similarities and differences of my works. In my study, to test the possible research outcomes, I have brought my practical works back to the social research data to analyse whether they can effectively reflect on the findings. For example, I have made three works to interpret the topic of wearing a Chinese garment for performing identity. Each work has employed different metaphors to reflect on the semantic expression in different contents, such as using a mirror as a metaphor to reflect on the Chinese immigrant's identity struggles (Figure 2), making references of Eyck's (1434) 'The Arnolfini Wedding' to express identity dilemma in a Westernised Chinese wedding ceremony (Figure 5), and Sanzio's (1509-1510) 'The school of Athens' in the situation of scholarly debate. The practice figures five and seven have some

similarities. For example, both of them make references to the Western classical oil paintings. The paintings reveal the Western cultural traditions and historical background. They can also be used to make an association to my social research data for visualisation as the informants have mentioned the same formal situations of wearing Chinese garments. In my opinion, making references to Western paintings can be an effective way for visualising identity dilemma. The experimentation allows me to make decisions for selecting the possible outcome. I also make subtle changes to my practice in the experiments such as re-shooting images and refining my digital works.

### **C. Aesthetic approach: in-between document and fiction**

In my opinion, photography and illustration have a different nature. Photography bears the organic nature of documenting reality through the photographer's intended perspectives. According to Savedoff (2000), unlike painting, people read photography as a documenting of the world. Photographers always deal with the camera's perspective and exploitation to make their approaches (p. 50). In my research, photography is employed to portray my social research findings of statistical 'reality' into a visual form. It is also used to create a visual language for communicating the informants' identity dilemma. Simulating real scenes enhances the authenticity of the social research findings. For example, based on the social research data to visually interpret the Chinese immigrant's dining custom, I chose a Chinese immigrant's kitchen and set up the sense of dilemma by mixing Western and Chinese ingredients on the table (Figure 10) for the photograph.

Illustration has the organic nature of reflecting and translating one's cognition of the world into visual form, which supports my subjective interpretation of the findings. It is the language we create for expression. Berger (1982) states that photography, unlike drawing, does not possess a language. Photographs do not translate from appearance as drawing does (p. 96). In my practice, illustration is a sort of fiction added on to the photographs, which aims to emphasise my interpretation of the informants' identity dilemma. Photography in the research as a main medium is supported by illustration to create the aesthetics of 'in-between document and fiction' to visualise the cultural ambivalence of the participants.

## Chapter three: The social research findings

This chapter gives an analytical reflection on the data. The process of the social research is explained in the appendices of the exegesis. The interview transcripts were recorded by writing notes. The data is analysed and interpreted below:

According to the statistics, 45% of the participants identify themselves as New Zealand Chinese. 35% of them think that they will choose New Zealand as their permanent home. In addition, 75% of the participants believe that they are able to adapt to living in New Zealand. Chinese immigrants have attempted to learn Western culture in different situations, such as cooking Western food at home, using a knife and fork when dining in a Western restaurant, wearing Western suits in formal situations, using an English name when introducing themselves, following Western naming customs when signing formal documents and learning the Western way of studying in school. From the data, 45% of them would like to wear Chinese garments in New Zealand, and 33% of them want to wear them to represent their Chinese identity. 50% of the Chinese immigrants would like to follow Western dining customs when dining in a Western restaurant. 59% of them use their English names all the time, and 60% of the participants usually follow Western signing customs. This feedback directly or indirectly reflects the Chinese immigrants' cultural identity and influences the decisions they make about their cultural identity. The data reveals that they attempt to negotiate and adapt to living in New Zealand.

In contrast, the Chinese immigrants also attempt to maintain their cultural traditions. According to the informants' feedback, 35% of the informants identify themselves as Chinese and choose China as their permanent home. Also 30% of them feel that they can adapt to living in China again. Chinese immigrants struggle to keep their cultural traditions in many situations. For example, 45% of the Chinese immigrants would like to wear Chinese garments in the future. 67% of them wear Chinese garments to reflect their Chinese identity in New Zealand but they do not do so in China. Today, Chinese garments are no longer common attire in China. There are very few people who like to wear them because they are considered very old fashioned. However in the Western environment, the informants choose this very special and unusual way to represent their Chinese identity. It shows the informant's strong will to preserve their Chinese identity. In this situation, wearing a formal Chinese garment is a means of showcasing their Chinese identity. It is an organised disclosure of identity. On the other hand, it is unnecessary to address one's Chinese identity in China. In another example, 76% of informants prefer to use their Chinese name when signing formal documents.

The data reveals that the majority of informants struggle to hold on to the Chinese customs in the situation of signing formal documents. In addition, there are a number of informants that would like to use chopsticks when dining in a Western restaurant. It is an incongruous behaviour to use Chinese cutlery in a Western environment. The evidence illustrates that the Chinese may struggle to maintain their 'original' cultural tradition.

While trying to adapt to Western culture, it is not uncommon for Chinese immigrants to hold on to their original customs and habits. For example, 30% of the participants cook both Eastern and Western food at home. 70% of informants do not really like Westernised Chinese meals. 15% keep using their Chinese name when signing formal documents but following the Western order of address, i.e. first name followed by surname. In addition, 30% of them are not sure about their sense of belonging. Such uncertainty has lead to an ambiguity of identity.

To sum up, it is common that Chinese immigrants are ambivalent in their decision making process on a daily basis. They constantly negotiate and struggle to accept the Western culture. Holding on to their own Chinese identity has become a part of their daily routine. Drifting between East and West has lead to an ambiguity in their cultural identity.

## **Chapter four: Visualising my view of identity dilemma**

In the exegesis, I comment on nine pieces of artwork. The works together represent my interpretation of the notion of identity dilemma through different perspectives. Based on the social research findings, I reflect and transfer my understanding of the Chinese immigrants' identity dilemma with a focus on expressing their struggles, negotiation, ambivalence and ambiguity of their sense of belonging and decision-making when adapting to living in the New Zealand (Western) community. The content and the visual elements of the works are also closely associated with the social research data that was collected, such as the immigrants' daily costume, dining habits, naming customs and sense of belonging.

### **A. Costume**

In the first image (Figure 4), the girl wearing a Chinese garment standing in front of a mirror in a Western environment metaphorically expresses her organised disclosure of identity. From Lotman's (1990) interpretation of mirror, the reflected image of a thing is cut off from its natural practical associations (space, context, intention, and so on), and can therefore be easily included in the modeling associations of the human consciousness (p. 54). I designed a New Zealand postcard for mailing to China, which represents her original identity while living in New Zealand. Her unfocused eye line, her body gesture and her Chinese costume reveal her possible dislocation in a Western environment; longing for her home.



Figure 4. Zhang, N. 2008.

The next image (Figure 5) explores Chinese immigrants' clothing in a Western wedding ceremony. A wedding ceremony is a formal situation in which one expresses their identity. In the image, the visual construction of the two characters' poses has made reference to Eyck's oil painting (1434) "The Arnolfini Wedding" (Figure 6). In this wedding photo, the cross-over of West and East is significant: the bride in a Chinese cheongsam and the bridegroom in a Western suit. However I tagged a collection of repetitive Chinese symbols of happiness [喜]<sup>4</sup> onto the suit and imprinted a Western wedding gown on the cheongsam. The 'mixed' aesthetics of photography and illustration represents their ambiguous cultural identity. Embedded in a happy wedding photo are intricate fusions of negotiation, struggle, and compromise. Holding on, or letting go of their cultural identity?

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<sup>4</sup> In Chinese culture, the pattern is a mixed word comprising a symmetrical display of the same Chinese characters '喜', which literally means 'double happiness'. The word also implies the joining together of a male and female in a marriage. The pattern of bats around the word refers to fortune in Chinese.





Figure 5. Zhang, N. (2008).



Figure 6. Eyck, J.V. (1434). *The Arnolfini Wedding*.



There are different philosophical structures between the Eastern and Western educational systems. The most significant one would be debating to achieve new knowledge. Confrontation (in a civilised manner) is very common during public discussion or group critique in the Western society. Yet the Chinese will usually avoid confrontation and as such will not normally participate in critical decision. Adapting to a different learning environment is a challenge. Figure seven portrays a confronting situation of scholarly debate.

The visual construction makes reference to Sanzio's (1509-1510) 'The School of Athens' (Figure 8) in which Plato (left) and Aristotle (right) were having a scholarly debate. My work is a contemporary version of 'The School of Athens'. However, the context deals with the notion of identity dilemma, of drifting between East and West.



Figure 7. Zhang, N. (2008).



Figure 8. Raphael, S. (1509-1510). *The School of Athens*.

## B. Naming customs

Naming customs also reveal the Chinese immigrants' struggles and negotiation. In the image below (Figure 9), I have designed an illustration formed by continuous recurrent signatures to reflect that there is no visual definition disclosed between Western and Chinese naming formats. This illustration reflects the informant's struggle to hold on to his original identity and his compromise to avoid confusion in a Western society. The mirrored portrait, his diverging eye-line, and his despondent expression, in a Western suit, reveals his loss of direction and suggests multiple layers of his identity dilemma.



Figure 9. Zhang, N. (2008).

### C. Dining habits

Dining habits directly reflect personal 'eating' preferences. Nowadays, enjoying a diverse range of food has brought joy and entertainment to our mundane lives. Although food does not directly reflect our identity, there is a subtle clue instilled in our choice of food. Figure 10 was taken when a Chinese was cooking at home. The mixture of Eastern and Western ingredients portrays a sense of fusion between West and East. This is probably one area where the Chinese can easily embrace change.



Figure 10. Zhang, N. (2008).

The findings indicate a tendency for Chinese to favour their own food. I posed a young woman (Figure 11), in her cheongsam, dining in a Western restaurant. I instructed her to pick up a piece of food from the Western dish with chopsticks. This incongruous and seemingly embarrassing behaviour reflects her struggle. Her insistence at holding on to Chinese habits was accentuated through her unwilling expression and her cheongsam. I designed an album cover to envelope such an ambivalent moment of her life.





Figure 11. Zhang, N. (2008).

#### **D. Chinese New Zealander and New Zealand Chinese**

In the artwork below (Figure 12), I want to express the struggles Chinese immigrants face when negotiating their hybrid identity. I designed an illustration formed by the montage of Chinese and New Zealand passport images to express the informant's identity negotiation. Her passport photo is separated and placed in opposite directions and bleeding to the edge of both sides. Again, the interplays of separation and the mirroring and overlaying of the portrait and passports convey the emotional intricacy during the process of negotiation. This design expresses her ambivalent sense of belonging.



Figure 12. Zhang, N. (2008).

People consider home as a lived space. Home is where we can be what we are (Manen, 1997, p.102). The phenomenon of feeling 'homelessness' is another significant ambivalence of one's sense of belonging. In the practice (Figure 13), I designed a scene of a living room decorated with a mixture of Western and Eastern styles to represent the informant's lived space and cultural collectivity. The ambiguous New Zealand and Chinese landscape intrude into the room through the window to represent an in-between space. The young Chinese woman is posed to sit in-between the two spaces with an unfocused eye-line to express her feeling of an ambiguous and ambivalent sense of belonging.



Figure 13. Zhang, N. (2008).

I want to give my concluding perspective through an image (Figure 14). The aesthetics of this work is significantly different from the others in my research. It employs strong illustrative visual elements similar to Picasso's work (Figure 15) in the cubism<sup>5</sup> idea to illustrate a Chinese facial image through multiple layers to articulate a confused feeling. The overlapping and intertwining Chinese and New Zealand flags encroach on the facial expression. Behind the determined eyes, there is indecision about his sense of belonging.

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<sup>5</sup> In cubist artworks, objects are broken up, analyzed, and re-assembled in an abstracted form. Instead of depicting objects from one viewpoint, the artist depicts the subject from a multitude of viewpoints to represent the subject in a greater context. Often the surfaces intersect at seemingly random angles, removing a coherent sense of depth. The background and object planes interpenetrate one another to create the shallow ambiguous space, one of cubism's distinct characteristics (Figure 15).





Figure 14. Zhang, N. (2008).



Figure 15. Picasso, P. (1937). *Weeping woman*.

## Chapter five: Conclusion

The main research question in this research is how to communicate Chinese immigrants' identity to the New Zealand community through visual discourses. In the project, social research has been employed to acquire rigorous consideration to understand the Chinese immigrants' thoughts and feelings about their cultural identity. The social research findings have been used to give evidence to support my practical development.

The exegesis has contextualised my exploration of Chinese immigrants' identity through a series of theoretical studies on the notions of identity. From my sociological research, I have established my notion of identity dilemma through interpreting the participants' contradicting thoughts and feelings. I have designed and performed a semi-constructed interview with guided questions in order to canvass the informants' opinions on their sense of belonging and their decision-making process in their daily routines. The notion of identity dilemma is understood as the Chinese immigrants' ambivalent struggle to negotiate in-between Western and Eastern culture within the New Zealand community.

The social research findings have been transformed into a series of visual representations. To express my notion of identity dilemma, I have focused on visualising Chinese immigrants' emotional ambivalence, conflict, struggle and negotiation through an interplay of visual elements. The heuristic models of experimentation have been effectively employed in the creative production of my research. This enabled me to explore visual meanings, discipline and to test the hypothetical outcomes in order to interpret and communicate my social research findings. I have explored many ideas and visual elements for achieving and visualising my notion of dilemma. For example, the social research data shows that the informants attempt to negotiate with Western culture in different situations, such as wearing Chinese garments in a wedding ceremony, having dinner in a Western restaurant and cooking at home. To respond to the data, I have set up some scenes to rebuild the environment for photographing. In my opinion, using my social research data allows my practice to become more rigorous. I have also employed metaphors that made references to Western classical paintings for visualisation. In my opinion, applying Western metaphors is effective as they are familiar to the Western community. I have also developed other ways for visualising identity dilemma. For instance, I had extended the distance between the mirrored portrait (Figure 9) to express the ambiguous mental journey of Chinese immigrants' struggles and negotiation when adapting to Western naming customs. It reveals the long journey of making compromise, which will probably stay with the immigrants



for their future life in a Western society. The practical research approaches transfer the social research findings into a visual form by using photographic aesthetics as documentation, and is supported by illustration. The mixed media approach is introduced to create the in-between document and fiction aesthetics. The visual outcomes reflect on the research findings from a collective perspective.

In summary, New Zealand Chinese do have the intention of negotiating and adapting to the Western culture even if they are torn by their cultural beliefs and struggle to balance their emotional ambivalence at different levels. I have established my notion of identity dilemma and have transformed it into visual representations as a way of initiating an art and design discourse. I believe that the project contributes to transforming the social research findings into a visual form, which communicates with viewers to bring an awareness of the ambivalent identity of Chinese immigrants in New Zealand's multi-cultural community.

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## Images:

Maurits Cornelis Escher, *Another world*. Woodcut. 318 × 261 mm. Signed and dated 1947. Cornelius Van S. Roosevelt Collection. Washington.

Jan Van Eyck, *The Arnolfini Wedding*. Oak panel. 822 × 600 mm. Signed and dated 1434. National Gallery. London.

Pablo Picasso, *Weeping woman*. Oil on canvass. 60 × 49 cm. Signed and dated 1937. Penrose collection. London.

Raphael Sanzio, *The School of Athens*. Fresco. 5000 × 7700 mm.

Signed and dated 1510. Apostolic Palace. Vatican City.

Yasumasa Morimura, *Blinded by the light*. Type C photograph. 2000 × 3830

mm. Signed and dated 1991. Queensland Art Gallery. Brisbane.

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## **Appendices:**

The appendices listed are the 20 participants I have interviewed. It includes the process of the interviews, the sample questions, participants' demographic profiles, transcripts. A review of the knowledge being drawn from these interviews to inform my practice is also included.

### **A.1 The process of the interviews:**

20 participants (both 10 males and females) have been chosen through my network with Chinese immigrants in New Zealand. I managed times and had interviews with each of them and asked them questions based on my designed questionnaire. The participants' feedbacks were recorded and transcript by written documents for further analysis. These data have been transformed to become the underpinning concepts of my creative practice.

### **A.2 Questionnaire sample:**

#### **Part one: Participant's information**

1. Name:
2. Gender:  
(1) Male (2) Female
3. Where were you born?
4. Where did you grow up? (Places and dates)
5. When did you come to New Zealand?
6. What is your profession?

#### **Part two: Place of Permanent Residence**

1. Please select the country you prefer to be your future permanent home.  
(1) China (2) New Zealand (3) Not sure
2. Please give reasons for the above.

3. Do you think that you have adapted to living in the New Zealand (Western) community? Give an example.

(1) Yes (2) No

4. Now living in New Zealand, do you think you can adapt to living in China again (either temporarily or permanently)? Give an example.

(1) Yes (2) No

5. Which identity represents you best?

(1) Chinese (2) Chinese New Zealander (3) New Zealand Chinese (4) New Zealander

### **Part 3: Dining Habits**

1. Please select the type of restaurant you prefer to go to for dinner?

(1) Chinese restaurant (2) Western restaurant

2. Please select your cooking style at home and give an example.

(1) Chinese meal (2) Western meal (3) Balance between the two styles of cooking

(4) A remixed style between Chinese and Western

3. Do you prefer to share dishes when you dine in a Western restaurant with your friends?

What is the reason? Give an example.

4. Do you enjoy Westernised Chinese meals in New Zealand?

(1) Yes (2) Not really, but it is acceptable (3) No

5. Please select the cutlery that you prefer to use when dining in a Western restaurant:

(1) Chopsticks (2) Knife and fork

6. If you selected chopsticks, please select the reason why.

(1) For convenience (2) Dislike cutting and piercing food (3) Feels comfortable

7. If you selected knife and fork, please select the reason why.

(1) To follow the local custom (2) Do not like to use it, but to follow local custom  
(3) Feels comfortable

8. Please select the cutlery you always choose when dining at home.

(1) Chopsticks (2) Knife and fork

9. If you selected chopsticks, please select the reason why.

(1) For convenience (2) Dislike to cutting and piercing food (3) Feels comfortable



10. If you selected knife and fork, please select the reason why.  
(1) To follow the local custom (2) Do not like to use it, but to follow the local custom (3) Feels comfortable

#### **Part 4: Daily Costume**

1. Do you wear Chinese garments (such as Cheongsam) in New Zealand?  
(1) Yes (2) No

2. If yes, why do you wear Chinese garments?  
(1) Like the style (2) To represent my Chinese identity (3) Just for fun

3. If yes, please select on which occasion you wear Chinese garments.  
(1) During formal occasions (2) At home (3) During leisure time

4. If no, do you intend to wear one in the future?  
(1) Yes (2) No

5. Did you wear Chinese garments when you were in China?  
(1) Yes (2) No

6. Will you wear Chinese garments when you live in China (temporarily or permanently) in the future?  
(1) Yes (2) No

#### **Part 5: Naming**

1. Do you have an English name?  
(1) Yes (2) No

4. If yes, when do you prefer to introduce yourself with your English name?  
(1) At all times (2) Only to Western friends (3) I introduce both my English & Chinese names

2. If yes, will you use both English and Chinese names as your formal name (e.g. in your passport or when signing legal documents)? And in which order (Chinese or English name first)?

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3. If no, why have you not chosen an English name?

4. Unlike the Western name order, Chinese put their family name first followed by their first name. Which order do you follow, the Western or Chinese order? Why?

(1) Western (2) Chinese

5. When signing formal documents, do you sign in Chinese (characters) or English?

(1) In Chinese (2) In English

### **A.3 The participants' demographic profiles**

The participants' professions include qualified accountant, sales man, student, IT workers, jewellery designer, manager, cleaner, travel consultant, office assistant and mechanical engineer. They were born and grew up in different areas and cities of China, which include Beijing, Nanjing, Dalian, Guangzhou, Shijiazhuang, Shenzhen, Daqing, Shanghai, and Fujian. Each member of the target group came to New Zealand at different times. They have been living in New Zealand from two to fifteen years. The recruitment criteria included those: who were educated in China; and/or are currently studying in New Zealand; and/or are currently working in New Zealand. The exclusions were: those under 20 years of age ; those who were unemployed; and those who have resided in New Zealand for more than 15 years. The rationale is to select those who are actively involved in the community; are mature enough to give sensible opinions; and are still in the progress of establishing their career.

### **A. 4 The interview transcripts**

#### **A.4.1 Male participants' transcripts**

1. Information recorded from the participant named Charlie:

Charlie is from Jiang Sun Province in China and has been in New Zealand for seven years. He is now a qualified accountant. Charlie identifies himself as a New Zealand Chinese. He thinks that he can adapt to living in both China and

the New Zealand (Western) community. He prefers to participate in New Zealand local social activity, entertainment and sports so that he can learn New Zealand history, culture and strengthen his English language. Charlie likes to go to Chinese restaurants for dinner. He prefers to follow Western customs in a Western environment. However, he cooks a remixed style of Chinese and Western food at home. The informant intends to wear Chinese garments in China but he does not want to be acknowledged as Chinese by wearing Chinese garments in New Zealand. Charlie introduces himself with both his English & Chinese names, and he prefers to follow Western signing customs.

2. The participant named Zhang is a sales man who came to New Zealand in April of 2000. The informant identifies himself as New Zealand Chinese. He thinks that he can adapt to living in the New Zealand (Western) community but not in China. The informant prefers Chinese restaurants for dinner and cooking Chinese food at home. In accordance with Western dining customs, the informant does not like to share dishes with others when dining in a Western restaurant. In contrast, he still insists on choosing chopsticks as he feels more comfortable using them. He only uses his Chinese name when signing in formal situations, as he wants to be acknowledged as a Chinese person in New Zealand. The informant also has integrated into the Western community. He likes the Western working environment in Kiwi companies.

3. Greg is a cleaner who has been in New Zealand for seven years. He identifies his cultural identity as New Zealand Chinese. He feels that he cannot easily adapt to living in between the New Zealand (Western) community and China. The informant wants to mark his Chinese cultural identity through wearing Chinese garments in formal occasions only. In formal situations, the informant insists on signing documents in Chinese characters. In contrast, in informal situations, he tends to identify himself by using his English name. The informant enjoys the Westernised Chinese meal in New Zealand, but he usually cooks Chinese food at home and goes to Chinese restaurants. He prefers to follow Western dining habits in a Western restaurant.

4. Mo is a builder who has been living in New Zealand for five years. He identifies himself as New Zealand Chinese. The informant feels that he cannot easily adapt to living in New Zealand because of cultural differences between West and East. The informant would like to identify his Chinese identity through wearing Chinese garments in New Zealand, but not in China. Mo prefers Chinese restaurants for dinner. He tries to keep Chinese dining culture in a Western restaurant such as sharing dishes with friends. He also feels that a remixed style of food is not acceptable. The informant uses his Chinese name at all the times. In some formal occasions, he would like to follow the Western name order (e.g. when signing formal documents).

5. Ken is an IT worker who came to New Zealand 10 years ago. He identifies himself as New Zealand Chinese. The informant wants to continue living in New Zealand in the future, as he enjoys Western culture and would like to communicate with New Zealanders. The informant feels comfortable using a fork and knife when he dines in a Western restaurant. However, when he has dinner at home he prefers to choose chopsticks as he dislikes cutting and piercing food. The informant likes to use his English name when he introduces himself in an informal situation. However, he keeps his Chinese name and follows the Chinese order of signing when he signs formal documents in New Zealand. Even though he usually signs formal documents in Chinese, in contrast, he uses both English and Chinese names as his formal name. This is because he thinks that it is easier when introducing himself to others.

6. Michael is a chief who has been living in New Zealand for six years. He identifies himself as a Chinese New Zealander. He does not sure where to live in the future. Michael likes to use his English name at all the times when introducing himself to others. He also likes to follow Western dining habits in a Western restaurant. However, he cooks a remixed style of food between Chinese and Western food at home. In addition, he would like to represent himself as Chinese in the future through wearing Chinese garments in New Zealand.

7. Wu is a student who has been living in New Zealand for nine years. He identifies himself as a Chinese New Zealander. He is not sure where he will live in the future, China or New Zealand, as he enjoys both Western and Eastern cultures. Wu likes to use his Chinese name at all the times when introducing himself to others and when signing formal documents. He prefers to follow Western dining customs in a Western restaurant. Westernised Chinese meal is acceptable to him. He usually shifts between Western and Eastern food at home, such as cooking steak, Chinese tofu, pasta, and salad. In addition, he would like to represent himself as Chinese through wearing Chinese garments in the future.

8. Ryan is a student who has been living in New Zealand for five years. He identifies himself as a Chinese New Zealander. He would like to choose China as his permanent home in the future. Ryan thinks that he can adapt to living between China and the New Zealand (Western) community. He prefers to follow Western dining customs in a Western restaurant. He usually cooks Chinese food at home, and Westernised Chinese meal is also acceptable to him. Ryan has worn Chinese garments before. He also likes to wear it in New Zealand to represent his Chinese identity. Ryan uses his English name when introducing himself, and he likes to follow Western naming customs when signing formal documents.

9. Bill is an IT worker who has been living in New Zealand for seven years. He identifies himself as New Zealand Chinese. He is not sure which country will be his permanent home in the future. Bill finds it difficult to adapt to living between China and the New Zealand (Western) community because of cultural diversity. He prefers to follow Western dining customs in a Western restaurant. He usually cooks Chinese food at home, and does not really like Westernised Chinese meals. Bill has not worn Chinese garments before, but he wants to wear it in New Zealand to represent his Chinese identity. Bill uses his English name when introducing himself, and he likes to follow Western naming customs when signing formal documents.

10. The informant called Lee is a photographer who has been living in New Zealand for more than five years. He identifies himself as New Zealand Chinese. He is not sure which country will be his permanent home in the future. Lee finds it difficult to adapt to living between China and the New Zealand (Western) community because of cultural difference. He prefers Chinese restaurants for dinner. When he has dinner in a Western restaurant, he likes to follow Western dining customs. He usually cooks Chinese food at home, and does not really like Westernised Chinese meals. Lee has worn Chinese garments before, and he also likes to wear it in New Zealand to represent his Chinese identity. Lee uses his Chinese name when introducing himself, and he follows Chinese naming customs when signing formal documents.

#### **A.4.2 Female participants' transcripts**

1. Nicky is a jewelry designer who came to New Zealand in 2002. She identifies herself as New Zealand Chinese. However, she finds it difficult living in the New Zealand (Western) community. The informant does not want to wear Chinese garments to identify her Chinese identity in New Zealand. Nicky prefers Chinese restaurants for dinner. She usually cooks a remixed style of food between East and West. She would like to learn Western dining customs in a Western restaurant. The informant uses her Chinese name for signing documents, but uses her English name for informal introductions.

2. Yan is a student who immigrated to New Zealand five years ago. The female informant identifies herself as a Chinese New Zealander. However, she does not think that she can adapt to living in China again. She prefers Chinese restaurants for dinner and cooks a remix of food between West and East at home. She keeps her Chinese dining customs by using chopsticks at all the times. The informant would like to wear Chinese garments in New Zealand because of the fashion style. However, she does not want to try it in China. Yan prefers to use her Chinese name when signing formal documents, but follows the Western name order. She uses her Chinese name when

introducing herself.

3. Daisy is a manager who came to New Zealand more than seven years ago. She lived in Guang Dong province in China. The informant identifies herself as Chinese. However, she dislikes going back to China because of the dense population. She usually shifts between Chinese and Western styles of cooking such as sandwiches, steamed rice etc. The informant does like following the Western dining culture in a Western restaurant, as she dislikes cutting and piecing the food. Sometimes the informant does not really like the hybrid style of things between Western and Chinese cultures. For example, she does not really like the Westernised Chinese food in New Zealand. She wants to mark her Chinese identity through wearing Chinese garments in both New Zealand and China. The informant usually uses her English name to represent herself when she signs a formal document. She sometimes follows Western customs in formal situations.

4. The female participant named Jamie came to New Zealand about four years ago. She studies Theology. The informant identifies herself as a Chinese New Zealander. She thinks that she can adapt to the New Zealand (Western) culture, and she chooses to go back to China to see her family and friends. She introduces herself by using both her Chinese and English names. The informant usually uses both Chinese and English characters when signing. However in the future, she plans to use only her Chinese name when signing formal documents. Faye would like to wear Chinese garments in New Zealand because of the fashion style. The informant likes to follow Western dining customs in a Western restaurant, but she cooks a remixed style of food at home.

5. The female informant Jessica came to New Zealand six years ago from Beijing. She works as a cleaner now. Jessica identifies herself as New Zealand Chinese. She has chosen New Zealand as her permanent home because of the good climate. She can adapt to living in the New Zealand (Western) community, but not China because of the dense population. The informant prefers to go to Chinese restaurants for dinner and cooks Chinese food at home. She feels comfortable following Western dining customs in a Western restaurant. Jessica has never tried and does not want to wear Chinese garments. She uses her English name when introducing herself and tends to follow Western signing customs.

6. Daniel came to New Zealand seven years ago from Beijing China. She works as an office assistant. She identifies herself as Chinese and prefers to choose China as her permanent home because of her family and friends. She finds it difficult adapting to life in the New Zealand (Western) community because of the cultural differences. The informant prefers to go to Chinese

restaurants for dinner and cooks Chinese food at home. She feels comfortable following Western dining customs in a Western restaurant. Daniel has never tried and does not want to wear Chinese garments. She introduces herself by using both her English and Chinese names and tends to follow Western signing customs.

7. Na is a cleaner who came to New Zealand six years ago from Beijing. She identifies herself as Chinese and prefers to choose China as her permanent home. She feels that she cannot adapt to living in the New Zealand (Western) community because of cultural diversity. The informant prefers to go to Chinese restaurants for dinner and cooks Chinese food at home. She feels comfortable following Western dining customs in a Western restaurant. Na has never tried and does not want to wear Chinese garments. She introduces herself by using both her English and Chinese names and tends to follow both Chinese and Western signing customs in different situations.

8. Abby is a travel consultant who came to New Zealand six years ago from southern China. She identifies herself as Chinese and prefers to choose China as her permanent home. She feels that she cannot adapt to living in the New Zealand (Western) community because of cultural diversity. The informant prefers to go to Chinese restaurants for dinner and cooks Chinese food at home. She feels comfortable following Western dining customs in a Western restaurant. Abby has never tried and does not want to wear Chinese garments. She introduces herself by using both her English and Chinese names and tends to follow both Chinese and Western signing customs in different situations.

9. Ho is a Chinese student who came to New Zealand more than 11 years ago. The informant identifies herself as Chinese. However, she prefers to choose New Zealand as her future home. She thinks she has integrated into the European lifestyle in New Zealand. She tries to learn the Western ways of scholar thinking. She follows Western dining customs and she likes to use a knife and fork when dining in a Western restaurant. In contrast, she prefers to share dishes with her friends in a Western restaurant, as she wants to taste different food. Ho has worn Chinese garments before in China and she wants to wear them again both in China and New Zealand. However, the reason is not to mark her Chinese identity but for the fashion. She introduces herself by using both English and Chinese name.

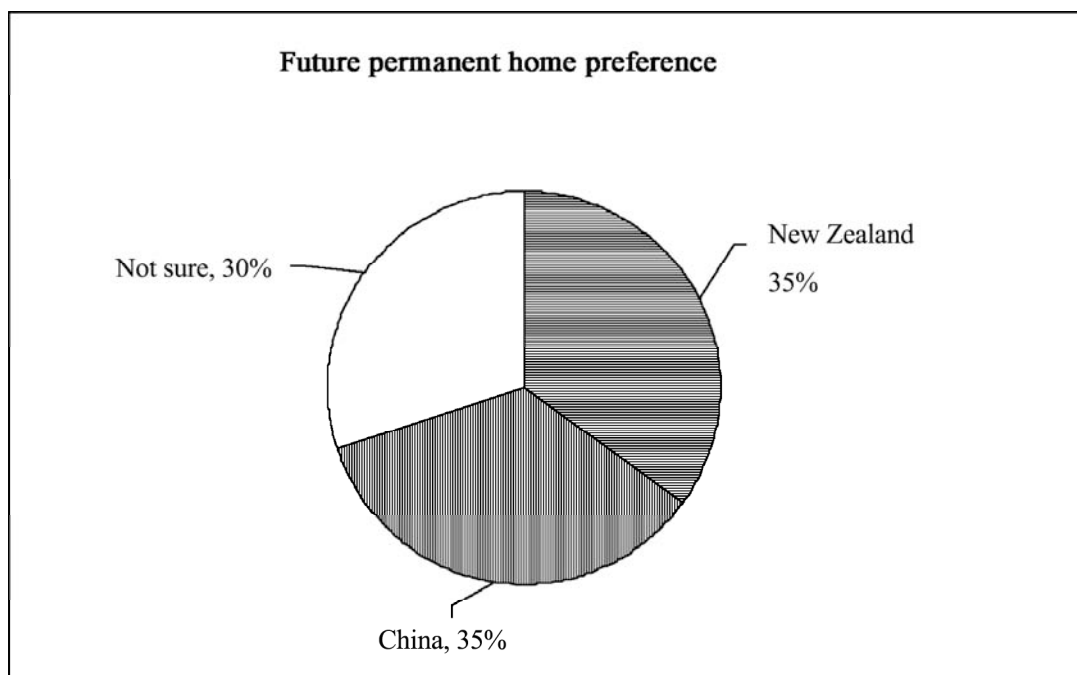
10. Tao is a mechanical engineer from northern China who came to New Zealand in 1999. The informant identifies herself as Chinese. She still cannot make a decision about which will be her permanent home, New Zealand or China. She feels that she can adapt to living in both Western and Chinese cultures. The informant does not want to wear garments to identity her cultural

identity in any situation. Tao prefers Chinese restaurants for dinner. She tries to learn the Western dining culture by using a knife and fork, but she still keeps some Chinese dining behaviours such as sharing dishes with friends. Tao does not like a remixed style of Chinese and Western food, but it is still acceptable. The informant follows Chinese traditional culture in which the only name she uses is the one given by her parents, thus she does not have an English name. However, she follows the Western name order when signing formal documents.

## A.5 Data Statistics

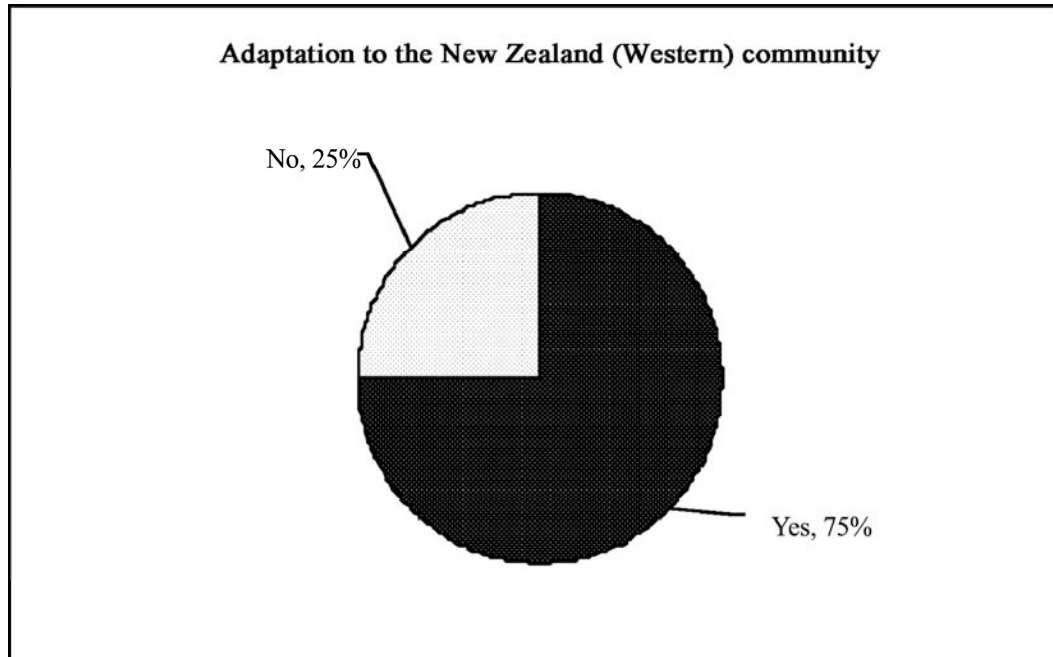
Permanent residence

1.

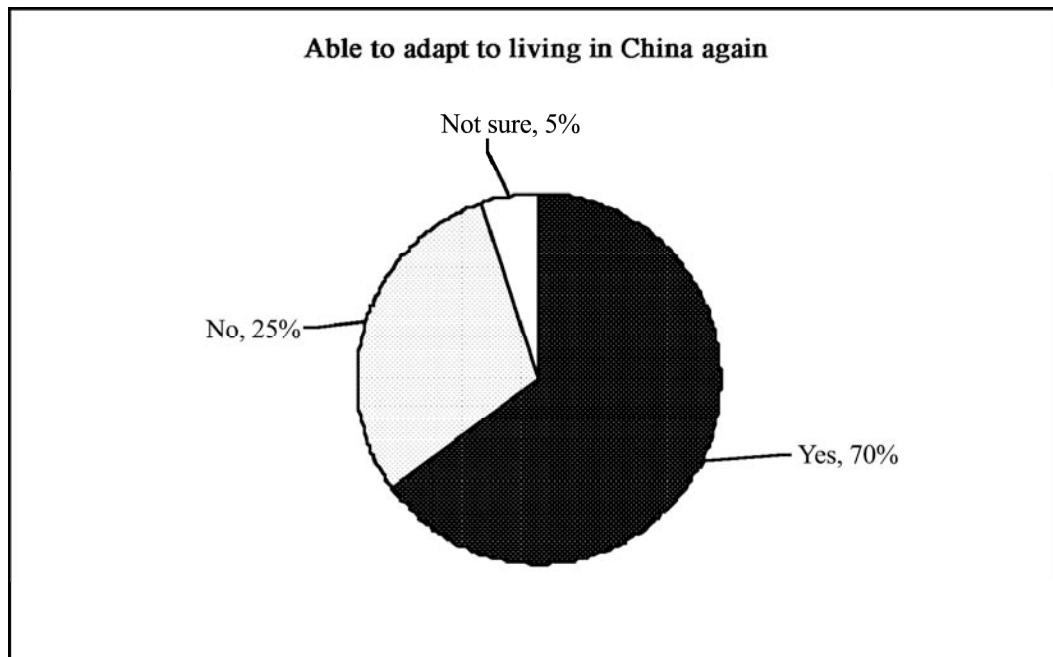




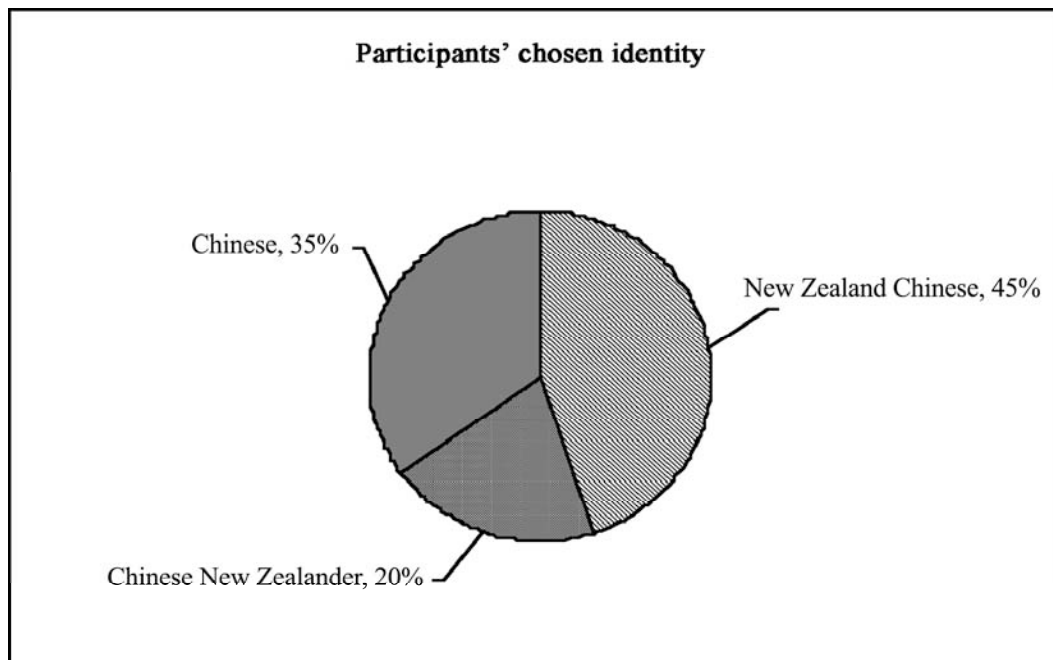
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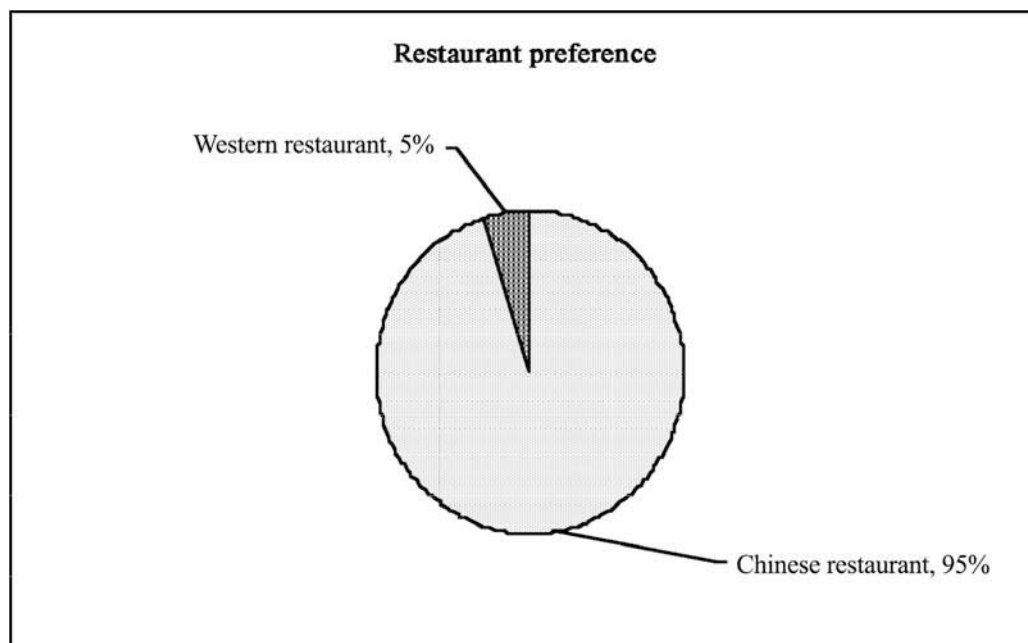


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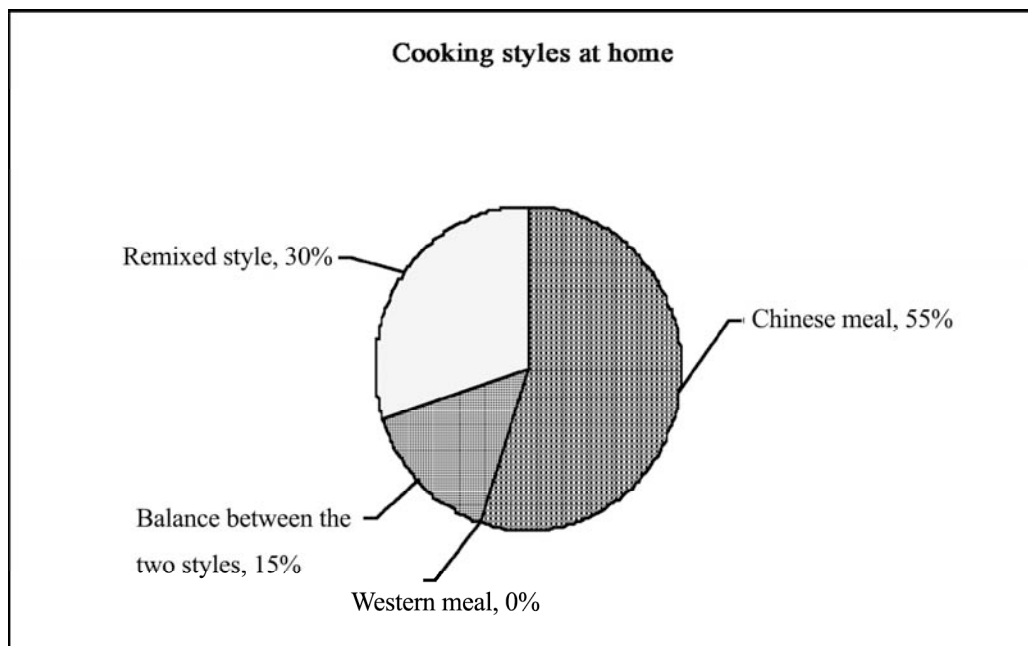


## Dining Habits

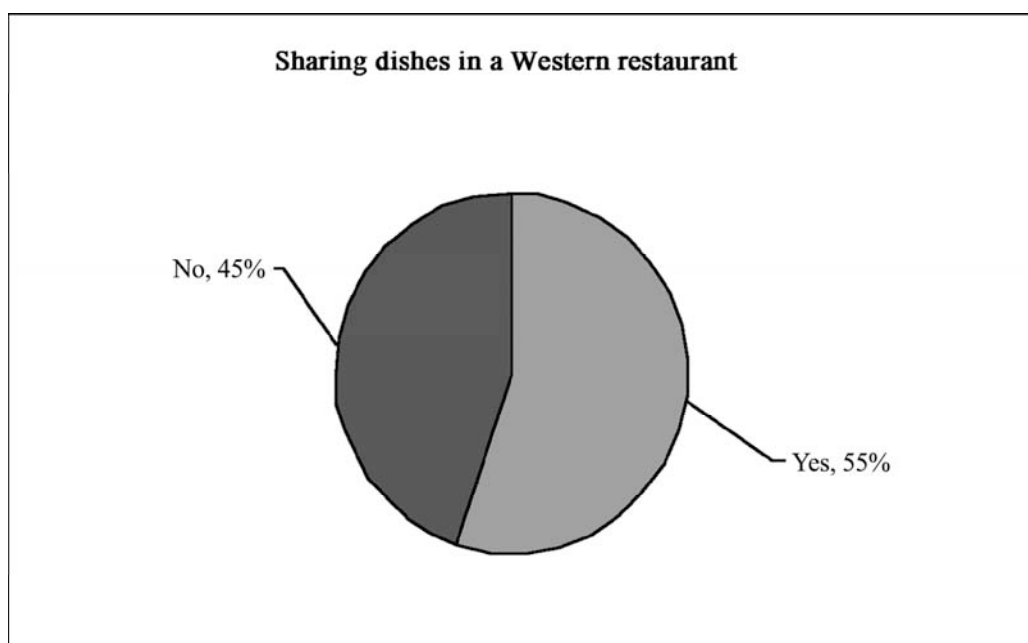
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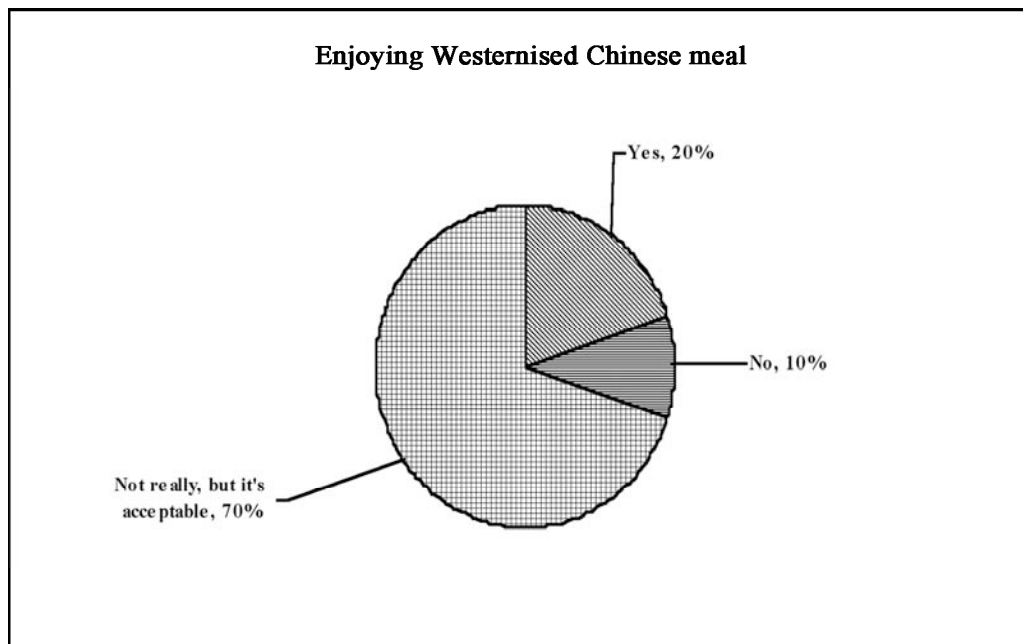
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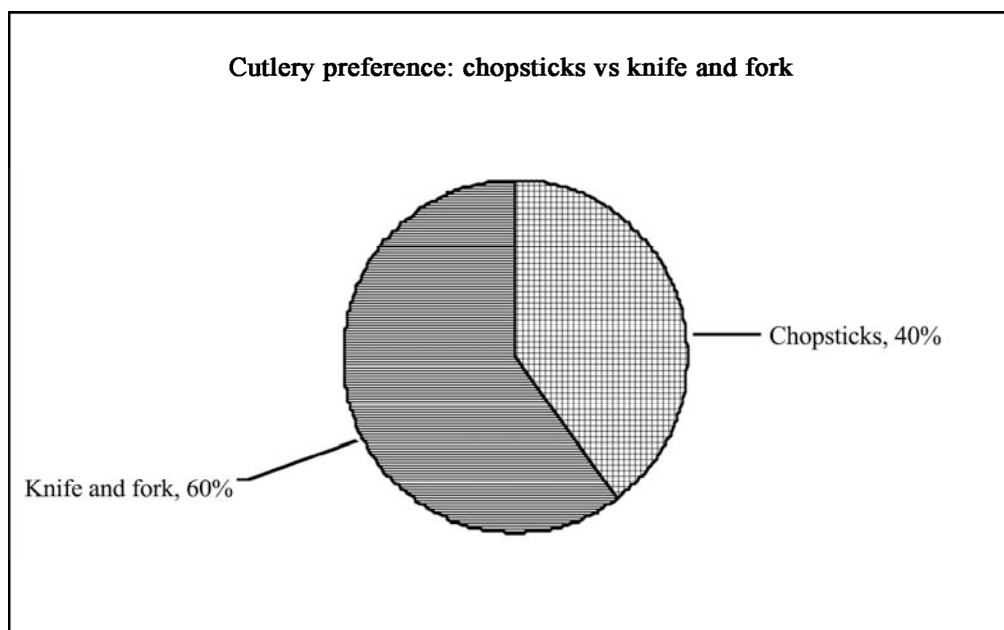
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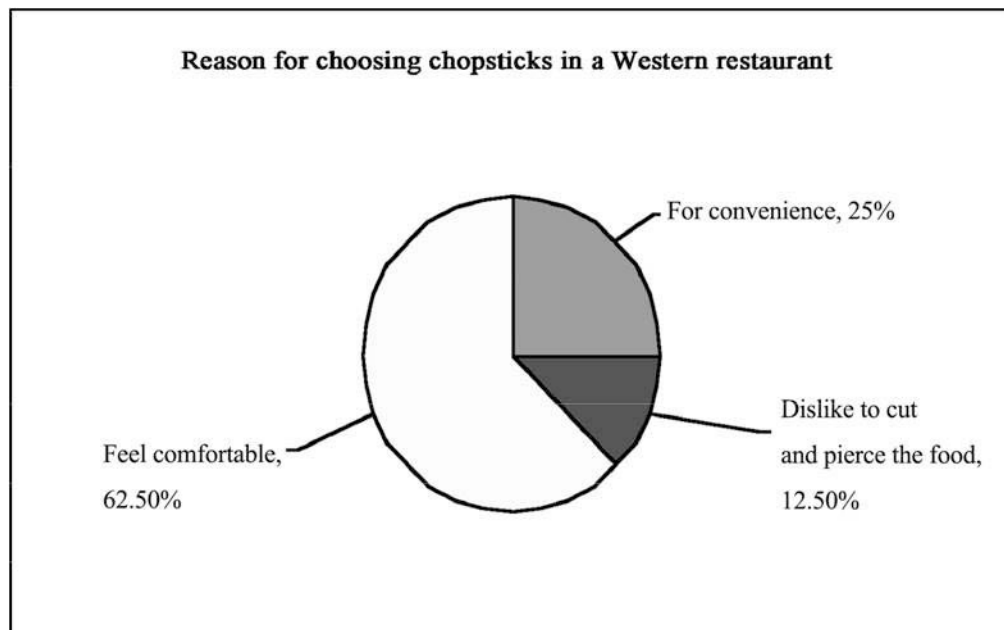
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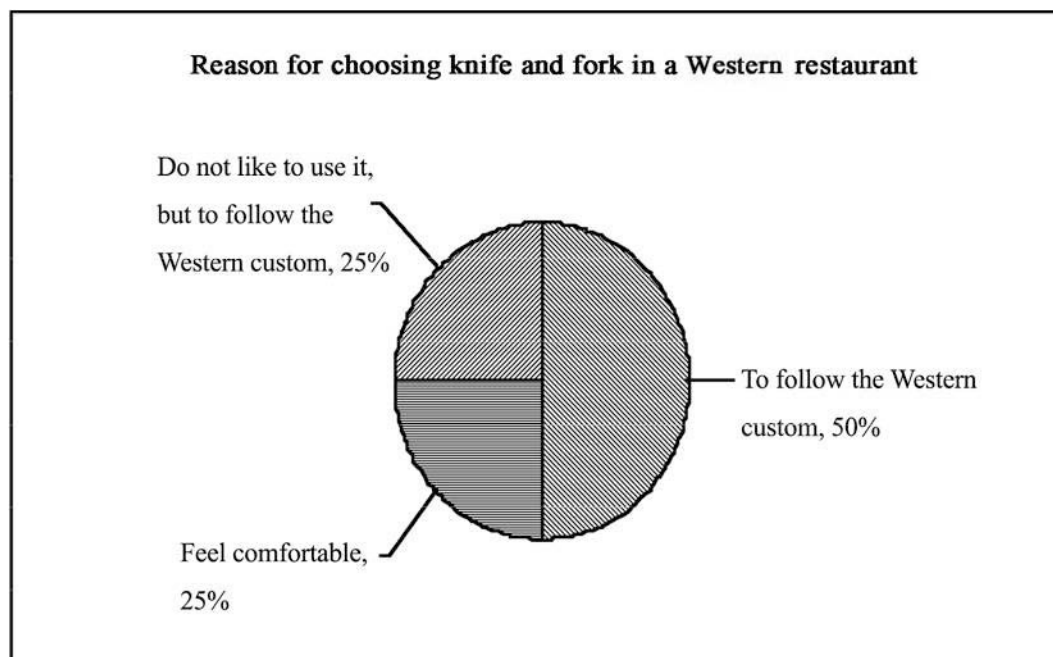
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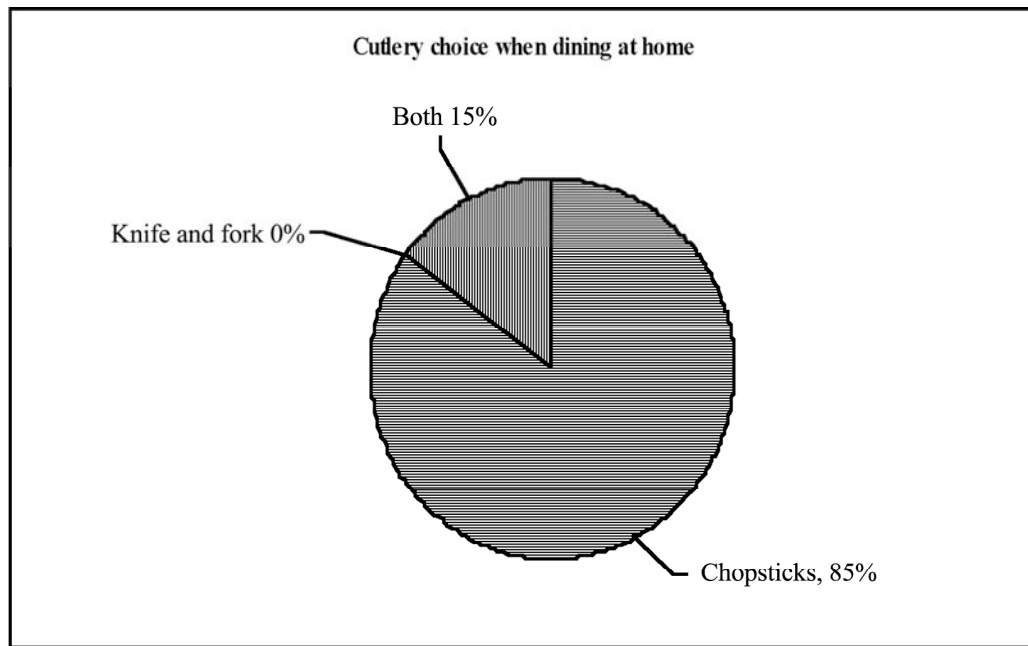
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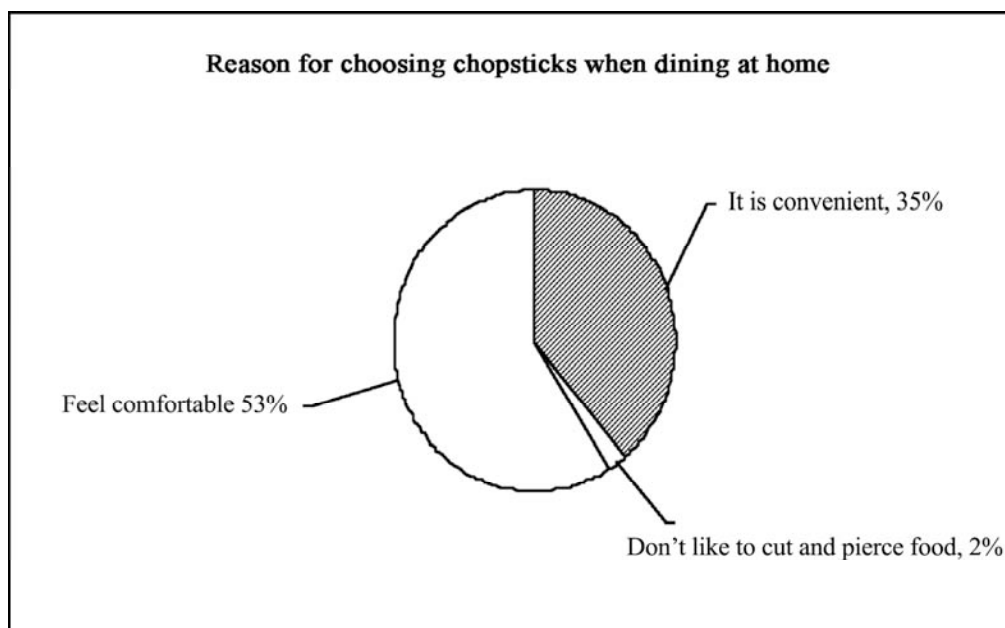
7.



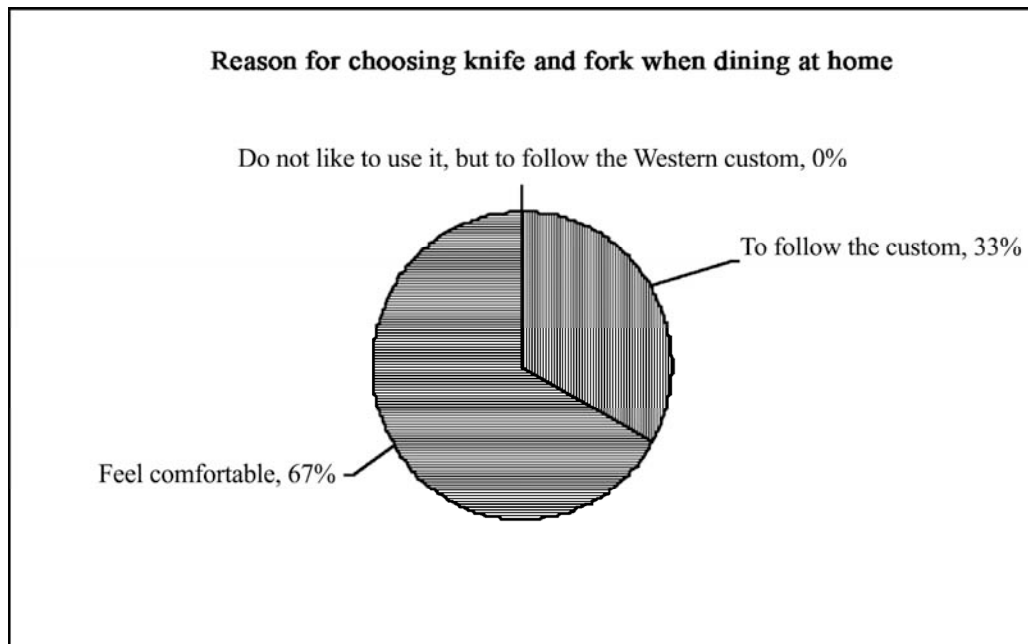
8.



(1) 9.

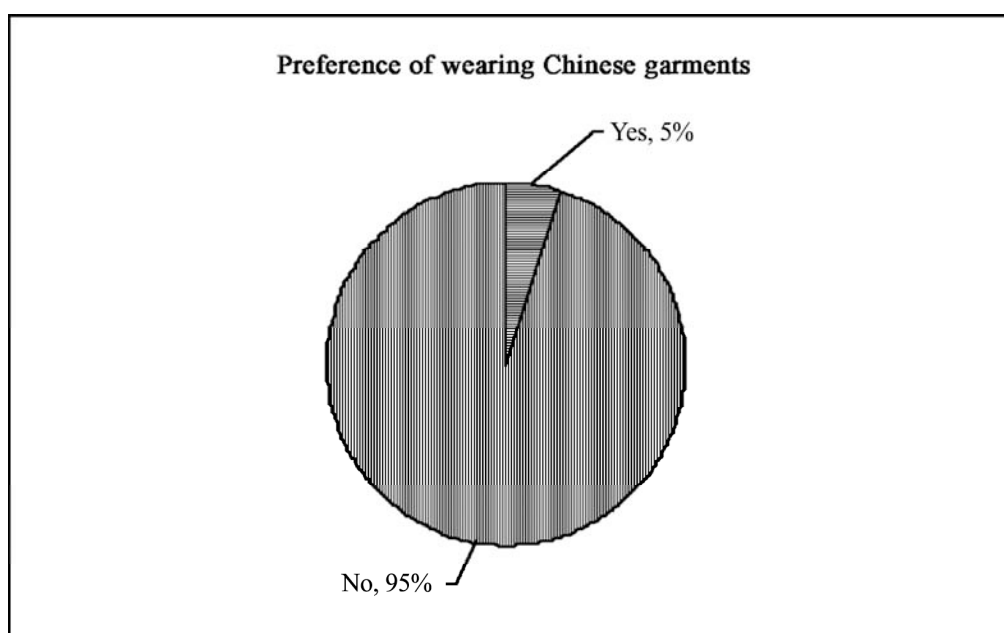


10.

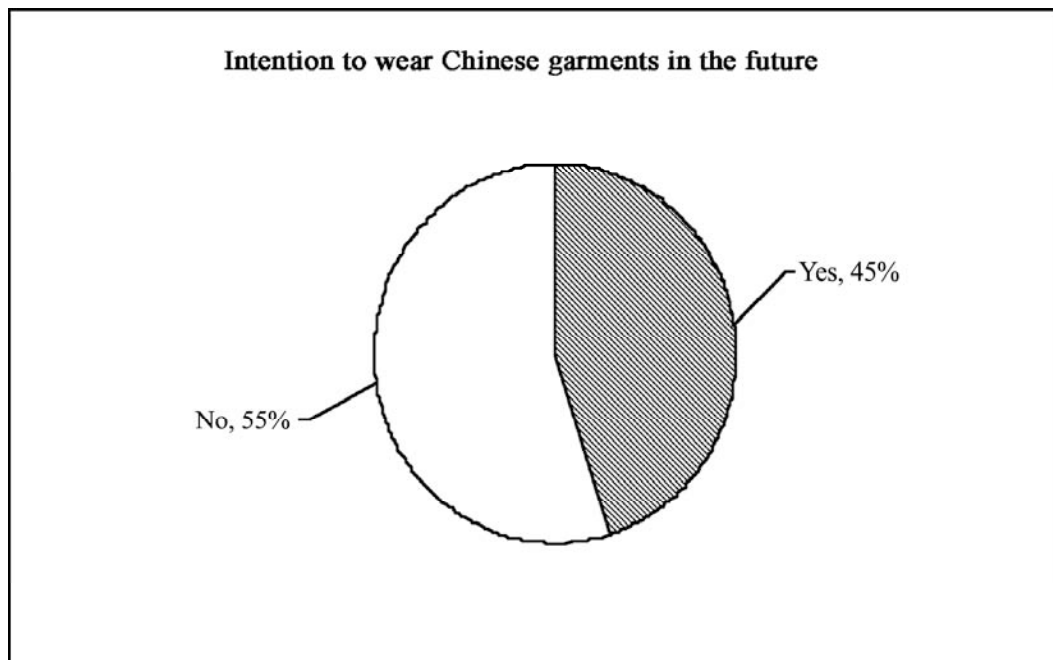


## Daily Costume

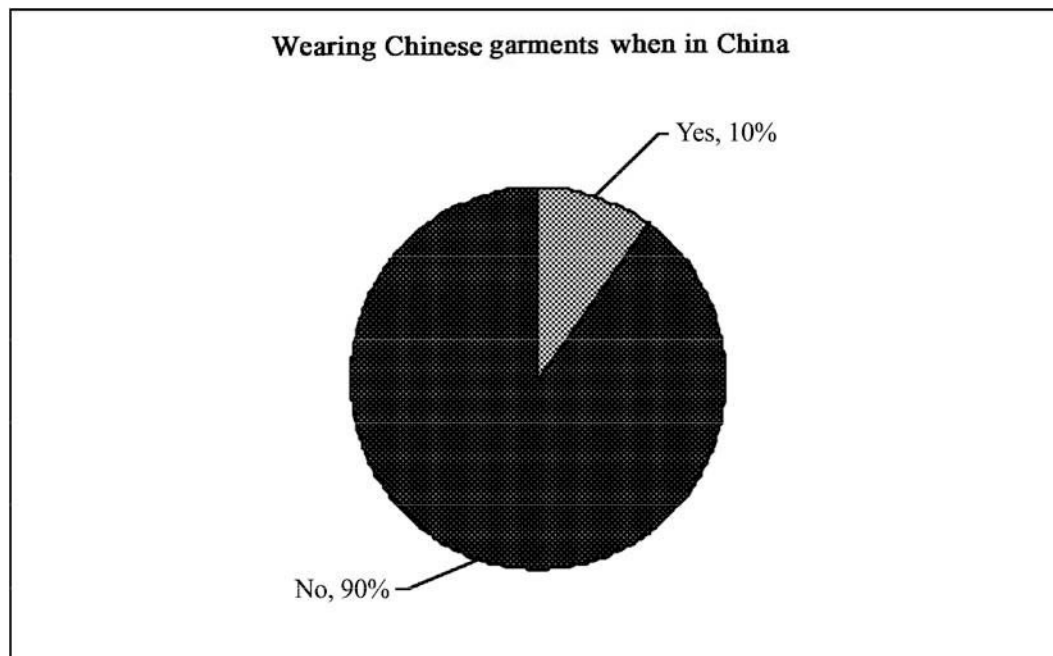
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2.

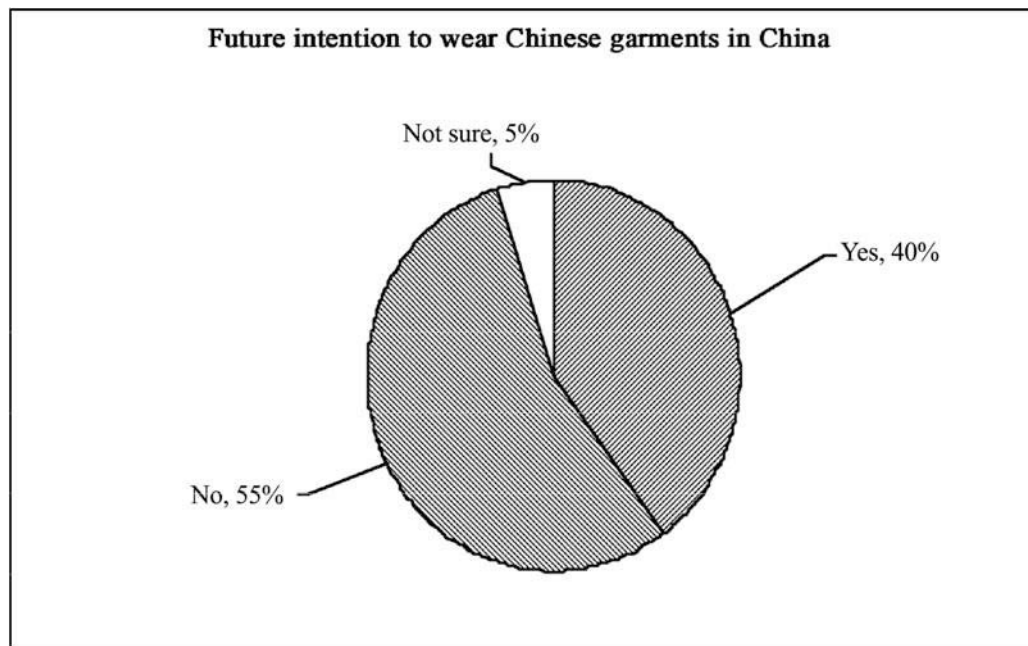


3.

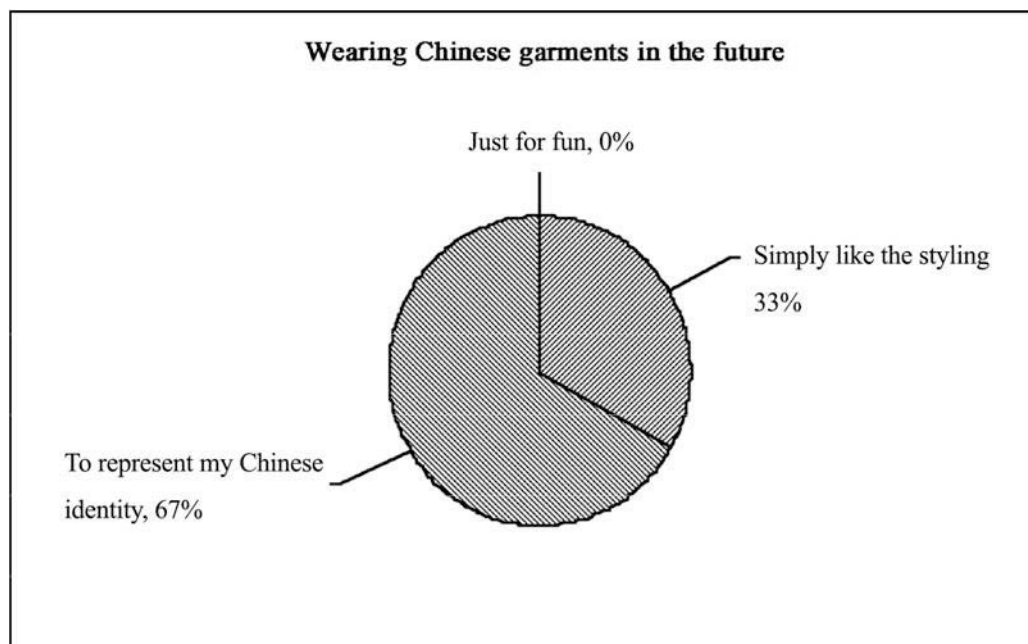




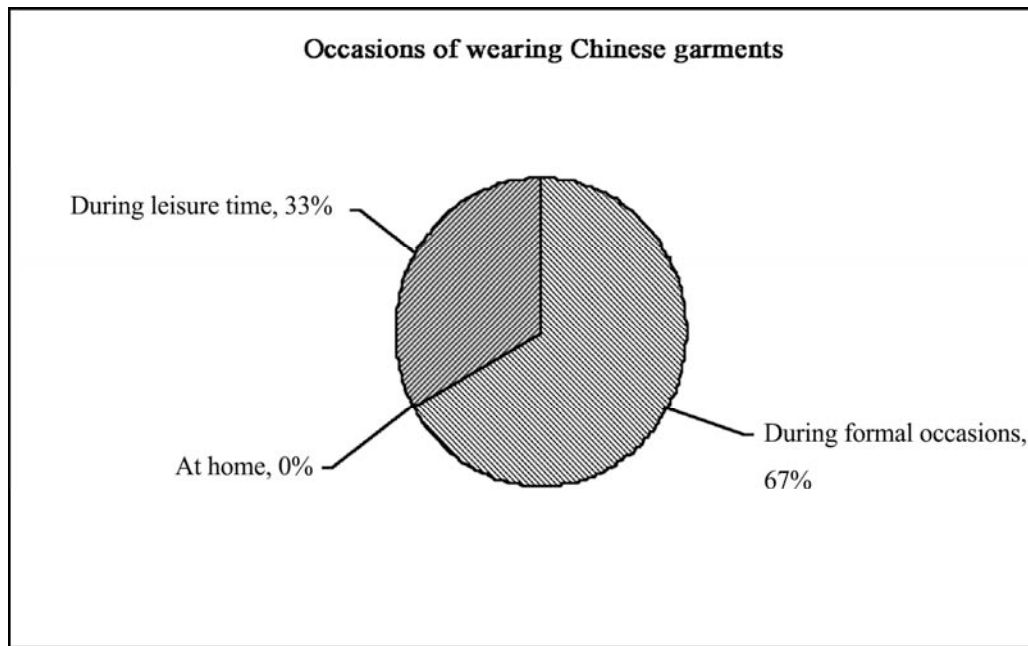
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5.

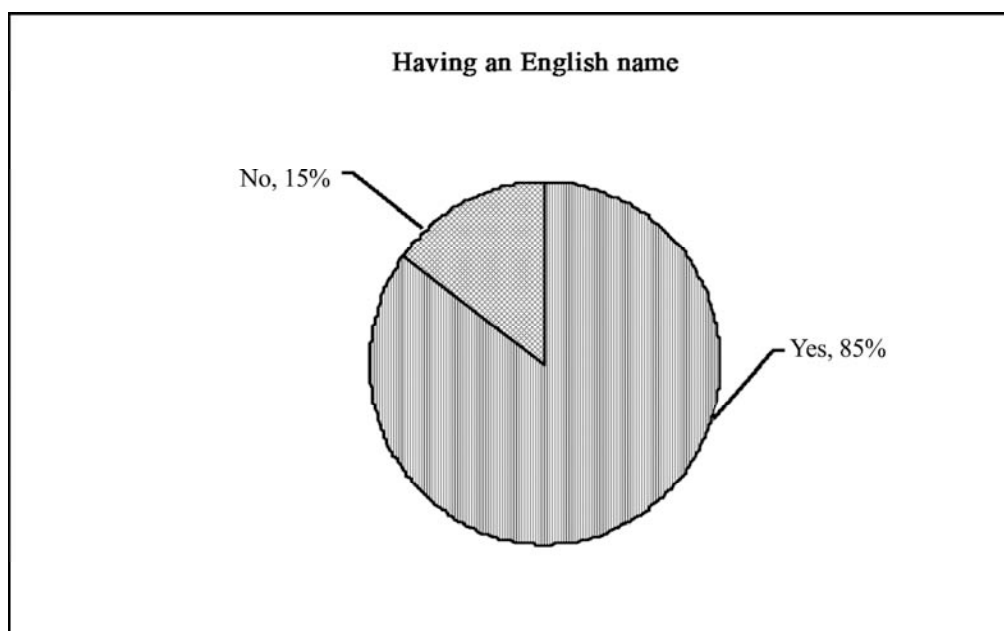


6.

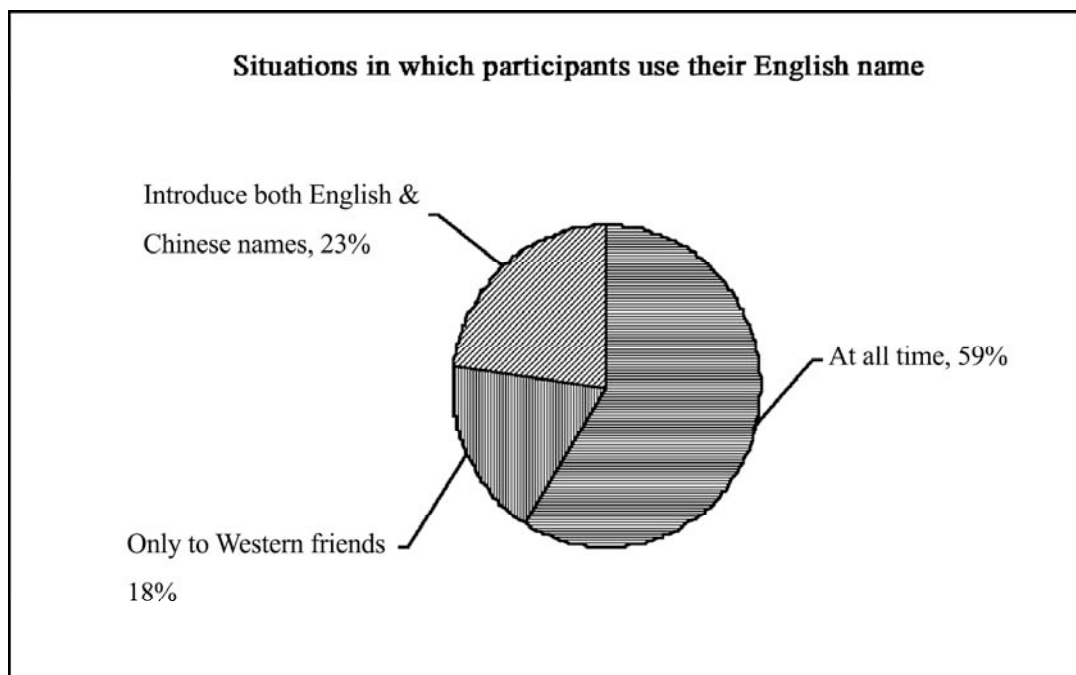


Naming

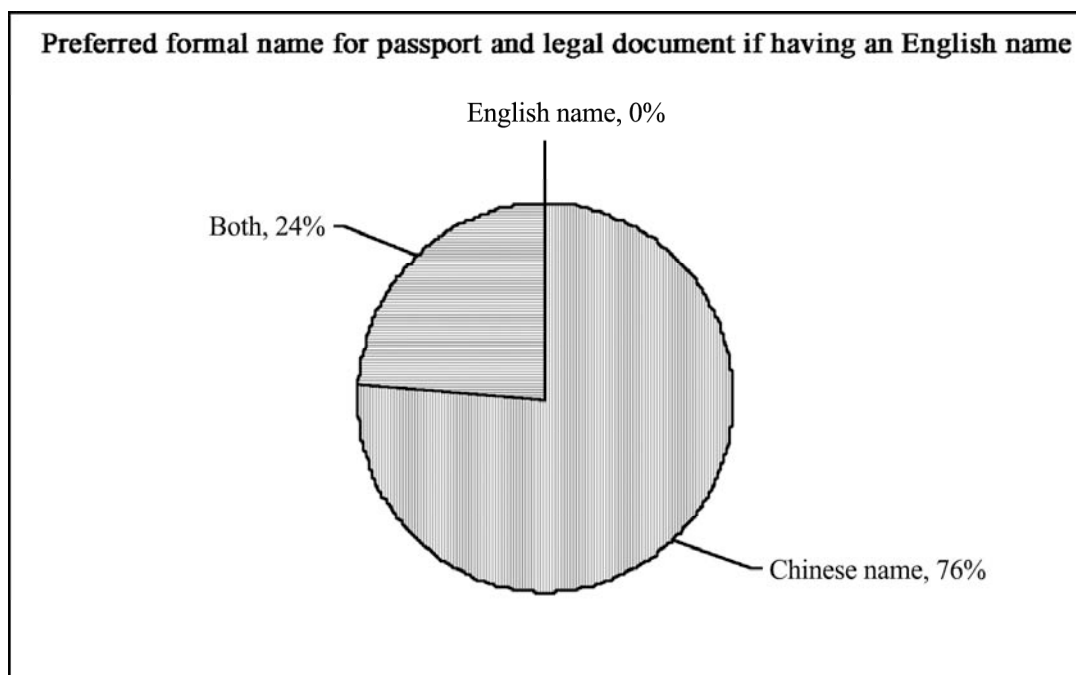
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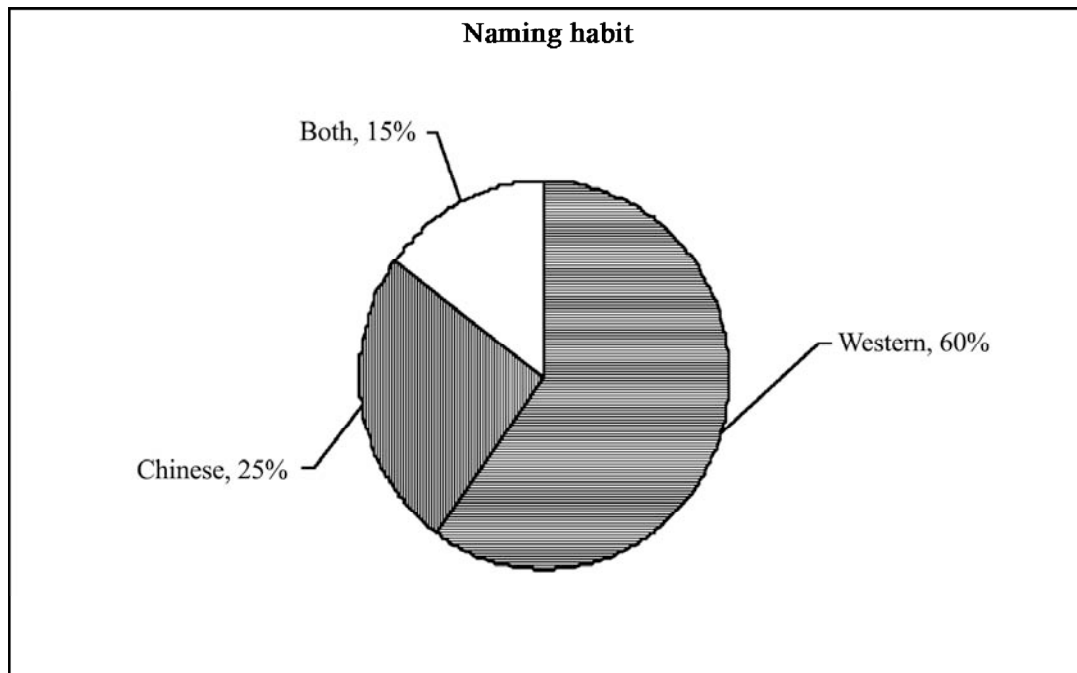
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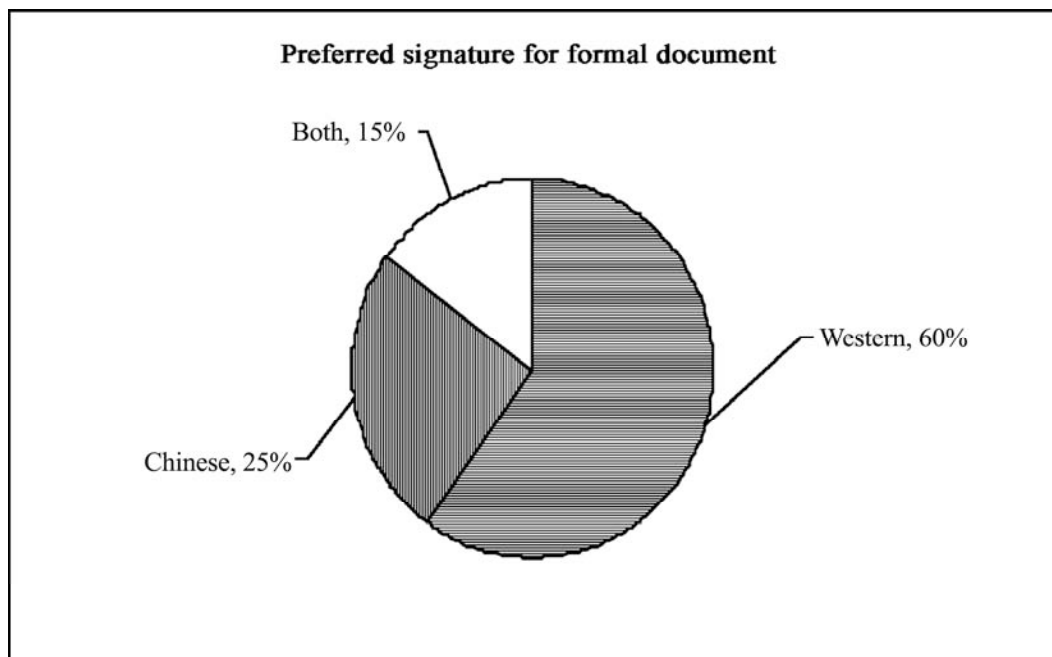
3.



4.



5.



The social research data has been analysed in chapter three.

