Exploring stressors that affect Vietnamese caregivers raising their children in Australia

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Abstract

While a body of research exists detailing challenges that Vietnamese caregivers face when settling in Australia, there are no empirical studies conducted on Vietnamese caregivers' stressors that affect their children's wellbeing in Australia. This qualitative study aimed to explore Vietnamese caregivers' experience in raising their children during a period of settlement in Australia, with at least one child in the age range between seven and nine. Guided by the relevant literature, semi-structured interview questions relating to how these caregivers raise their children in the context of parenting practices were posed to the ten participants. Thematic analysis was used to identify patterns of data reflecting their experience on raising their children. Six themes were identified: freedom, academic achievement, education at home, parental interaction, managing children's behaviour/attitudes and their children and language preference. Novel findings of the study include caregivers' ability to adapt to the host culture, their parenting style, and their beliefs and goals. A degree of conflict between caregivers and their children depended upon their children's age and their English language barrier. It is suggested that conducting mixed methods research would test the reliability of this study and offer a more comprehensive understanding of the research question.

Declaration

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree of diploma in any University, and, to the best of my knowledge, this thesis contains no material previously published except where due reference is made. I give permission for the digital version of this thesis to be made available on the web, via the University of Adelaide's digital thesis repository, the Library Search and through web search engines, unless permission has been granted by the School to restrict access for a period of time.

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<center>**CHAPTER 1**</center>

<center>**1. Introduction**</center>

1.1 Overview

Child-rearing in a host country is one of the biggest challenges for immigrant caregivers from diverse cultures. This is especially the case for Vietnamese caregivers who have emigrated from Asian countries to Western countries (Han & Ostering, 2011; Nguyen, 2008; Pinquart & Gerke, 2019; Tajima & Harachi, 2010). Some findings have indicated that cultural differences and English language barriers might lead to psychosocial distress among caregivers, which also affect a parent-child relationship (Choi, He, & Harachi, 2008; Dinh & Nguyen, 2006; Liamputtong, 2006). Vietnamese immigrants also face ongoing challenges when settling in the host country, such as learning a new language, finding a secure job, adjusting to a new environment and having a lack of social and family support (Liebkind, 1993; Nguyen, 2008; Rhee, Chang, Berthold, & Mar, 2012). Parents deal with many commitments, including demands of work, family, school-related and other child-related activities (Soriano & Weston & Kolar, 2001). Other findings show that Vietnamese immigrants' social-economic status in their home country, the length of time of settlement (Han & Osterling, 2011; Rhee et al., 2012), or traumatic experience during the escape from their home country influence the ability to adapt to the host country (Kegler, Young, Marshall, Bui, & Rodine, 2005). These problems do not only affect their lives but also affect how they raise their children (Han & Osterling, 2011).

Immigrants have experienced the process of learning and adapting to the new culture (Passer & Smith, 2015). The adaptation level depends on immigrants' attitudes towards the host culture (Sam & Berry, 2010). Cross-cultural studies indicated that the first generation took longer to learn and adapt the host cultural values and norms than the second generation (Kegler et al., 2005; Wong

et al., 2011). Integration refers to migrants maintaining features of their original culture, while also accepting aspects of the host culture (Sam & Berry, 2010). Assimilation refers to migrants foregoing their traditional culture and adopting the host culture (Passer & Smith, 2015). Separation occurs when migrants maintain their original culture and do not accept the host culture (Passer & Smith, 2015). Marginalisation refers to migrants not maintaining aspects of their traditional culture and are less likely to engage with the host culture. Migrants who adapt integration lead to better psychological outcomes than migrants of assimilation, separation or marginalisation (Sam & Berry, 2010).

Marginalisation and separation produce more psychological stress than either integration or assimilation (Passer & Smith, 2015). Consistent evidence across Western countries shows that Vietnamese parents who remain within the traditional culture and less likely socialize in the host country, tend to be strict on their children, and this parenting practice can produce child-parent conflict (Han & Osterling, 2011; Choi et al., 2008; Rhee et al., 2012). A recent study has documented how a degree of child-parent conflict increased from young aged children to the adolescent population (Tingvold, Hauff, Allen, & Middlethon, 2012). This was characterised by argument, anger and disagreement and resulted in youth problems include aggression, conduct problems, depression, anxiety and low self-esteem (Pinquart & Gerke, 2019). Other findings found that parent-child conflict decreased the level of secure parent-child bonding which results from poor in social and psychological adjustments in youth and adolescents (Choi et al., 2008). Overall it has been suggested that the home environment which contributes to how children perceive their parents and how they are treated (Morris, Cui, & Steinberg, 2013).

1.2 The Vietnamese community in Australia

The Department of Social Services ([DSS], 2018) reported that the Vietnamese community is the third-largest migrant community in Australia. Before 1975, 2500 Vietnamese people lived

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and worked in Australia (e.g.: students, orphans or spouses) (Flaherty, 1996). In Australia, there

were 185 039 Vietnamese born people (DSS, 2018). After the fall of Saigon on the 30th of April

1975, there were two waves of Vietnamese people who fled their home country and came to

Australia by boat in the late 1970s (Flaherty, 1996). Those people were forced to leave Vietnam due

to safety reasons (Rhee et al., 2012), or their experience of traumatic events before arriving in the

host country (Liebkind, 1993; Steel, Silove, Phan, & Bauman, 2002; Tingvold et al., 2012) to seek

hope, freedom and opportunity (Han & Osterling, 2011). The first wave of refugees was selected by

the Australian Government Refugee and Humanitarian Migration Program from Southern East

Asian refugee camps (Flaherty, 1996). The Australian Institute of Family Studies ([AIFS],1995) has

reported that since 1986, under the Family Reunion Program, the Vietnam-born population has

increased the number of Vietnamese people-partners, dependent children, and elderly parents who

have been approved for settling permanently in Australia. Vietnamese immigrants differ in

occupational skills, social class and their ethnic composition (DSS, 2018). Of the 97 505 Vietnam-

born who were employed, there was 40.8 per cent in a skilled managerial, professional or trade

occupation (DSS, 2018). There was 37.5 per cent of Vietnamese-born people aged 15 years and

over possessed higher non-school qualifications compared to 55.9 per cent of the Australian

population (DSS, 2018).

The Vietnamese population is dispersed across six States in Australia. Vietnamese people

tend to value a close relationship with their neighbour, hence, when settling in Australia they tend to

live close together in Australian capital cities such as Melbourne's Springvale and Sydney's

Cabramatta. Population numbers are as follows: New South Wales: 71,838 (38.8%); Victoria: 68

296 (36.9%); Queensland: 16 269 (8.8%) and Western Australia: 12 715 (6.9%) (DSS, 2018). The

numbers for the less populous states are: South Australia: 12025 (6.5%); Northern Territory: 670

(0.4%); Australian Capital Territory: 2957 (1.6%) and Tasmania: 263 (0.1%) (DSS, 2018). There

were 84 806 males (45.8 per cent) and 100 231 females (54.2 per cent) (DSS, 2018). The three main

languages spoken at home were Vietnamese (148 319), Cantonese (24 700) and English (5970) respectively (DSS, 2018). The major religions were Buddhism (104 066) and Catholicism (39 895) (DSS, 2018).

1.3 Challenges in the host country

Significant life-changing events have an impact on physical and emotional functioning of the family (Choi et al., 2008). Research has found that new migrants from different cultural backgrounds often struggle with financial, employment and settlement issues in Australia (Liamputtong, 2006). One study has found that parents can take longer than their children to adapt to a new cultural environment (Nguyen, 2008). Immigrant and refugee families face challenges to rebuild their family structures as well as functions in the host country. In a traditional family, role and authority are determined by sex, age and birth order (Xiong, Detzner, & Cleveland, 2005). Therefore, a father's authority (including grandfathers) can be challenged in the host country (Dinh & Nguyen, 2006). Father can have ultimate power in the family and thus can discipline children strictly. It has been also suggested that father, more than mothers, affect children's outcomes (Nguyen, 2008). However, under financial pressure, adult females are forced to find jobs, rapidly exposing them to non-Vietnamese values. Often they can become the main breadwinner while fathers are unemployed (Rhee et al., 2012). In a family where both the wife and husband had to participate in the labour market, husbands can be expected to share with the housework and care for their children. However, some husbands resist the change and can be feeling left behind (Rhee et al., 2012). Couple conflicts can cause women severe psychological distress (AIFS, 1995) and affect children's well-being indirectly (Rhee et al., 2012).

The English language barrier might cause psychological problems for Vietnamese immigrants. Vietnamese people are less likely to express their thoughts and feelings straightforwardly to foreigners and can find it difficult to change the way they communicate to non-

Vietnamese people due to a feeling of shame (Nguyen, 1994). Previous research has found that Vietnamese people with a lack of communication skills can be misunderstood by the dominant groups (Han & Osterling, 2011). This, in turn, may contribute to anxiety and uncertain and limiting contact with the host culture. Additionally, immigrants' parental authority can be challenged when children become the family's interpreter or spokesperson to help their parents deal with daily social interactions (Dinh & Nguyen, 2006; Kegler et al., 2005). Children learn a new language quickly and have more opportunities to interact with their peers, therefore, they adopt the host country's values well (Sam & Berry, 2010). Children taking power in the family might cause a conflict between the parents and their children due to cultural differences, and also diminish traditional parental roles as in the traditional family (Kegler et al., 2005).

Previous research has demonstrated that a conflict between parents and their children might lead to psychological problems among this population (Choi et al., 2008) because children may struggle in identifying with their parents (Nguyen, 2008). Other empirical evidence shows that girls tend to exhibit more conflict towards their parents than boys due to gender equality in Western countries (Nguyen, 2008). Studies of adolescent's perception of parenting style have documented that Vietnamese children perceive their parents as having a lack of empathy or understanding of their thoughts and feelings (Dinh & Nguyen, 2006). Some studies report that parents who want to reinforce their authority can cause physical punishment to discipline their children (Tajima & Harachi, 2010). Such parenting practice is not accepted in Western countries and is defined as maltreatment. Recent studies have argued that depending on adolescent's perception of parenting practices results in a broad range of accounts and interpretations (Morris et al., 2013). A recent pilot study has provided evidence that parents admitted that they lack awareness of adolescents' feelings and thoughts due to the perception of 'saving face' (Wong et al., 2011).

An acculturation gap that has led to youth problem behaviours either directly or indirectly can weaken parent and child bonding (Choi et al., 2008). During the journey of escaping Vietnam,

many people left their properties, family members and witnessed traumatic events and lived in difficult conditions in refugee camps. Once those people arrived in the host country, many quickly join in the labour force (Nguyen, 2008) and had limited opportunities to spend quality time to engage and communicate with their children (Dinh & Nguyen, 2006). The level of adaption of the host cultural value of the host nation may influence parenting style. For example, a recent study has found that parenting style study demonstrated that parenting style and the differential rate of acculturation can affect mental health outcomes of Vietnamese adolescents (Tajima & Harachi, 2010). Overall, it has been observed that Vietnamese parents tend to use an authoritarian parenting style, which may expose children to a higher level of depression and lower self-esteem (Heiz & Gullone, 1999).

Other research has demonstrated that a degree of conflict between parents and their children began when the children attended school and resulted in problems with adolescent social and psychological adjustments (Choi et al., 2008), including with education at school and home (Nguyen, 2008). Moreover, Vietnamese immigrants may not familiarise themselves with the child protection system, therefore, their parenting practices were considered as inappropriate in the host country. Some parents may resort to physical discipline for managing their children's behaviour such as spanking, by hitting with an object, slapping a hand, arm or leg. (Rhee et al., 2012). Such harsh and strict discipline is defined as authoritarian parenting which can produce misbehaviour and psychological problems in young children and adolescents. Cross-cultural studies argue that due to cultural differences, even parents who use physical punishment, do not necessarily consider such approaches as (Tajima & Harachi, 2010).

1.4 Vietnamese child rearing

There is little research on Vietnamese caregivers' child-rearing practices in Australia. An exception is one qualitative study where face to face interviews was conducted with Vietnamese (Soriano et al., 2001). Most of the participants were mothers who reported that their perception of

child-rearing was shaped by the culture in which they were raised in Vietnam (Soriano et al., 2001). Other research has shown that the expectation of parents has been strongly shaped by their cultural beliefs and values, embedded in the traditional norms (Jackson & Dickinson, 2009, Soriano et al., 2001). Findings also indicate that Vietnamese parents expect that their children should follow the filial piety and moral codes (AIFS, 1995; Dinh & Nguyen, 2006). Pious children are required to obey their parents, such as taking care of their parents when they get older and also protect pride and honour of the family and saving face (AIFS, 1995; Nguyen, 1994). In Vietnam, when children do something wrong or were disobedient, caregivers are more likely shout at or hit them and are less likely to discuss, negotiate or show their affection and talk with them (Fekjær & Leirvik, 2011). There is also the expectation that younger people will respect and obey adults due to their wisdom without question (Tajima & Harachi, 2010). It has also been observed that in a sibling relationship, younger siblings need to follow older siblings' behaviour and manners to live harmoniously together and that children are not motivated towards assertiveness which is considered to be a lack of respect (Nguyen, 1994). On the other hand, in the Western European countries, assertiveness is encouraged and considered as a strong foundation for children's outcomes positively regarding social interactions (Rudy & Grusec, 2001). Compared with individuals who are assertive and express their interests, wishes and needs. Vietnamese children are shaped to consider others' interests and to inhibit their interests. This is, in turn, may limit their ability to developing social skills and interact with other people (Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

With the fear of losing Vietnamese culture, Vietnamese caregivers have made efforts to encourage children to maintain Vietnamese culture. For example, children may be taught to remain in a close relationship with their relatives in both Australia and Vietnam (AIFS, 1995). They may be sent their children to Vietnamese schools to learn the Vietnamese language and participate in Vietnamese religious activities and Vietnamese /Chinese community cultural festivals (AIFS,

1995). They also prefer their children to speak the Vietnamese language inside the house while they can speak the dominant language in the public (Fekjær & Leirvik, 2011).

Other studies have indicated that parenthood is not an easy task when it is combined with a lack of sufficient English or lack of support networks such as extended family members and financial hardship. Extended family members might help with caring for children both in terms of physical help and advice, or financial difficulties, including job insecurity resulting from migration to Australia (Liamputtong, 2006). In the host country, the lack of extended family might challenge parents' ability to adapt and consequently reduce the quality of child-rearing (Rhee et al., 2012). Due to social-economic hardship, parents maybe struggle in the balance between family and work commitments and may be less likely to spend quality time interacting with their children due to work demands (Soriano et al., 2001).

Research also shows that most parents believe that the success of their children represents the success of the family and is a sign of good parenthood (Fekjær & Leirvik, 2011). And that education is considered as an intrinsic value of being a good citizen and having better lives (AIFS, 1995). This finding is consistent with cross-cultural studies which indicate that Vietnamese parents may force their children to study hard and achieve high academic performance because of a belief that their children would have a better life such as having better jobs and greater financial security (Souralová, 2014). Children may be reminded to study not only for themselves but also for their parents' ambitions (Souralová, 2014). Motivating children to achieve academic performance by rewarding them with some money and gifts is an example of such parenting behaviour (Souralová, 2014). Through education, parents expect their children to become productive citizens and to do the 'right things'. Parenting beliefs and parenting practice shape how parents raise their children (Nguyen, 2008). Child-rearing practices and child-parent relationships can be shaped by the acculturation process and immigration (Gauvain, Perez & Beebe, 2013). Parenting behaviour also

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affected by acculturation (Tingvold et al., 2012). The concept of the self and family are integrated, therefore, parents consider their children's success as their success (Tingvold et al., 2012).

1.5 Children's well being

There are different ways to define child well-being. The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund defined parents who presented warmth, communication, role modelling, discussion with children and monitoring children as being beneficial to children's well-being (Sanders & Morawska, 2018). Parent plays an important role in psychosocial development in young aged children and adolescent wellbeing (Lozada & Halberstadt, 2015; Tingvoild et al., 2011). Previous research has indicated parenting practices involve in parental communication, discipline, guided experience, modelling, monitoring and other everyday processes of child socialisation (Jackson & Dickinson, 2009). Research conducted on parenting practice across countries argues that while social academic status (SES) underpins children's developmental outcomes, parenting practices affect children's choices, feelings and behaviours (Tramonte, Gauthier, & Willm, 2015). Cross-cultural studies indicate that what parents say and do, how parents set a family rule and reinforce social norms were other forms of parenting practices (Keels, 2009) while children learn and adapt to social norms that were instantiated in their behaviour (Jackson & Dickinson, 2009). Some findings confirm that parenting goals motivate parents to use practices that contribute to the likelihood of desired or undesired attributions indirectly (Jackson & Dickinson, 2009). Parents aim to orient their children to engage in moral issues, conventional issues and education such as telling the truth, cleaning their room and doing homework respectively (Jackson & Dickinson, 2009). Recent research has found certain parenting practices were formed from parenting goals that pertained to children's development of various domains including academic achievement, self-esteem or physical health (Tingvold et al., 2012). Other research indicates that

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parenting practices vary in dimensions which belong to parenting beliefs and goals (Matsumoto & Hwang, 2019).

Caregiving context and children's behaviour may relate to the parent goals which affect childhood development. Parents' beliefs concerning their role as caregivers also influence children's behaviour (Matsumoto & Hwang, 2019), who learn and adapt social norms through child-parent interaction during their early and middle childhood (Keels, 2009). Also, parenting belief systems are filtered during a social contact to the host culture which produces parenting practices and organises daily activities for children and family (Bester & Rooyen, 2015). There was inconsistent evidence of associations between parenting beliefs and parenting behaviour due to cultural process (beliefs) and social process (current rule-setting and parent's emotions) that producing any instantiation of children's behaviour (Keels, 2009).

Accumulated research demonstrates parenting behaviour that might be characterised as demonstrating control and support (Jackson & Dickinson, 2009). Control refers to the confidence and skill which parents discipline, supervise and regulate their children's behaviour. Support refers to the parental capacity to be responsive and sensitive to their children's needs and psychological adjustments (Repetti, Sears, & Bai, 2015). Parenting style underpins an attribution of parenting behaviour and influences children's development through social interaction (Jackson & Dickinson, 2009). Additionally, parental expectations are shaped by their cultural beliefs and values. Traditional values and parenting practices may restrict adolescents to assimilate to the host culture. (Tingvold et al., 2012). Parents with higher socioeconomic status cab are more sensitive and supportive of children through verbal communication which in turn enhance their cognitive development – linguistic skills. (Grebelsky-Lichtman, 2015)

Parenting style also influences children's cognitive development through directly providing instruction and guidance for children. In order word, parenting style underpins an attribution of parenting behaviour and influences children's development through social interaction (Jackson & Dickinson, 2009). Authoritative parenting has an impact on a child's emotional development and also facilitates the regulation of cognitive development throughout childhood (Gauvain et al., 2013). Authoritative parenting supports young adults lower depression, high self-esteem and high social adjustments (Matsumoto & Hwang, 2019). Supportive parenting is defined as non-restrictive and non-punitive, warm and responsive to children's needs which includes stimulating teaching behaviours. (Keels, 2009). On the other hand, authoritarian parenting underpins the value of obedience and respect for authority which diminish children's social skills because it fails to strengthen the child's feelings of autonomy (Rudy & Grusec, 2006).

1.6 The Current Study

Previous research on the experiences of Vietnamese caregivers in raising their children in Australia is limited. Most studies focus on the challenges that Vietnamese mothers face in raising their children while few studies examine stressors among fathers and grandparents. Although several previous studies suggest parent-child conflict due to cultural differences and English language difficulty, there is little research that explores Vietnamese parenting practices and how these practices affect children's well-being. The current study addresses critical gaps in the literature by providing an in-depth qualitative exploration of the parenting stressors which Vietnamese caregivers (mothers, fathers and grandparents) face while raising their children in Australia. Thus, the study aims to explore the main parenting stressors commonly expressed by Vietnamese caregivers and to better understand how these parenting practices impact children's wellbeing.

CHAPTER 2

2. Method

2.1 Theoretical Framework:

Given the limited literature on Vietnamese caregiver's child-rearing practices and the exploratory nature of the study, qualitative analysis methods were used for a better understanding of the context, and for obtaining rich and detailed data (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Qualitative research attempts to gain a better understanding of the experience from the participant's perspective – relevant and consistent with the aims of the study, and also to explore other phenomenom through participants' experiences 'expressed in the data (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

2.2 Participants

A purposive sampling framework was adopted, with participation restricted to those with experience in raising children aged 7 to 9 years of age in Australia. This age group was chosen for practical purposes as it was possible for the researcher to access caregivers of such children via her personal networks. In order to enrich the results both male and female Vietnamese adults were recruited (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2013). The aim was to attract not only parents, but also other family caregivers such as grandparents.

Participants were recruited through flyers and Facebook pages. A passive snowballing approach was also used, in which participants who had already been interviewed, invited friends to also be participants. Ten individual interviews were conducted. In all cases, participants contacted the researcher to volunteer and to check whether they meet the inclusion criteria.

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2.3 Semi-structured interview

A semi-structured interview schedule was used with open-ended questions to ensure flexibility and to maintain a unique conversation direction and flow determined by each participant (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2013). Interviews were recorded and transcribed verbally by the researcher. Nine participants preferred to speak Vietnamese, while only one participant preferred to speak English. The data were translated into English by the researcher and checked by the researcher's bilingual colleague.

Six questions aimed to explore the main stressors relevant to child rearing, child development and parenting style. Emergent questions following from prompting were asked where appropriate. The researcher also consulted with her supervisor who advised on how to frame relevant questions.

A pilot interview was conducted by the researcher with her Vietnamese friend to ensure that the questions met the research aims. No changes were made, and the piloted data was included in the study.

2.4 Procedure

The research study was approved by the University of Adelaide Human Research Ethics Committee (H-2019-58). Participants were then recruited through the researcher's networks (Facebook) and flyers (see Appendix C), with interested participants being asked to email or phone the researcher in the first instance. The interviews were conducted over a month, from the end of May to the beginning of July 2019.

All interviews were conducted face to face, whereby participants were provided with an information sheet containing an outline of the research (see Appendix A), with confidentiality

explained and consent obtained (see Appendix B). Participants were also given a hard copy of the participant information sheet and a consent form in both Vietnamese and English languages. Interviews took up to 45 minutes and took place at either a room in a local public library or a local classroom. Interviews were digitally recorded with participants' consent and transcribed verbally.

Using pseudonyms was considered to be the best practice for protecting participants' anonymity (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Participants were provided with information for psychosocial support agencies (e.g.: Lifeline Australia) in case they became anxious during or after the interview.

2.5 Analytic Approach

Thematic analysis (TA) was used to identify, analyse and report patterns or themes within the raw data (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2013). Analysis followed the six phases of TA, including reading and familiarisation with the transcripts, complete coding and across the entire data set, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2013). The process of collection and analysis involved moving back and forth between phases to refine results (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2013). Prevalence was not always presented at the level of the data item; instead the goal was to capture interesting data relevant to the research aims. A thematic network was then established to improve rigour and transparency by creating a visual map of themes (see Figure 1).

A data saturation table was established to access the consistency of data across ten interviews (see Appendix). Data saturation, a point at which no new data are identified, was reached after the tenth interview (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The analysis was conducted within a realist framework, where interview questions captured participants' lived experiences (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The analysis combined elements of both

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inductive and deductive coding. A deductive theoretical approach considered data of direct relevance to the research question, about participant stressors in relation to child-rearing. An inductive, latent theme identification enabled exploration of other themes linked to the data themselves.

2.6 Quality Criteria

Eight "big-tent" criteria were adopted to ensure quality qualitative research (Tracy, 2010). Through data collection and analysis procedures, an audit trail was maintained as a guarantee of transparency and rigour in the research process by documenting all research activities and decisions. The researcher also used the audit trail to compare results continually throughout the data collection and analysis. As a result, themes were refined based on earlier participant contributions.

It was noted that the researcher plays an active role in identifying themes in the data, selecting those that are interesting and relevant to answering the research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2013). To ensure rigour and trustworthiness in the data, first transcriptions were coded by the researcher and then checked by the project supervisor (DT) and her colleague. To maximise dependability, the researcher discussed any issues arising at each step of the analysis process with the supervisor (Green & Thorogood, 2009).

Self-reflection is one of the primary practices of qualitative research (Tracy, 2010). It involves the process of being introspective, assessing bias and motivations which the researcher considers before choosing the topic. The researcher was motivated to do this research because she is a mother of two young children, with an understanding of the challenges and rewards of parenting in a new country. It is inevitable that this will impact on the way that she interprets the data and therefore she checked her analysis with her supervisor in an ongoing way throughout the research process (Pope et al., 2006).

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According to Tracy's guidelines, researchers should carefully and consciously consider their character, their actions and consequences on others – relational ethics. This was achieved by providing an information sheet with a full explanation of the content of the project as well as a helpline website in case of participant distress. Engaging in reciprocity with participants maintains relational ethics in qualitative research. Thus, the researcher offered participants a summary of the findings at the complete of the research.

Procedural ethics were ensured via the consent gaining process whereby participants were explained about the voluntary nature of their involvement and the context of the study. To ensure the privacy and confidentiality of participants, the researcher removed all identifying materials, stored data on a password-protected laptop and destroyed audio recordings after transcription. This practice guarantees more credible data, as participants feel protected and trust the intentions of the researcher (Tracy, 2010)

CHAPTER 3

3. Results

3.1 Participant Characteristics

A total of ten caregivers including a grandmother ($n=1$), mothers ($n=7$) and fathers ($n=2$) participated in the study. The participants came from nine families consisting of between one and four children, residing with both parents. The grandmother's family includes ten grandchildren aged between two and 13, with her responsibility being to take care of the children before and after school. Characteristics of the participants can be seen in Table 1 below.

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Table 1. Characteristics of Participants *(n=10)*

Participants	Role	Number of Children/Grandchildren	Gender and age of Children/Grandchildren
Lan	Mother	1	Girl 8
Ngoc	Mother	2	Boy 15
			Girl 8
Nam	Father	3	Girl 14
			Girl 12
			Girl 7
Thang	Father	1	Boy 8
Xuan	Mother	3	Girl 13
			Girl 11
			Girl 7
Thu	Mother	3	Boy 16
			Girl 12
			Boy 7
Hoa	Mother	2	Boy 7
			Girl 6
Hue	Grandmother	10	Girl 13
			Boy 11
			Boy 9
			Boy 9
			Girl 7
			Girl 7
			Girl 5
			Girl 4
			Boy 3
			Girl 2
Khanh	Mother	2	Boy 9
			Boy 7
Tien	Mother	2	Girl 11
			Girl 8
			Boy 7
			Girl 5

Note: *Pseudonyms used

3.2 Overview

Analysis of the data resulted in the identification of six themes as follow freedom, academic achievement, parental interaction, education at home, managing children' s behaviour/ attitudes and language preference (Figure 1)
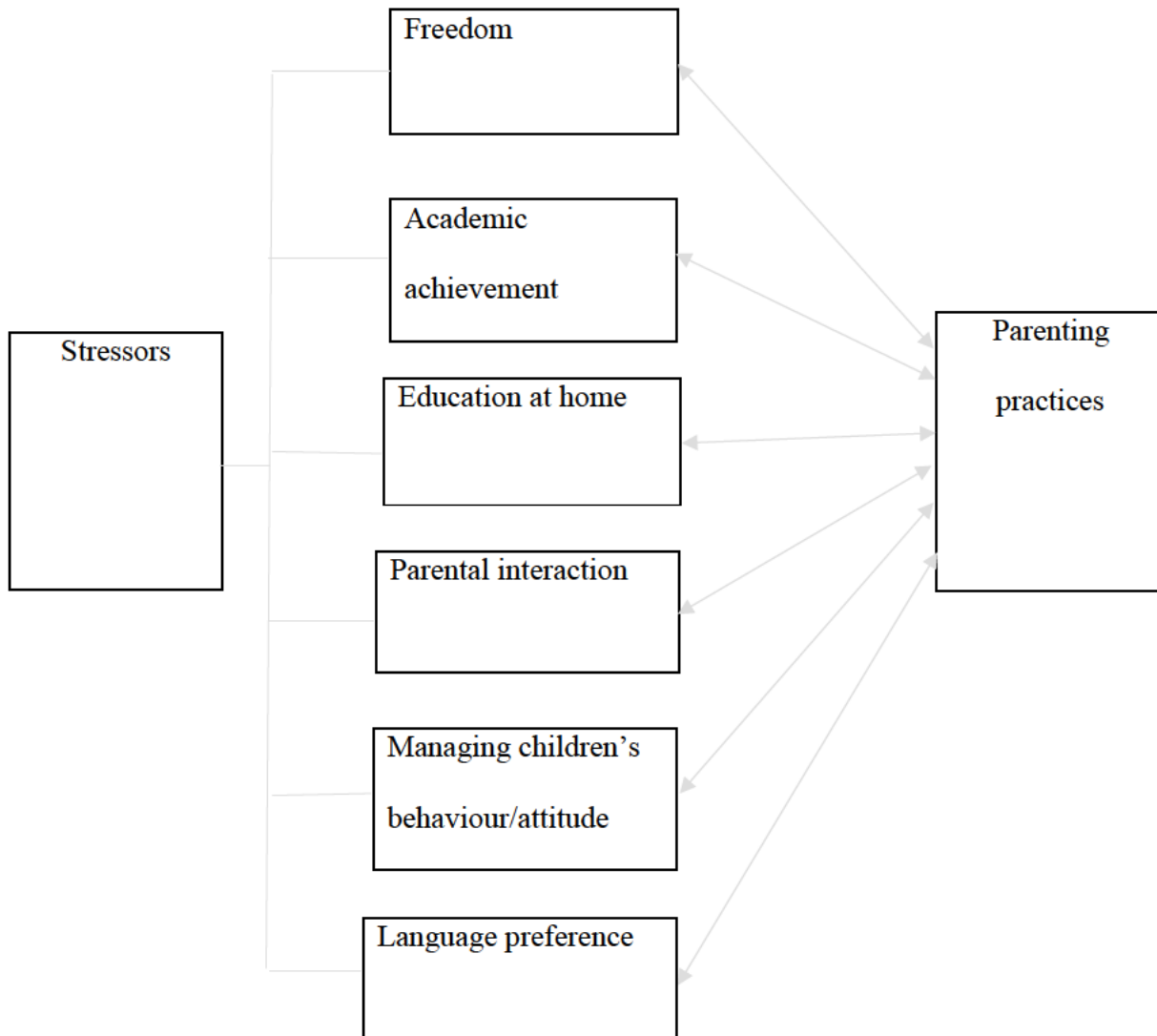

Figure 1. Thematic map of identified domains and themes

3.3 Themes

3.31 Freedom

The majority of participants expressed their concern about the level of freedom which children have in Australia and believed that school is the place which promotes freedom for children. Some explained that they expected their children to go to school and obtain some basic knowledge.

> *Australian educational system is very good compared to Vietnam but too much freedom. My daughter seems to learn nothing at school. Parents had to spend time and teach her at home. At school, playing is more than learning. After school, I asked my daughter "What did you study today? She replied, 'I don't know, I don't remember'. I feel like I pay fee school for my daughter just for playing, not for education or learning.* (█, lines 19-24)

One participant noted that in order to obtain some basic knowledge the children should spend more time learning and reinforcing their knowledge by doing homework frequently. This would produce a strong foundation which is essential for children to be prepared for their later learning, such as getting into high school.

> *Another thing is at school, kids are not forced to do much homework and say that they are so young and let them enjoy their lives, but I disagree with this idea. If they don't have a concrete foundation, how would they get into high school, and so many things like learning English, you have to learn the basics then you build it up day by day. You can't tell them to jump into the pool and tell them to swim. With everything, you need to build up day by day, bit by bit and not pushing them all at once.* (█, lines 178-183)

One mother expressed that if children do not acquire this basic knowledge, they would not have success in the future.

Although I said that I let them to freely choose what they like, if they did not achieve a standard point like learning and getting a basic knowledge from the school, they will cruise in their lives later. (█████ lines 58-60)

Several participants highlighted that freedom might lead to a parent-child conflict, especially between teenagers and caregivers due to cultural differences. One of the participants noted that teens were not prepared with a real-life so she had to protect her child and to ensure their safety and they were doing the right thing.

My son's beliefs might be affected by his school's values. He was taught that he is free to do whatever he wants when he turns 16. However, I think teens are still young and have less experience in real life. Therefore, how do they know what right thing or wrong thing to do as their brain hasn't fully developed yet. We, as parents still protect him and make sure he is safe and does the right thing. (████, lines 21-25)

Two of the participants expressed that the term 'freedom' should be clearly explained children so that they would have a better understanding about using freedom within particular contexts. It was reported that some behaviour brought from school to home was not considered acceptable.

...at school, they are told to be themselves, but you need to ask how to be yourself? To be yourself like do whatever you like but there are some things you can't do. For example, swearing, uhm the other kids say oh that is swearing but when they come home that is not the right thing to say, which is complex there. (████, lines 172-175)

One participant expressed that he always reminded his child in public to carefully consider other people's safety when playing sport, especially with regards to younger children. He noticed that Vietnamese-Australian children adopted the host cultural values which be believed did not consider people's safety.

Children are growing here have too much freedom. Every Saturday, I take my son to the Vietnamese school. I saw some boys were playing basketball. These boys didn't consider the smaller kids passing by…In Australia, kids seem not to consider the safety of others when they are playing. I don't like my son to behave like that. I said, "You can play basketball freely but you need to carefully consider people around you, especially small kids." Vietnamese adults always remind their children to do so. Western people let their children do whatever they want, too much freedom. Freedom should be reconsidered. (████, lines 35-43)

3.32 Academic achievement

Eight of the participants referred to the important role that they believed academic achievement contribution to their children's success. Some respondents noted that academic achievement would allow their children to have better lives. Other mothers emphasised that they were willing to invest both their time and capital resources to support their children in learning.

I still remind my children to concentrate on studying because education is good. I also want my son to go to university, get a higher degree, have a good job and a good salary in the future. (████, lines 84-86)

If I invest in something, uhm I will consider education as a priority. I will do everything to make an excellent environment regarding their studying which is quality and comfortable. (████ lines 60-63)

One participant highlighted that the first child would be a role model for his or her siblings, and therefore, she concentrated on the first child and observed and supported her child's learning progress carefully.

For academic, uhm I am concerned about it. I keep my eyes on my children's homework, especially the first child. I also let her go to an extra tutor. (████ lines 75-76)

Most participants reported that they did not force their children to study hard, but rather hoped that they would just naturally focus on learning. One respondent expressed that he allowed his children to freely select their favourite subjects and whatever future career for which they had a passion. He reported that he considers being happy and productive in society as being more important than achieving social status.

For me, becoming a doctor or a dentist is not important in Australia ((pause)). The most important thing is that children feel happy with their choices. I respect my children. They freely choose what they want to study or select a potential career. I am afraid that if they are not happy with what I offer or suggest, they will hate me in the future. I just want to raise them to become happy and productive to society. (█████, lines 52-58)

In contrast, two participants emphasised that attending university was very important. One participant explained that she promised her children that they could do anything afterwards, as long as they focused on learning first and then afterwards got a job. She reported that once they received a qualification from university, they could find whatever job they liked and that she will be very happy.

I will encourage each child to attend university. I hope they do so. After they get a qualification, they may not use it to get a job, they can do another job like running a business. I am still happy with that. I always encourage them to learn, learn and learn, to try their best and then go to university. (███, lines 107-111)

One of the participants expressed that due to her English language barrier and academic background, she did not feel confident in raising her children and thought that her children were academic behind their friends.

I am worried about their learning process at school, I feel like they are behind their friends. I don't feel confident about how to raise my children in Australia. I think my children are not good at learning math. I heard my friends talk about their children who can do math like

timetables, but my son can't do that. In Vietnam, I quit school from year 8, so I am worried about how I can help them. (███, lines 33-37)

3.33 Education at home

Most participants reported they educated their children in traditional ways. They consistently agreed that "raising children in Australia is not an easy" job to do (Nam, line 12 - 13). The grandmother expressed that she educated her grandchildren in the same way that she educated her own children but acknowledged that her grandchildren have assimilated into the Australian culture.

My grandchildren were more likely to be affected by their parenting practices because their parents came here when they were young, others were born here, so they followed Australian culture rather than Vietnamese culture. When they asked me to care for their children, I said if they want me to look after their children, they have to accept how I educate their children. If they don't want, they can send their children to somewhere else. I educated my grandchildren the same way as I educated my children. ███, lines 49-54)

Some respondents noted their experience of child-rearing was shaped by how they were raised in their home country – being quite strict on raising them. Children were educated by showing their respect towards adults and asking for permission from adults to do certain things and maintaining a good and strong relationship with family members.

For example, when children meet an adult, they bow their head and say 'hi' or they always ask permission from an adult when they want to do something. (Nam, lines 19-21)

I traditionally raise my kids like Vietnamese people raise kids in the old day. Quite strict on them. I do my best to provide what they need or they require. I do my best but more likely follow the traditional Vietnamese culture and shape them in the way how I suppose when they were young. (███, lines 7-10)

I teach my son to respect other family members and to be close to them. (███, lines 6)

Some participants expressed that educating children is not just limited to the home setting. Two mothers described how they create opportunities for their children to interact with other Vietnamese people through attending Vietnamese school and religious groups.

> *I still want my sons to remain their Vietnamese culture through learning Vietnamese, going to Vietnamese church, attending children activities in the church and making friends with Vietnamese children who have just come to Australia or with our Vietnamese friends' children.* (█████, lines 10 -13)

> *On the weekend, we take them to attend in Buddha membership community, they can make friends there, this is a good environment for them.* █████, lines 48-49)

Another father noted that he focused on how to build his children's confidence through outdoor community activities.

> *Our main focuses… attending extra outdoor community activities. By doing this can build their confidence when they interact with their peers.* (████, lines 13-15)

Several participants reported that they educated their children by integrating their experience of traditional child-rearing and Australian culture. Some explained that living in Australia over a long time changed their perspective of child-rearing and consequently they had adapted to the Australian culture. Those participants discuss, negotiate with their children and guide them to choose appropriate options.

> *…I don't shout at him, I discussed with him until he agrees with me ((pause)). Comparing to Vietnamese culture, Vietnamese-Australian children have the freedom to talk and make choices. I wasn't able to do that when I was a child. Living here for a long time, I adapt and adjust myself to the host culture. I know some children were taught very strictly by their parents. They were very stressed later and also had conflicts with their parents ((pause)). I don't want to treat my son that way, I let him talk freely and do the things that are suitable for his age.* (█████ lines 26-32)

I asked them 'what do you disagree about that, give me a reason, if your reason is good, I agree with you, if not, you tell me, why you want that way', I ask them 'you compare your way if it's better'. For example, when she does her homework, my husband taught her this way, I guided her in another way. I ask her to compare two ways, which one she can understand easily, which one she can work out faster and choose the best way. That's how I teach my kids, let them compare two ways, I don't force them to follow my way. I give them a choice. (█ lines 150-156*)*

Two of the participants expressed their stress in raising their children in a way educated their children while following the moral norms. They explained that they did not feel confident and were confused about whether they were educating their children in the right way. One respondent described she had a fear that of her parenting practice might lead to her children to become deprived.

I feel compelled to prepare my children for what is ahead of them, as well as a moral responsibility to ensure my children grow up to be good people. If I raise them in the wrong way, they become depraved. (█ lines 38-41)

Another respondent explained that she felt a loss of control when her children rebelled against her.

I have struggled in raising my children, I am afraid they go the wrong direction, do the wrong thing, I felt a loss of control when educating them, they don't listen to me. I don't know how to solve this problem. (█ lines 5-7)

Another mother described how she disciplined her children through physical punishment because she was afraid her children might do the wrong thing and become a burden to society.

To be honest, sometimes I spank my kids as well, I do not agree that spanking children is considered as physical abuse in Australia. Sometimes I hold a stick and spank them as they do not listen to me. I think that if I do not discipline my children well what will happen later

on in their life?... You know, if you do not teach your kids the right way, anything could happen, later on, it becomes a burden as well. Doing the wrong thing not only harm themselves but also bring a burden in society. You need to think to manage the issue, their future, you need to guide them in the right direction. (███ lines 139-147)

Two respondents with more than one child reported on the challenges of educating children with difficulties with controlling and expressing thoughts and emotions. They were concerned that this may diminish their children's success and effective communication with other people.

... They are completely different. I recognise if I push the first child in both doing the best and achieve higher grades, he will be stressed and will fail to do that. (Khanh, lines 76-79) *The second child is very quiet. I am worried about her so much. When I read her school report, all teachers comment that she is so quiet, so I am very sad. She is not confident. She also doesn't communicate well with other people. My first child has a lot of friends but the second does not. Even though she was bullied by her friends a while back at school until she could not tolerate it anymore that she confided her issue to us.* (███ lines 35-38*)*

One mother explained how she supported her child to regulate her temperament.

My second child always thinks that I am unfair when comparing her with her sister. When she was angry with me, she kept quiet, 10 times the same. I advised her 'When you are upset about me or someone else, you should talk about it out, please let me know why you get upset, if you don't do that, I cannot help you out'. When she is happy, she is happy to talk to me and tell me the reason she gets upset. However, the people around me told me that if my second child cries, just let her cries, don't mind, but I think she is very special, not like other children. If I ignored her, she thought that I didn't care about her, didn't love her. Sometimes, I am upset about her but I restrain my emotion because I know her personality, I try to explain or solve an issue straight away, I can't ignore her.

If the issue didn't get solved at that time, she would be upset and angry with me until tomorrow and she might miss her dinner on that day. (███████ lines 67-76)

3.3.4 Caregivers' interaction

Most participants expressed they were the main carer in the family and had no extended family support or partner's support. They spent time organising and engaging in their children's daily activities as well as academic learning. One mother described how she spent her time with her children

I am the primary carer in the family. In the morning, I drive my children to their school and pick them up in the afternoon ((pause)). I also drive them to attend sports groups or other activities. Most of the time is spent on them. (███████ lines 11-14)

The best time for me and my children is when my children go to the bed, we read books together, or on the weekend, we practise kungfu together or they help me do chores. (███████ lines 27-27)

Several participants reported that while they educated their children differently to their partners at times, they cooperated well when discussing and organising interaction time with their children. two mothers described how they dealt with their partners in raising their children.

I also discussed with my husband using his time and invest his time to interact with them. On weekends, he interacts with the children through playing a sport in the afternoon, every Sunday, father and children play sport together for 2 hours. And in the afternoon, training in a club for 1 hour, and in the morning, playing a soccer game in the local club for an hour. In total, the quality time of father-child interaction is 6 hours. (███████ lines 92-96)

He doesn't have much time to help me taking care of our children. However, since my kids start to go to school, my third one is starting to school, I asked him to stop working at the restaurant because I'm unable to manage 3 young children at the same time ... It is hard for me to look after their homework at the same time, so I need him to monitor Sarah involving

> *in her homework and explain the homework. I look after the others' homework. The*
>
> *housework we divide evenly. While I cook, he does the laundry. If I take the clothes in,*
>
> *Sarah will fold our clothes… we are sorting out the housework. I get all my kids involved,*
>
> *help them to take care of themselves, their responsibilities to build up slowly.* (██ lines
>
> 99-106)

Another mother described her family time as when all family members enjoyed the same activities togethers.

> *My husband talks to her a lot... We eat out around 2 or 3 times per week, sitting together and*
>
> *joking together. Every night drinking milk at the same time.* (██ lines 81-83)

One of the participants noted that it is important for parents to be good role models for their children in order to educate them well. She believed that bad habits can be transferred from parents to children. She further went on to say that she has previously tried to impress on her partner, the importance of role modelling.

> *I want to be my children's role model and want them to listen to me but my husband does not,*
>
> *that is his habit, it is hard to quit for him. I am stressful and upset because I discussed with him*
>
> *this issue many times, I told him he needs to quit that habit, if not how can we educate children*
>
> *well. I know he understands watching iPad whereas eating is a bad habit, but he can't make it.*
>
> *We educate our children in different ways.* (██ lines 11-15)

Another noted that she had had a lot of arguments with her husband while raising their children. She preferred to explain and guiding the children to do the right thing while her husband just followed his way and disregarded anything that she told him.

> *We usually argue about how to educate my children. For example, if my children do the wrong*
>
> *thing, I would explain to them why they shouldn't do that. My husband just shouts at them and dares*
>
> *to spank them. You know they are kids, they are so messy and noisy, they do not pack up their toys*
>
> *after playing, watching TV, running or chasing in the house noisily. He always shouted at our*

children, "Shut your mouth." I told him, if he just scolded without explaining, they wouldn't understand what he meant. (█████ lines 20-25)

Another mother reported that she follows religions and has learnt to accept unexpected events in her life. She also applies mindfulness to help her calm down in case of couple conflicts.

I follow the Budha, therefore I learn to accept everything. I was angry with him but I controlled my anger, did not argue with him in front of my children (█████ lines 15-17)

One mother expressed that although she and her partner agreed to educate their children according to the traditional ways, they disagreed in some arears. For example, while she tried to encourage her children to express their thoughts and feelings, her partner tried to force them to inhibit their actions as well as emotions.

On the basic rules, agree on teaching them to remain the mother language, respect older people or adults, but about how to get there, we are in the opposite direction [...] The second thing, about discipline, how to eat, stand, how to express their feelings. He orients my sons to control their actions and emotions, self-control. For example, when eating, do not chew loudly and eat with mouths opened. When they get hungry, not allow to shout, they need to wait for parents to permit them to eat. For me, I contrast to him, I encourage my sons to express their feelings like they can annoy me when they feel hungry and want to eat. My husband disagrees with me about it. (█████ lines 105-107; lines 111-117)

3.3.5 Managing children's behaviour/attitudes

Participants reported that they had little concern about their young children's behaviour at this stage. However, one mother of younger aged children highlighted her consideration of children's friendships and interactions with others. Some children's behaviour was not accepted at home. She described how she dealt with these issues and expressed that she felt helpless due to her language deficiency.

I have a concern about their behaviour relating to peer interaction. After school, they behave in bad manners such as saying bad words, that I believe that they learned from their peers. I also raised my concern with their teacher. I said, "At home, we never swear but I do not know where they hear and learn from." When I banned them not to swear any more, they deceived me by swearing in a separate word. I did not understand what they said due to my English barrier at that time. My friends explained to me, what they said is not good. I get headaches from them. I did not find an effective way to deal with this issue. (▇▇▇ lines 41-48)

A mother of two young boys described how she assisted her first child to express his thoughts and feelings in a specific context.

For example, his behaviour is an argument to parents, when he rejects parents' request him to do something, in this case, I don't think the behaviour is negative or positive. I just consider that at this stage or this context, he might be tired after school, while parents told him doing his homework, he questioned why he had to do that while he felt tired after school. They do not have any motivation at that time, less cognitive and engagement, their brain is tired. They are not ready to study. I acknowledge this kind of situation. So I just explained for them "If you feel tired, you do not want to do it now, let me know or explain the reason for me". For example, you might answer that "I am sorry mum, I don't want to do that because I bla..bla..bla, I need you to explain to me." (▇▇▇▇ lines 26-34)

In contrast, a mother of teenagers expressed that she felt helpless to manage her children's behaviour and establish appropriate attitudes and responses.

One day, I told him he should hang the washing by himself as he was old enough to do it, he got angry with me, stood up and clapped his hands on his thigh and replied "That's not my job, that's your responsibility, Mum, why you have done it for a long time but now you ask me to do it, I don't want to do it, I don't need to do it." I said "You are old enough to do it, it is your responsibility." (▇▇▇ lines 10-14)

One participant highlighted her experience on how she treated her children who did not listen to her. She explained that sometimes she had to discipline her children by spanking them. She believed that this kind of punishment worked well with regards to managing their behaviour.

Sometimes I hold a stick and spank them as they do not listen to me. I think that if I do not discipline my children well what will happen later on in their life? If they do not have responsibilities if they go the wrong way, what will happen in society? You know, if you do not teach your kids the right way, anything could happen, later on, it becomes a burden as well. Doing the wrong thing not only harm themselves but also bring a burden in society. You need to think to manage the issue, their future, you need to guide them in the right direction. The most important thing for themselves is you need to direct them what is right what is wrong, what they can do and what they can't do, that's it. (█████ lines 141-148)

Several participants reported that when their children misbehave, they tended to explain right from wrong, then they warn them that they would be punished with time out if they repeated their mistakes. Sometimes, they expressed their authority to the children when they behaved in an unexpected way.

Sometimes, my son didn't listen to me, I explained to him in 2 languages. If he repeated his mistakes or behaved like what I don't expect him to do, I might punish him such as time out… He wanted to quit the Kungfu class but I refused. I said, "You decide to join this class, you cannot quit it." I add "You can quit it when you turn 18, now you are still under our guidance, we are your parents, we are taking care of you and guiding you." (█████ lines 43-45; lines 51-54)

Five of the participants reported that they tended to seek advice from their friends in similar circumstances when they struggled in managing their children's behaviour. One participant noted he

punished his children by taking away their favourite things and sometimes he felt overwhelmed in managing his children behaviour.

One thing I consider is technology, playing iPad or watching a movie via Youtube. I think most families face this problem ((laughs)). It is hard to control their behaviour. For example, after school, when they are free, they play online games or watch a movie. When I asked them to help me with the chores, they get angry and look unhappy. However, being a parent, I must be persistent and firm, not always let them get their way. If I say stop playing and if they don't listen to me, I punish them by taking the iPad away for a month… Sometimes I feel tired and out of energy, but I have to endeavour, you know, I have no choice. My wife and I sometimes seek advice from our friends whom we meet at the Buddha group as they have children around the same age as ours. We share our experience or struggles in raising our kids. I think I learnt a lot of useful advice from my friends ((laughs)). (███ lines 32-45)

Another participant explained her approach to her children when she felt overwhelmed; she acknowledged losing control of her parenting might affect her children's well-being.

I learned from parents whose children learn kungfu and swimming with my children. In the past, when I got angry with them, I yelled at them but now when I feel angry, I go away, ignore them at that time. My friends told me when we get angry with children, sometimes we do something which we can't control which result in a bad effect on children. We might hurt them physically and emotionally. Go away to calm down. (███ lines 100-105).

Some of the participants highlighted the role played by peer relationships in contributing to their teens' behaviour or attitudes, by using the concept of the "sleepover" to highlight a parenting dilemma.

For example, my first daughter wanted to sleepover at her friend's house. I did not permit her to do that. if I know her friend's family well, I might consider her want and let her go,

but now she is in her puberty stage, I can't permit her to sleep over anymore. I need to consider her safety. Australian people are different from us, they permit their children to go to their friend's house and sleep there. Vietnamese people limit that situation. I think teenagers are curious, sometimes we can't control how and what they behave or act, therefore I think safety is a priority for my first daughter. Preventing is better than treatment. I am afraid that if I don't restrict her to do that, I will regret later if any bad thing happens to my daughter. (████ lines 91-98)

Another participant reported they monitor their children's friendship and other activities because they want to ensure their children' positive outcomes. One mother expressed that she aimed to have her child socialise with diligent peers because she believed that those peers would support for her children's success.

I prefer my son to play with well-behaved students, who focus their time on studying as that will be safer. (████ lines 49-50)

One mother noted that she always reminded her stepdaughter to focus on study.

She bought cosmetic without my permission, she has her own money from family on her birthdays or new year events. I am afraid she will not concentrate on studying... I also raised my concern with my husband but he responds that let her to be dressy because she is a girl, I am just worried about her studying and her future. (███ lines 29-35)

3.3.6 Language preference

The majority of the participants expressed they preferred to speak Vietnamese to their children at home. some respondents accepted that their children speak Vietnamese to their children at home but they wanted to retain their Vietnamese culture. A grandmother explained that if the second generation could not speak the Vietnamese language, they would forgo their culture. Therefore, she encouraged the second generation to learn and speak the Vietnamese language.

He only speaks English to me. He stays with me for 5 hours a week. I am worried that he will lose our Vietnamese culture. I think when the children stay at home, parents need to speak Vietnamese to their children. (▮▮▮ *lines 83-85).*

One of the participants expressed that speaking Vietnamese helps both parents and their children to understand each other if a parent cannot speak English well.

I speak Vietnamese to them and I require them to speak Vietnamese at home. I think it is better to raise children if I speak Vietnamese. It is so that we can understand each other easily. Another reason is that I also want to keep the Vietnamese culture going. (▮▮▮ *lines 16-19)*

Another participant highlighted that speaking the Vietnamese language creates a connection with the Vietnamese community and their relatives which benefits their children lives.

It's an advantage for them to know another language. I prefer to speak Vietnamese to them as well to keep the mother language and also help them to understand just in case you know when they go back to Vietnam, they are able to communicate with other relatives or they are able to understand culture, the language as well, I do, I do recommend speaking my mother language. (▮▮▮ *lines 78-72)*

Some participants noted that due to an English barrier, they felt a sense of belonging and more confidence when speaking Vietnamese. For this reason, they expressed that they were less likely to interact with Australian people, especially with teachers.

I am afraid speaking to Australian people due to the English barrier. I am not confident in speaking English. I also don't have spare time to meet them. On the other hand, I feel more confident if I come to Vietnamese school and talk to my people there. (▮▮▮ lines 47-49)

Other respondents reported that their language preferences depended on the situation. In everyday activities, participants explained that they prefer to speak their mother language.

However, when those people supported their children with homework, they preferred to speak English so that the children might be better able to follow what was being said.

Now that he is in year 2, general communication with him such as take a shower, prepare for the dinner table, I preferred to speak Vietnamese to him. However, when I helped him with his homework, I preferred to speak English. (██████ lines 11-14)

CHAPTER 4

Discussion

4.1 Overview

This study employed qualitative methods to explore Vietnamese caregivers' stressors in raising their children in Australia. The six themes identified were: freedom, academic achievement, education at home, parental interaction, managing children behaviour/attitudes, and language preferences. This chapter discusses these themes and comments on the finding of children's wellbeing, the second aims of the study. The background to this study was research suggesting that parents who are sensitive and responsive and who show affection positively affect their children's wellbeing (Bester & Rooyen, 2015). Related research also indicates that parents who engage in emotional coaching and who show warmth and responsiveness influence positive psychological outcomes among young children and adolescents (Morris et al., 2013).

In contrast, with previous research, this study found that parents reported that school tend to promote freedom in children behaviour. Caregiver' perception of freedom was found to be somewhat different from those of broader Australian values. Caregivers expected their children to go to school for learning rather than playing and to obtain basic knowledge which they believed should be reinforced by frequently doing homework. They believed that education is a strong foundation for their children's success and to ensure that their children do the right thing according to a cultural set of moral codes. Such beliefs about the value of education might produce parental engagement which promotes discipline which in turn may be associated with academic achievement (Chang & Le, 2005). Through social interaction with their peers, children adopted some values and norms which are not accepted by Vietnamese adults (Wong et al., 2011). For this reason, caregivers carefully considered how to clarify the term freedom to help Australian-Vietnamese children gain a better understanding of these values and how they should behave in a culturally appropriate context.

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Caring for people's safety when playing and not swearing at home are examples of unaccepted behaviour. Interestingly, a mother acknowledged her teen with lack of real-life experience associate with brain development, which means that she wanted to ensure his safety from freely doing whatever he liked. A mother's knowledge of her child has been defined as the strongest protectors from negative impacts of negative behaviour (Bester & Rooyen, 2015).

Consistent with previous studies, academic achievement was considered to be a critical success factor. Most of the respondents reported they supported, encouraged and reminded their children to focus on study naturally to obtain academic achievement. Understanding the importance of education, one caregiver expressed she tried to help her children in academic learning but she struggled and felt less confident due to the English language barrier, and her educational background. Several respondents reported that they expected their children to go to university, achieve qualifications and gain better life resources. One respondent noted that she would still feel happy if her children chose to work in an area which did not relate to their qualifications. This finding was consistent with previous research, where children's success was aligned with their parent's ambitions.

The belief that younger siblings would follow older siblings was also highlighted by one respondent. Interestingly, some respondents reported that they observed, motivated and encouraged their children to focus on study naturally to obtain academic achievement. This contrasts with previous research which indicated that Vietnamese caregivers tried to force their children to study hard and these practices might cause psychological stresses on their children. The results reflected that children's academic achievements are achieved by parents supporting homework support and providing encouragement which also affect children's development (Kurth-Costes, 2015). The finding is surprising in light of one caregiver's support of his children's academic achievement by encouraging his children to freely chose the subject they like or are passionate about. Bester &

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Rooyen (p 438, 2015) stated that "Parents who are aware of one another's needs, who support one another, and who display fondness and mutual respect are likely to handle the demands of parenthood with relative ease". Evidence shows mothers' knowledge of child development play an important role in parenting behaviour, the children's development and well-being (Al-Maadadi & Ikhlef, 2015).

In light with other research, most of the respondents reported that education at home is different from education at school. It was reported that caregivers educate children following the traditional values, norms and beliefs. They believe that children should follow piety and moral codes, including respecting adults or asking for adults' permission. One respondent noted that they were strict on educating their children, and sometimes applied physical punishment when their children disobeyed or misbehaved. Two respondents expressed that they felt confused and lacked confidence and a sense of control when educating their children to follow moral codes, and that feared that their children would be a burden on society. This finding is consistent with previous research which highlighted the fact that this parenting practice would weaken the child-parent bond and affect the children's wellbeing (Choi et al., 2008). Interestingly, some respondents reported that their objective in allowing their children to attend outdoor activities, social-religious groups was not only to remain in the Vietnamese culture but also to build confidence in their children. Studies on child development support the idea that when children engage with peers and other people, their social and emotional skills develop (Morris et al., 2013). Some respondents reported that they combine two cultures due to the length of settlement, and orient their children's education through discussion, negotiation and explanation when a conflict occurs. This parenting behaviour helps to retain a strong child-parent relationship and influence positive psychological outcomes for the child (Barker & Xia, 2013). Respondents who reported helping their children regulate their temperament

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may also positively affect their children's emotional development (Morris et al., 2013; Snyder et al., 2013).

In parental interaction, mothers contributed more to caring for children than fathers. Most of the respondents expressed they received no support from extended family and less support from their partners. Mothers noted that they invested all their time on their children through school-related involves and other activities. It is noted that such involvement can contribute to cognitive development through playing and reading with children (Gauvain et al., 2013). Although fathers and mothers educate children in different ways, some mothers received support from their partners and reported that they cooperated well when discussing and organising interaction time with their children. Such close and supportive relationships between parents can assist in emotionally and practically caring for children. (Soriano et al., 2001). Such healthy marital relationships can have a positive effect on children's social, emotional and behavioural health (Bester & Rooyen, 2015).

On the other hand, some respondents reported disagreement and conflict with their partner regarding educating their children. These problems can be characterized by distress or disappointment in the relationship (Mannering et al., 2011). One mother reported that she tried to warmly explain and guide her children to do the right thing while her partner hit and shouted at them. Such explanation and guidance as provided by the mother might lead to positive children's outcomes and enhance a strong parental-child relationship (Gauvian et al., 2013). Further, it has been suggested that such a parenting style can positively influence the child's cognitive development (Gauvain et al., 2013). Another respondent noted that being a good role model was important to educate children well. It is argued that children learn the behaviours modelled by their parents and often adopt these behaviours themselves as they reach adulthood (Kurth-Costes, 2015). Role modelling is one of the significant factors contribute to children's well beings (Kurth-Costes, 2015). Interestingly, one mother reported that she applied mindfulness when she had a conflict with

her husband to put her in a more positive state of mind. She learned this from her religious which promotes 'acceptance' of unexpected events. This might help her to retain a good relationship with her partner and her children (Atran & Norenzayan, 2004). Such approaches might be particularly helpful for Vietnamese people facing parenting and family stressors in everyday life.

Managing behaviour/ attitudes was one of the biggest challenges for several caregivers. Some mothers expressed they felt helpless and confused about how to manage their children's behaviour due to English language barrier. These mothers expected their children's behavioural to follow the traditional culture, for example with respect to manners. It might be supposed that they believed that such an expectation might establish positive psychological outcomes in their children (Morris et al., 2013).

Some respondents reported experiencing stresses when they tried to guide theirs according to traditional moral codes. They reported that they tried to monitor their children's relationship with peers and other activities to ensure positive outcomes for their children. One mother noted that she aimed to pursue her stepdaughter to focus more on study rather than on more material activities like 'dressing up'. She believed that her daughter might quit school early and this might affect her future life. Similarly, one mother shared her experience with limiting her son's time spent on technology with her sons and monitoring his socialization with peers. She also encouraged her teen to make friends with diligent students because she believed that these friends would influence her child' academic outcomes. Such monitoring behaviour has been reported as a secure way to enhance children's wellbeing and academic achievement (Deans et al., 2016).

Several respondents reported their concern about a specific activity like the 'sleepover' where teens stay at a friend's house overnight. During the interviews, they explained that they tried to control unexpected consequences, which they did not define and also ensure their children's safety.

It has been suggested that such control might help to promote positive behaviour and outcomes for children's development (Gauvain et al., 2013). Some respondents explained that they sought advice from their friends in similar circumstances when they felt overwhelmed and struggled to control their children's behaviour. Through such friendships, they were able to acknowledge that their responses and actions might affect their children's wellbeing, and their efforts to control their anger. Such response is broadly reflective of social learning theory, which would suggest the negative implication of children witnessing aggression or anger (Bandura, 1977). One mother explained that she aimed to consider her child's response in a specific context rather than make a generalisation about positive or negative behaviour. In such a way, she supported her child how to express his emotions by modelling for him. This is in line with suggests that parents who intentionally teach children coping for negative emotions enhance their children's emotional development which might benefit them in adolescents (Morris et al., 2013).

Consistent with previous research, participants described that the maintenance of the mother language is significantly important. The majority of respondents expressed that they wanted to retain Vietnamese culture by speaking the Vietnamese language at home. The grandmother who participated in the study expressed a fear of losing the Vietnamese language and the desire that it would be retained in the future generation. Most of the respondents acknowledged that speaking language in Vietnamese not only benefited their children but also helped to reinforce the child-parent relationship (Nguyen, Shin, & Krashen, 2001). Studies on child development support the idea that such engagement helps with the development of social and emotional skills as well as self-identity (Morris et al., 2013).

Some parents reported a sense of belonging, identity and confidence when communicating with their fellow Vietnamese rather than with Australian people. Therefore, they preferred that their children speak Vietnamese at home. Regular communication with children in either English or

Vietnamese can be beneficial for children's cognitive development. Empirical evidence shows that children's academic achievement can be diminished between kindergarten and grade 5 but they quickly catch up with their peers. It may be useful for mothers experiencing barriers with English to spend more time in activities such as communicating with children, becoming involved in school activities and monitoring homework, so as to enhance academic performance (Kurtz-Costes, 2015). At the same time, it is suggested that individuals needed to learn the culture-specific behavioural skills (such as the language) to cope in everyday social encounters (Sam & Berry, 2010).

4.2 Strengths

Rigour was maintained throughout this study, through the practice of self-reflexivity and the ongoing recording of observations through an audit trail (Tracy, 2010). Data saturation was also achieved, suggesting that sufficient data was captured to support claims that were captured in the research (Tracy, 2010). Likewise, credibility was enhanced through member reflections and a detailed analysis of the data. The study received support by the Vietnamese school, Vietnamese community and participants who hope that in the future more research will be conducted regarding the Vietnamese population. One of the participants noted that she hoped that through this study, the Government might better understand the circumstances of local Vietnamese people and to provide them with more support. During the course of interviews, information about the socio-economic status of the respondents as well as their length of the settlement was collected informaly and this might be used in the future to gain a deeper understanding of parenting stressors.

4.3 Limitations

The main limitation of this study is that the translation of transcripts was not checked by qualified translators, therefore, original meanings might be mistranslated. Also, the study did not account of levels of acculturation and how this may have impacted on the findings. This is

Exploring stressors that affect Vietnamese caregivers raising their children in Australia

important given that previous research has indicated that the level of migrant adaption to the host culture might impact the child-parent relationships.

4.4 Recommendations for Future

This study has found that numerous stressors affect how Vietnamese caregivers raise their children. future studies could include quantitative research such as surveys to test caregivers' stress levels; a possible tool may be the Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995). It is also suggested that a longitudinal study might follow up with the families every 6 years to see how the children and parents interact when the children become reach teenagers. Further studies may also take account of the views of teachers as they play an important role in influencing children's development (Barber et al., 2005)

4.5 Implications

It is hoped that this research can provide a better understanding of the Vietnamese child-rearing practices relating to the child's well-being. A parenting practice is embedded in traditional values and beliefs, which often contrasts with Australian culture at some points. It is hoped that this study may inform the Educational Department and other departments relating to children, to provide adequate services and support to enhance the parent-child relationship within the Vietnamese community.

4.6 Conclusions

The present study contributes to the literature by identifying the main stressors which Vietnamese people face in raising their children in Australia. These stressors influence their parenting practices. The associations of parenting practices, parenting styles, parenting beliefs contribute to children's well-being. Parents who tend to discuss, negotiate, create opportunities (eg.;

attend Vietnamese school…), role model, communication and help children with labelling and regulation of emotion would influence their children's emotional, cognitional and sociopsychological development. Generally, caregivers' beliefs are shaped by the original culture with a variety of aspects including respecting adults, asking permission and moral codes. Some caregivers with English language barrier found difficulties in raising their children in traditional ways. Vietnamese caregivers aim to orient their children focusing on the study to achieve better lives and become a productive citizen. Vietnamese caregivers face different challenges in raising their children in Australia and consequently, these challenges might affect children's wellbeing.

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Appendix A: Participant Information Sheet

THE UNIVERSITY
of ADELAIDE

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

PROJECT TITLE: Exploring stressors that affect Vietnamese caregivers raising their children in Australia

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE APPROVAL NUMBER: ██

██████

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Professor Deborah Turnbull

STUDENT RESEARCHER: Xxxxxxx

STUDENT'S DEGREE: Xxxxxxx

Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in the research project described below.

What is the project about?

This research project is about the types of stressors faced by Vietnamese caregivers raising their children in Australia. The research also aims to get a better understanding of the impact that these stressors may have on children's wellbeing.

Who is undertaking the project?

Exploring stressors that affect Vietnamese caregivers raising their children in Australia

This project is being conducted by Ho Doan Trang Bui. This research will form the basis for the degree of Bachelor of Psychological Science (Honours) at the University of Adelaide under the supervisor of Deborah Turnbull, Professor and Chair in Psychology, School of Psychology, University of Adelaide, South Australia.

Why am I being invited to participate?

You are being invited as you are a Vietnamese caregiver(s) with experience in raising your children in Australia.

What am I being invited to do?

You are being invited to participant in this project which involves an

- Interview

How much time will my involvement in the project take?

The interview will take up to 45 minutes.

Are there any risks associated with participating in this project?

There are few real risks in being involved. You can withdraw from the interview at any time. You can contact Lifeline Australia if you become distressed. The phone number is 13 11 14 (24 hours a day) and press 2 for Interpreting Services.

What are the potential benefits of the research project?

You may find it interesting to discuss your experiences with someone. We will provide you with a copy of your information if you request it.

Can I withdraw from the project?

Participation in this project is completely voluntary. If you agree to participate, you can withdraw from the study at any time.

Exploring stressors that affect Vietnamese caregivers raising their children in Australia

What will happen to my information?

Your information will only be used as described in this participant information sheet and it will only be disclosed according to the consent provided, except as required by law.

Who do I contact if I have questions about the project?

Student name: Xxxxx

Email: Xxxxxx @student.adelaide.edu.com

What if I have a complaint or any concerns?

The study has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of Adelaide (approval number ▮▮▮▮). This research project will be conducted according to the NHMRC National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2007 (Updated 2018).

If you have any questions or problems associated with the practical aspects of your participation in the project, or wish to raise a concern or complaint about the project, then you should consult the Principal Investigator at deborah.turnbull@adelaide.edu.au

If you wish to speak with an independent person regarding concerns or a complaint, the University's policy on research involving human participants, or your rights as a participant, please contact the Human Research Ethics Committee's Secretariat on:

▮▮▮▮   ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

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Exploring stressors that affect Vietnamese caregivers raising their children in Australia

Any complaints or concerns will be treated in confidence and will be fully investigated. You will be informed of the outcome.

If I want to participate, what do I do?

The participant(s) will sign a consent form provided by a researcher.

Yours sincerely,

XXX

Appendix B: Consent form

CONSENT FORM

Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC)

THE UNIVERSITY of ADELAIDE

1. I have read the attached Information Sheet and agree to take part in the following research project:

Title:	Exploring stressors that affect Vietnamese caregivers raising their
Ethics Approval	███████████

2. I have had the project, so far as it affects me, and the potential risks and burdens fully explained to my satisfaction by the research worker. I have had the opportunity to ask any questions I may have about the project and my participation. My consent is given freely.

3. Although I understand the purpose of the research project, it has also been explained that my involvement may not be of any benefit to me.

4. I agree to participate in the activities outlined in the participant information sheet.

5. I agree to be:

   Audio recorded ☐ Yes ☐ No

6. I understand that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time.

7. I have been informed that the information gained in the project may be published in a thesis.

Exploring stressors that affect Vietnamese caregivers raising their children in Australia

8. I have been informed that I will not be named in the published materials. I understand that the information that I provide will be anonymous.

9. I understand my information will only be disclosed according to the consent provided, except where disclosure is required by law.

10. I am aware that I should keep a copy of this Consent Form, when completed, and the attached Information Sheet.

Participant to complete:

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher/Witness to complete:

I have described the nature of the research to _____

(print name of participant)

and in my opinion she/he understood the explanation.

Signature: _____ Position:_____ Date: _____

Appendix C: Online Post/Flyer

Are you interested in being involved in research from the University of Adelaide.

The study is about caregiving by Vietnamese parents, grandparents and other family members living in Australia.

We are looking for Vietnamese caregivers (aged 18 plus) who are currently looking after children from 7 to 9 years of age.

You may find it interesting to discuss your experience with someone. We will provide you with a copy of your information if you request it.

The study will involve you being interviewed for no longer than 45 minutes.

All information is anonymous.

If you would like to participant in the study or to find out more, please contact

XXXXXX

Email:

Mobile phone no.:

Appendix D: Interview guide

PARTICIPANT INTERVIEW:
[FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIRE VERSION]

1. Tell me about yourself and your family.

How long you been in Australia? What do you do now? If you work, do you work fulltime or partime? How many children do you have? Do they attend in school now? Do you have a partner who share responsibilities with you like doing housework or caring your children? Do you have extended family or some close friends here?

2. What challenges do you face or consider when raising your children in Australia?

For example, how do you communicate with your children when conflict occurs? What language you prefer to speak to them (Vietnamese or English or both)? After solving conflicts, do they follow your advices or just follow their ways?

Do you think their academic results is the most important thing you consider? Why you think so?

However, according to previous research, social skill or interpersonal skill is very important for your children, which helps them become more successful in the future, how do you think about this statement?

As a caregiver, you may satisfy your children' needs, safety properly. What is about happiness? How do you know your child is really happy?

3. *When you feel overwhelm with a conflict between you and your children, what do you do?*

You may consider your children' friendship, their behaviour, their safety or their academic results. How do solve these issues and how you help them overcome their issues effectively. How to manage them to listen to you? How and when they express what they think and how they feel in conflicts?

Exploring stressors that affect Vietnamese caregivers raising their children in Australia

Where or whom you seek help from? Do these services/ people provide helpful information you really need? If not, why?

4. Where or whom you seek help from when you face your challenges in raising your children?
How these services (your community, your child school) / people (school counsellor, school teacher, doctor, psychologist, your partner, other family members or your close friends) provide helpful information you really need? If not, why?
Any extra helps (education website, other websites or parenting training program) you might think are useful for you and your children.

5. After you overcame your challenges, how did you think? What will you do in the future?
Your reflection about what you have done when facing challenges in raising your children. What you should and what shouldn't. For example, you did yell at your children when they performed their misbehaviour instead of taking a seat with them, talk to them about their problem to find out a source of their misbehaviour. If you have more than one child, how you treat the second child (same or different from the first one)? As time pass, what do you need to improve and how to achieve your goal (what is your goal)?

6. Anything else you would like to add regarding raising children in Australia?
    Your suggestions, recommendations for other caregivers

Appendix E: Saturation

Themes		Interview								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Freedom (7)		x	x	x	x	x				x		x
Academic achievement (9)	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x
Education at home (10)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Parental interaction (8)	x	x		x	x	x	x		x	x
Children's behaviour (9)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x
Language preference (8)		x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x